



# ARMY RESILIENCE COMMUNITYLINK

THE ARMY RESILIENCE DIRECTORATE NEWSLETTER | MARCH 2021



Commanders and first sergeants have a critical role in supporting sexual assault survivors in their units. They should ensure they have a conversation that conveys their support, respect for their privacy, and offers resources to get help. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Anthony Alcocer)

## How Command Teams Can Support Sexual Assault Survivors

By Antonietta Rico, Army Resilience Directorate

Sexual assault is a crime that often takes a long-term toll on victims, who may struggle to recover from the trauma for years, even decades. To ensure victims have the help they need after a sexual assault, support from leadership is critical. When commanders and first sergeants first learn that a Soldier in their unit has been sexually assaulted, they may feel they are not qualified to provide them support or they don't know what to say, but they should not avoid the survivor or the situation, said Lt. Col. La'Shonia White, Social Work Staff Officer and Suicide Risk Management Program Manager at the Office of the Surgeon General.

"It's important that commanders reach out to the service member," said White. "They feel more supported by command when the commander and first sergeant ask them what they need."

Once they learn of the assault, commanders should have an initial conversation with their Soldier that offers support and compassion. It's possible that sexual assault victims may cope with the trauma in unhealthy ways, including drinking, aggression and engaging in risky behavior. During the conversation they should convey that while every Soldier's reaction to trauma is different, the commander and first sergeant are there to ensure the Soldier has the help they need so their trauma does not result in unhealthy coping mechanisms that could further negatively impact their career and/or their life, White said.

"Have a conversation with them about what is going on and impress upon them how important it is for them to seek help," White said. "Listen to the service member, and find out what they need, and really encourage behavioral health as well as involvement with the SHARP program" and other victim-related support services.

Leaders should learn about the impact of trauma and what Soldiers experience when they file a report. Unrestricted reports can give commanders better insight into the assault which can help them offer better-aligned support.

White suggests commanders express understanding, convey that privacy is important and that only people who need to know will know about the assault, and encourage their Soldier to pay attention to themselves and notice if they are starting to engage in unhealthy behavior like excessive drinking.

"When you are in a lot of emotional pain sometimes you make poor decisions in an attempt to numb or avoid the pain," White said. A conversation with the Soldier by the commander and first sergeant will ensure that Soldiers get the mental health help they need before they spiral into self-destructive behavior that can also result in UCMJ.

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## DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

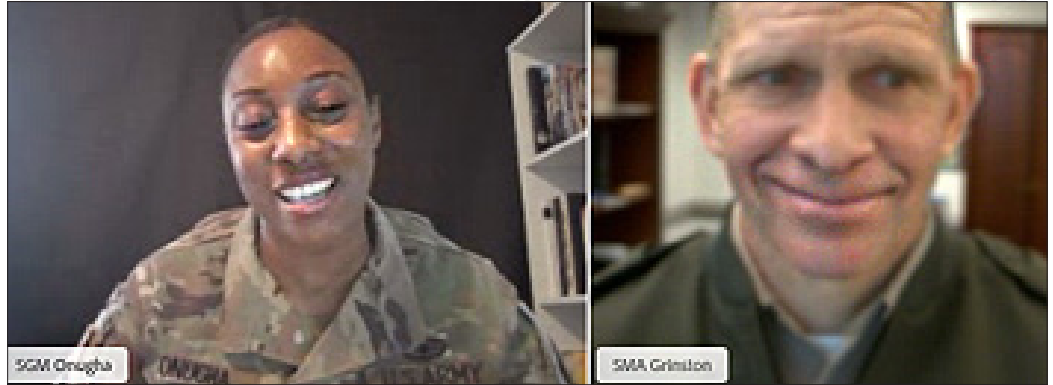
Team,

The Fort Hood report served as a sober reminder that we have a long way to go in eliminating sexual harassment and sexual assault from our formations. The Army, ARD, and the SHARP program are already addressing gaps identified in the report. Senior Army leaders directed that commanders receive additional training to empower them to effectively implement the SHARP program within their units, and SHARP is in the process of fielding re-training for commanders on the expedited transfer policy, as well as ensuring SHARP personnel receive training on how to improve case management for Soldiers. To learn more about the updated requirements of the expedited transfer policy see page 4.

Active-duty commanders and leaders already have a powerful tool in their arsenal to combat corrosive behaviors, the Commander's Risk Reduction Toolkit. Fielding of CRRT to the Army National Guard and Reserve should be complete in 2021. CRRT enables commanders and leaders to assess and prevent high-risk behaviors in their Soldiers and units through web-based reports that provide visibility of high-risk factors in a Soldier's background, including data on criminal history and substance abuse.

An additional tool for commanders to assess the environment in their organizations are command climate surveys. DoD's Office of People Analytics recently fielded a new version of the Defense Organizational Climate Survey, DEOCS V.5.0, which includes additional questions that

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ARD senior enlisted advisor, Sgt. Maj. Sharita N. Onugha, moderated the ARD webinar with Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston, Feb. 17. (Screenshot)

## SMA Emphasizes Awareness, Ownership During ARD Webinar

By Devon Suits, Army News Service

WASHINGTON—The Army's top enlisted leader joined the Army Resilience Directorate as a speaker during its monthly webinar Feb. 17. ARD's senior enlisted advisor, Sgt. Maj. Sharita N. Onugha, moderated the webinar with Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston, engaging in a discussion about the Fort Hood Independent Review, suicide prevention, and resilience.

During the webinar Grinston recalled his initial feelings of anger and disappointment as he read through the results of the review, which were released in December, and learned that installation leaders had created a culture of tolerance toward the acts of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

"I was so angry that our Soldiers had to live in an environment like that," Grinston said. "I was disappointed that our leaders, especially our noncommissioned officers, did not enforce the standard." However, Grinston emphasized that he also blamed himself. As the Army's top enlisted leader, he is responsible for setting and enforcing the Army's standard.

"I feel that I failed to communicate the importance of being a part of a cohesive team that is highly trained, disciplined and fit," he explained. "I talk about 'This is My Squad,' (and) how to take ownership and treat people with dignity and respect. I failed to get (my message) down to the NCOs on Fort Hood."

Grinston said he has doubled his efforts to meet with Soldiers since the release of the report and continues to stress the importance of cohesive teams.

Leaders at all levels need to take responsibility by educating themselves on the Army's standards

toward sexual harassment and sexual assault and take action when necessary, Grinston added.

Onugha, who became the senior enlisted advisor of ARD last December, after serving as the Sergeant Major of the Cyber Center of Excellence G3/5/7, emphasized the resources available to leaders at ARD's [32 Performance Centers](#) Army-wide.

"We focus our policy and programs, and we advise and assist the formation with strengthening individual readiness by promoting a culture of trust that is founded on the Army Values," Onugha said.

During the webinar Onugha highlighted training ARD offers to units, like the [Squad Leader Development Course and Engage](#). These workshops help squad leaders learn to build trust, communicate and create a positive environment in their squad, and train Soldiers to identify, take responsibility for, and act in critical moments to help fellow Soldiers.

Jill Londagin, SHARP program director, presented during the afternoon ARD webinar the same day, providing an update on SHARP efforts.

Army senior leaders have acknowledged that sexual harassment and sexual assault, suicide, and racism/extremism are considered the top threats to Army personnel, she said.

"The Army is working with the Department of Defense to develop a more standardized, integrated model for addressing sexual harassment and sexual assault across the board," she said.

To read more, visit: <https://www.army.mil/article/243525>

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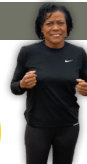
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## Soldiers and Elite Athletes Cope With Similar Challenges, Says Olympic Athlete Alexi Pappas During ARD Webinar

By David Gercken and Daisy Robles Johnson, Army Resilience Directorate

Soldiers are also athletes, and just like all athletes Soldiers need to take care of themselves both physically and mentally.

"There truly is so much overlap between the world of Olympic athletics and the military: we are all elite athletes whose mission it is to push ourselves beyond our limits to achieve extraordinary goals," Alexi Pappas, an Olympian, author, and actress, told a world-wide audience during a recent webinar hosted by the Army Resilience Directorate.

Pappas—who recently published her memoir "Bravey," in which she talks about her experiences competing in the Olympics, coping with injury, depression, and her mother's death by suicide—shared a message of resilience and the significance of treating the brain like a body part during the webinar.

Dealing with injuries and severe depression after competing in the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Summer Games, Pappas, with support from family and friends, sought treatment from a mental health doctor who told her that her brain had a "scratch on it." An injury. For Pappas it was an epiphany.

"The brain is a body part like any other, and mental health injuries like depression and anxiety can heal over time, just like any other injury," Pappas said, noting that it may help if this idea was integrated into the culture of elite athletes and the military.

Once Pappas began to treat her brain as any other body part, her entire outlook switched. She changed her mental approach to treatment: her doctor became like a coach, going to her mental health appointments was like reporting to practice, seeing her therapist was just



Olympic athlete Alexi Pappas (left) shared her struggle with severe depression, and how treating the brain "like a body part" and the support of loved ones helped her recovery, during the Jan. 28 ARD webinar. (Photo by Fred Goris, courtesy of Alexi Pappas)

like seeing a chiropractor or getting a sports massage. She urged webinar attendees to adopt the same mentality.

Treating the brain as a body part also requires that we talk about mental health injuries in similar terms. Just as we give solid advice to teammates with physical injuries, we must do the same for mental health and brain injuries.

"If we have a teammate who tears an ACL, would we visit them at home a week later and tell them to snap out of it or 'man up'?" Pappas asked. "That's because culturally, we understand that there's a healing process associated with physical injuries. And it's important for everyone to understand that it's the same with mental health injuries too. They're just injuries."

Pappas also shared the importance of choosing

optimism because it's "not about deciding to suddenly be happy. You can't just choose to be happy. Instead, it's about understanding that you can heal."

"In time Soldiers, elite athletes, and everyone for that matter, will be just as vigilant in caring for their mental health as their physical health. We all want to perform our best and there is nothing weak about that," Pappas said.

ARD offers a variety of performance and resilience training—from cultivating optimism to building confidence, learning mindfulness, attention control, goal setting and much more—to help Soldiers perform consistently and to their full potential regardless of circumstances. To learn more, visit the ARD website, <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/R2/R2-Performance-center.html>.

## PROTECTIVE FACTOR: EMOTIONAL

Writing in a journal helps to regulate your emotions and boosts your ability to handle stress.

There are many ways to journal. Try one of these ways:

- Grab a notebook and pen and write down your thoughts uninterrupted for 10 minutes.
- Writing on paper isn't the only way to journal. Visit your mobile app store to download a digital diary.
- Keep a gratitude jar. Jot down one thing you're thankful for on a note and drop it in the jar each day. Then read the notes weekly as a way to reflect.



Protective factors are skills, strengths, and resources that help Soldiers deal effectively with challenging situations. To learn more visit: [www.armyresilience.army.mil](http://www.armyresilience.army.mil)



ARMY RESILIENCE



## Updates to SHARP Expedited Transfer Policy to Reinforce Army's 'People First' Efforts

By Devon Suits, Army News Service

WASHINGTON—The Army plans to roll out new training in support of the expedited transfer policy that provides streamlined and necessary support to Soldiers and adult dependents who are victims of sexual assault.

Under the policy, sexual assault victims can request a move to a new unit or installation if their current environment is impacting their safety or emotional well-being or the command's ability to function, said Jill Londagin, director of the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program.

Former Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy recently directed all senior commanders to complete additional expedited transfer training no later than March 31. The secretary also mandated improved case management training for all SHARP personnel.

Guidance under the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act followed by a memorandum from the undersecretary of defense in early 2020 expanded the policy and provided additional guidance for victim support, Londagin said Jan. 7.

The move identified a critical list of responsibilities for all losing and gaining commanders and SHARP personnel to ensure that Soldiers and adult dependents have the best chance for success during their recovery process, Londagin added.

The Army also released an all Army activities message, or ALARACT, in November 2020 to provide additional SHARP program guidance related to the transfer policy, she said.

Information about the expedited transfer policy will soon be available to all Soldiers as part of the Army SHARP annual refresher training requirement, Londagin said.

Under the policy, Sexual Assault Response Coordinators must provide victims' advocacy support, facilitate appointments with behavioral health and medical professionals, and connect an individual with advocacy or legal services. SARCs will also conduct a series of non-clinical safety assessments to ensure an individual's well-being throughout the process.

Brigade commanders are responsible for tracking all expedited transfers and have the

authority to approve or disapprove a request, Londagin said.

Recent provisions to the 2021 NDAA amended the time for an expedited transfer decision from 72 hours to five calendar days, she added. This change offers victims more time to make a decision if they want to request a transfer and gives SHARP personnel additional time to line up adequate support.

"All expedited transfers are reviewed on a case-by-case basis," Londagin said. "There are cases when a Soldier has a pending (Uniform Code of Military Justice), medical or administrative action that a command has to consider before they grant an expedited transfer request."



**SHARP**  
SEXUAL HARASSMENT/ASSAULT  
RESPONSE AND PREVENTION

Londagin acknowledged the expedited transfer process could create a potential issue in low-density career fields or vacate a duty position critical to mission accomplishment. However, she said the Army and SHARP program must continue to put people first by prioritizing the individual's needs over mission requirements.

Once an individual is approved for transfer, the losing brigade commander must ensure a proper handoff before transferring the individual to their gaining unit. The gaining commander will receive information about the individual's condition, including a list of scheduled medical or behavioral health appointments, ongoing legal actions, and other personnel-related details if applicable.

Soldiers who want more information about the expedited transfer process can review ALARACT 95-2020 and Army Regulations 614-100 and 614-200 on the Army Publishing Directorate website. Personnel can also request information by contacting the Army Human Resources Command Service Center at 1-800-582-5552.

"People are the Army's top priority," Londagin said. "This policy reinforces the Army's commitment to eliminate sexual assault and sexual harassment from our formations. Acting on a Soldier's request for expedited transfer is an important component of a leader's response in supporting victims of sexual assault."

## SHARP Resources for Soldiers Are Just a Click Away

By Ashley Chagnon, Army Resilience Directorate

Army leaders have repeatedly emphasized that sexual harassment and sexual assault have no place in the Army. The Army Resilience Directorate supports this mission by providing numerous resources to Soldiers, Family members and DA Civilians on its website, [www.ArmyResilience.Army.mil](http://www.ArmyResilience.Army.mil). From the homepage, people can choose from four different paths depending on their needs, taking the guesswork out of where to find specific information.

1. If someone is in immediate need of help, the "[I Need to Talk to Someone Now](#)" link connects them with the [DOD Safe Helpline](#) in a single click. Whether they have been a victim or witness of sexual harassment or sexual assault, the Safe Helpline is always available 24/7 for immediate assistance and support.
2. For those who need help and guidance following a sexual assault the "[I Was Sexually Assaulted](#)" link provides several resources including help to find their local Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), and provides the victim detailed instructions on what to do immediately after an assault. Information on restricted and unrestricted reporting and the [CATCH program](#) is also available.
3. The "[I Was Sexually Harassed](#)" link provides resources for victims of sexual harassment. Visitors can easily find their SARC, connect to the DoD Safe Helpline, learn the differences between a formal and informal complaint, and the process of reporting each complaint. Also in this section, one can find out more about the [continuum of harm](#), which explains how attitudes that allow or enable forms of harassment, beginning with hazing and bullying, can lead to more egregious behaviors and progress into sexual assault.
4. The "[I Want to Help Someone](#)" link provides information on bystander intervention and how to talk to someone who has been sexually harassed or sexually assaulted. The impacts of trauma on victims are listed as well as talking points to help people communicate sensitively and effectively with victims.

Sexual assault doesn't only happen to women. [Information for Men](#) explains what male victims may experience and includes a SARC locator and immediate connection to the DoD Safe Helpline.

Toxic relationships can also be a contributor to sexual assault. The [Healthy Relationships](#) link explains components of healthy and unhealthy relationships to help prevent potential harm and sexual assault.

If you have been sexually assaulted [contact your SARC](#) for support.



## Building Resilience Through Effective Communication

By Mia Robinson, Army Resilience Directorate

Honest and effective communication is integral to building strong teams and strong leaders. Effective communication skills can help people master the art of having difficult conversations with ease, make their ideas heard, and earn the respect of their peers or subordinates.

Through many conversations with the command team in Hawaii, Master Resilience Trainer-Performance Experts Meg Helf and Stephanie McGrath began to receive a lot of information about the need to improve relationships in the Army. According to McGrath, it was important to find what the driving factor was behind issues affecting Soldiers such as suicide, low morale, behavioral issues, relationship breakdown and lack of motivation. It appeared that a contributing factor was lack of communication and one of the fundamental ways to improve relationships is through communication.

“Communication is the building block of relationships. It involves a two-way conversation, how do we actively listen—listening to understand and not respond—what does empathy look like when we express it,” said McGrath. “How do we get to understand someone and create an environment where they feel comfortable to come back and speak to you expressing themselves regardless of the issue.”

MRT-PE and course instructor Shawn Saylor added, “Relationships are the backbone to the military. In order to improve and strengthen it you have to be the best version of yourself.”

Rather than reinvent the wheel or look at outside resources, Helf and McGrath decided that the easiest way to remedy communication issues at the unit was to use the Army-required monthly performance counseling sessions as a springboard to bridge the communication gap and improve relationships between Soldiers and leaders. After having multiple discussions with different units and commanders about who was being counseled, how they were being counseled and if it was effective, they found that monthly counseling sessions were not being conducted regularly and if they were, they weren’t as effective as they could be.

Helf and McGrath wanted to change the narrative that performance counseling was negative or that it meant something was wrong or someone did something wrong, and instead emphasize why performance counseling sessions are actually positive; it’s where leaders check-in with and get to know their Soldiers and help them with their career progression.



Soldiers engage in a role-playing scenario during a Counseling Enhancement Course training exercise at Fort Sill, Okla.(Courtesy photo)

Based on their research and field work, Helf and McGrath decided to specifically target ways to enhance and improve how Soldiers and leaders counsel in their jobs. When the Counseling Enhancement Course was developed, the idea was to help Soldiers and leaders improve the way they communicate and relate to one another.

This interactive 3-day course includes learning fundamental counseling techniques, resilience skills and practical activities that are based on the skills outlined in ATP 6-22.1. What makes this course unique is that Soldiers and leaders participate in real life scenario-based counseling sessions. They learn an R2 skill in real time through role play, and apply it while receiving ongoing feedback to improve their understanding of human behavior. The course also helps bring awareness to body language and tone, managing emotions, and controlling reactions.

The skills taught in this course can help those seeking to improve the way in which they communicate with others, how they perceive others, and or help those looking to help someone in need initiate those “hard conversations” whilst being respectful, empathetic, and understanding.

For more information about the CEC course or to schedule training, visit: <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/R2/I-Want-to-Schedule-Training.html>.



### ARD Senior Enlisted Advisor Engages With R2 Performance Centers

FORT BELVOIR, Va.—Army Resilience Directorate Senior Enlisted Advisor Sgt. Maj. Sharita N. Onugha toured the Fort Belvoir R2 Performance Center to reinforce ARD’s commitment to helping Soldiers and their Families thrive. She also participated in a January call with staff at all 32 R2 Performance Centers Army-wide. To schedule resilience and performance training for your unit visit the link: <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/R2/I-Want-to-Schedule-Training.html>. From left to right: Staff Sgt. Sahavit Mosley, R2 Program Manager, National Capital Region; Heather Gatten, Level 3 Performance Expert, NCR; Sgt. Maj. Sharita N. Onugha; and Matt Sawyer, R2 Performance Center Manager, NCR. (Courtesy photo)

# AROUND THE FORCE

- ▶ SHARP
- ▶ Suicide Prevention Program (SP2)
- ▶ Ready and Resilient
- ▶ ASAP



## Military Widow's Story Offers Soldiers Different Perspective on Suicide Prevention

FORT LEE, Va.—Sarah Smith holds a framed photograph of her late husband, Sgt. 1st Class James Smith during a beachfront Family photo this year. Smith took part in the 94th Training Division-Force Sustainment, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, virtual suicide prevention training, where she shared her story about the loss of her husband due to death by suicide. To read more, visit: [www.army.mil](http://www.army.mil). (Photo courtesy of Sarah Smith, widow of service member)



**Establishing Roles Through Teamwork**  
FORT STILL, Okla.—A team-building event designed by the Fort Sill R2 Performance Center focused on team success by working together to complete a challenge. Teams participated in two different challenges. The first one, the 'cup stacker,' evaluated how the team performed in various roles. It highlighted the importance of being a good leader or follower depending on your current role. The second challenge, 'pipeline,' placed an emphasis on how teams work together when there is no leader designated. Does someone step up and take charge? Do too many people try to take charge? Both challenges required verbal and non-verbal communication skills and teamwork. (Courtesy photo)



**SHARP Staff Assistance Visit**  
HAWAII—The SHARP Program conducted a Staff Assistance Visit at the request of the USARPAC Commanding General, Feb. 6-13. The SAV team reviewed SHARP policies and processes, procedures for the Sexual Assault Review Board proceedings, victim advocacy and response services, program management and SHARP training. (Courtesy photo)



## Army NATO Brigade Hosts "SHARPen Your Holiday"

GERMANY—The U.S. Army NATO Brigade SHARP Office moved through the holiday season with 10 days of trivia titled "SHARPen your Holiday." Each duty day, the U.S. Army NATO Brigade SHARP Team presented questions and topics to the organization to seek an understanding of the Brigade's perceptions, thoughts, and opinions on material such as who can receive a restricted report, how individuals ask for consent, and the barriers that stand in the way of reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault. In recognition of their prevention efforts, the U.S. Army NATO Brigade SHARP Team, consisting of Sgt. 1st Class Brandy Jackson-Frazier, Brigade Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, and Arin Aviles, Brigade Victim Advocate, were coined on Dec. 18, 2020 by the United States Army Europe and Africa Deputy Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Jarrard during his visit to Sembach Kaserne, Germany. (Photo courtesy of Sgt. 1st Class Brandy Jackson-Frazier)

## Camp Parks Hosts MRT L2 Certification Course

CAMP PARKS, Calif.—A mix of 19 active duty and Reserve Soldiers attended and successfully completed virtual MRT Level 2 certification training hosted by the R2 Performance Center at Camp Parks, supported by Performance Experts from Fort Bliss, Fort Carson and Fort Leonard Wood. Training was delivered virtually from Camp Parks in Dublin, Calif. Soldiers were located in 12 different locations in the U.S. and Germany and instructors came from four different R2 Performance Centers across the U.S. The purpose of the course is to cultivate talented and vetted Soldiers from across the Army MRT community who have demonstrated the skill, motivation, and content mastery to be facilitators on a training team working in support of future MRT L1 courses. (Courtesy photo)



**Vignettes Aid 3rd CM BDE SHARP Program**  
FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo.—Staff Sgt. Crystal Chavous, a drill sergeant assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 10th Infantry Regiment, goes through a sexual harassment reporting scenario while trainees listen and take notes during SHARP training Jan. 15. To read more, visit [www.army.mil](http://www.army.mil). (Photo by Brian Hill)



## Army to Widen Scope of Special Victims' Counsel Program

By Joseph Lacdan, Army News Service

WASHINGTON—The Army looks to expand its Special Victims' Counsel program this fiscal year, as the need for legal counsel and victim representation increased at some installations.

SVCs are uniformed lawyers who serve under the Army's Office of The Judge Advocate General. They provide victims of an alleged sex-related offense with counsel throughout the legal process. SVCs advocate for victims' rights following a sexual assault where a Soldier is the alleged perpetrator, providing clients access to legal representation that victims of non-military sexual assaults typically do not have.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 extended the SVC program's pool of potential clients. In accordance with the act, since Dec. 1, military services must provide legal counsel to help victims of domestic violence offenses. The SVC program now provides legal representation to

certain eligible victims of domestic abuse. The service is adding 30 full-time Special Victims' Counsel lawyers this fiscal year to bring its total to 74 full-time SVCs. The Army will further increase SVC authorizations by an additional 17 in fiscal 2022.

As the national spotlight falls on Soldier deaths and alleged sexual assaults at Fort Hood, Texas, Col. Lance Hamilton, chief of the SVC program, reminds victims they can access the legal counsel services.

The SVC program has steadily grown since its 2013 inception, serving more than 12,000 victims while providing legal services that include advising victims on their right to protections from the accused, the right to be heard in court and the right not to be excluded from some proceedings.

Prosecutors seek justice in criminal cases and their

interests often align with the victims. However, in rare cases, their goals more closely converge with those of government or society than the victim. Those SVCs focus solely on the victims' interests, Hamilton said.

### Providing a way forward

In the weeks following a sexual assault, a victim may find the legal proceedings difficult to follow and SVCs often act as a steady guide.

"It's almost like a foreign language," said Lt. Col. Elliott Johnson, SVC deputy program manager. "For you to be sitting in a courtroom and you hear a judge, defense attorney, a prosecutor speaking this legal language that is unfamiliar to you, and you kind of want to know what they're talking about or thinking about your case."

To read the full article, visit: <https://go.usa.gov/xsNCv>

## Army to Target Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault in New Command Climate Survey

By Devon Suits, Army News Service

WASHINGTON—An updated version of the Defense Organizational Climate Survey, or DEOCS 5.0, will provide commanders with an evidence-based feedback tool to help them identify and intervene against a variety of areas critical to command climate, including destructive behaviors, such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, and associated retaliation.

The Army will incorporate 10 additional questions about sexual harassment and sexual assault reporting climate into all DEOCS surveys, said Michelle Zbylut, director of the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences.

The additional line of questions supports a People First Task Force initiative linked to the Fort Hood Independent Review, Zbylut said.

Army senior leaders stood up the task force in December to aggressively address the results of an independent report and restore an Army-wide culture of dignity and respect, according to task force officials.

Like a vehicle's check engine light, the DEOCS is intended to identify risk factors that drive an installation's or unit's command climate, said Jenna Newman, social science advisor with the Army Resilience Directorate.

The survey is managed and administered by the Defense Department's Office of People Analytics (OPA), Zbylut explained. The core survey is a collection of approximately 100 questions, with the option to include no more than 10 service-specific questions.

Installation leaders can also include no more than 10 multiple-choice and up to five open-ended



Commanders can now use an updated version of the Defense Organizational Climate Survey, or DEOCS 5.0 to help them identify and intervene against a variety of areas critical to command climate, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and associated retaliation. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Dustin Biven)

questions to target local interests, she added. These questions are selected from a bank of options to ensure the survey's reliability and compliance with DOD policies.

"The optional DEOCS content includes a wide variety of topics, ranging from workplace experiences, professional development, discrimination, to COVID-19," Zbylut said. "The additional questions allow commanders to dig deeper into a given topic area."

Installation commanders are required to conduct a DEOCS upon the first 120 days of taking command, Zbylut said.

Participation in the survey is considered voluntary for all personnel and provides them a safe, secure, and confidential means to submit feedback. The recent update to the DEOCS will allow participants to complete it through their smartphone or tablet,

creating more flexibility for anyone who wants to participate, Zbylut added.

"Many individuals in the Army will have taken a DEOCS at some point in their career, but these questions are going to look different from previous iterations," Zbylut said.

### A focused survey

To refine the survey, OPA received input from all military branches. The organization also included data and research from policymakers and subject-matter experts connected to force resilience; diversity, equity and inclusion; equal employment opportunity; suicide prevention; and sexual assault and prevention response initiatives.

The process determined a list of crosscutting risk and protective factors that are actionable and relevant to include in the survey.

Several protective factors associated with positive behaviors include cohesion, connectedness, inclusion, leadership support, morale, transformational leadership, and work-life balance, Zbylut said.

Alternatively, risk factors identified in the DEOCS focus on binge drinking, passive leadership, racial or ethnic harassing behaviors, sexually harassing behaviors, sexism, stress, toxic leadership, or workplace hostility, she added.

The opportunity to participate in a DEOCS is typically limited to a four-week window, she said. Once the survey is closed, the results are generated within 72 hours and sent to the local administrators, the commander, and the commander's supervisor.

To read the full article, visit: <https://go.usa.gov/xsjlw>



## AMC Wellness Challenge Promotes Mental and Physical Health

By Rachel Deloach, Army Materiel Command Public Affairs

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala.—Army Materiel Command headquarters' latest physical activity challenge wrapped up with 102 Soldiers, Civilians, Family members and contractors from the headquarters and AMC's local major subordinate commands virtually walking the Appalachian Trail.

The challenge produced both physical and mental benefits among participants as they worked toward their goal of walking 2,190 miles.

"The physical benefit was to encourage participants to move more and sit less, regardless of one's fitness level," said Valerie Francis, AMC's Health Promotion Program Manager. "The mental benefit was for employees to reconnect since most participants have been teleworking since mid-March with no or few visits. We are social beings and being isolated can take its toll."

Aviation and Missile Command employee Bill Loew, who was spending nine hours a day at his home office, said the wellness challenge was an opportunity to get out and get moving.

"COVID-19 may have confined us to our homes but it's important that we don't allow it to confine our physical activity," he said. "Setting daily physical activity goals throughout these past few months has been important to us in moving and staying healthy."

Loew recruited employees from AMCOM's Transportation branch to join him. His co-worker Alice Williams accepted the challenge.

"I walked as much as 16 miles in one day," said Williams. "Every day I walked was a win for me!"

Loew also asked his wife Lisa, who was looking for an opportunity to add more steps into her walking routine, to join him in the challenge. The



Aviation and Missile Command employee Alice Williams walks the Appalachian Trail virtually in her neighborhood. Williams was among 102 Soldiers, Civilians, Family members and contractors who took the Army Materiel Command Fitness Challenge. (Courtesy photo)

husband-and-wife duo encouraged each other to meet their daily step count and hold each other accountable.

The accountability component was a real motivator, said Francis.

"The American Heart Association stresses the importance of seeking a partner or battle buddy that can help motivate and keep you accountable," she said.

For AMCOM Environmental Engineer Jamie

Chilton, her main motivator was a shocking pre-diabetes diagnosis she received at the start of the pandemic.

"My desire to control my sugar levels and stay healthy were factors that motivated me to stay active and nurture lasting habits," she said. "I also kept in mind that I needed to log steps to contribute to the goal."

Every Monday since the start of the challenge on Oct. 19, 2020 participants were required to log their weekly steps by using the tracking tool on Microsoft Teams.

In addition to accountability, Francis said she shared nutrition and physical activity information to inspire participants to make holistic changes, as well as a weekly motivational quote each week to inspire the team to keep pressing forward.

"Since the team virtually walked the Appalachian Trail, I also provided photos and historical information about the trail," she said.

According to Francis, the themed challenge motivated them to collectively walk the Appalachian Trail in a record time of one week rather than the publicized five weeks. The group decided to see how many times they could walk the trail round-trip which was almost three times total.

After receiving positive feedback on the challenge which ended Nov. 22, Francis said she plans to offer another one in the summer or fall of 2021.

"In the meantime, my focus is organizing wellness, health promotion and resilience classes," said Francis. "I encourage all employees to take advantage of our classes, trainings and initiatives."

## SAAPM Observance Focuses on Rebuilding Trust

assess sexual harassment and sexual assault. Active-duty commanders are required to complete a command climate survey using the new DEOCS V.5.0 no later than March 21, unless they have already completed one within the last 120 days of the requirement. To learn more on DEOCS V.5.0 see page 8.

While sexual assault prevention is a year-round endeavor for ARD and SHARP, during April—designated as Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month by the DoD and civilian community—ARD will put a special emphasis on rebuilding mutual trust between leaders and Soldiers by focusing on the Army's 2021 SAAPM theme of "Building Cohesive Teams through Character, Trust &

Resilience. Protecting Our People Protects Our Mission." The theme emphasizes that upholding the respect and dignity of every team member is the foundation of trust. ARD developed awareness materials based on the SAAPM theme that SHARP program managers, commanders, and leaders can use as they observe SAAPM at their local installations. The materials can be found at the following link: <https://marcomcentral.app.pti.com/Ironmark/ARDmaterials>.

Also, in April, the 2021 National Discussion on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at America's Colleges, Universities, and Service Academies will take place. Currently it is planned for April 8-9. ARD is participating

**DIRECTOR'S COLUMN** Continued from page 2

in coordination of the event, which gathers leading experts in academia to address the elimination of sexual assault and sexual harassment on college and university campuses, including at the service academies. Sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention awareness materials for West Point and ROTC are also available on the ARD Products on Demand site at the link above.

Army leaders have stated people are the Army's top priority. Those are not just words but a way of life for our personnel at ARD every day. Thank you for your continued commitment to our Soldiers.

**Army Strong!**  
James A. Helis, Ph.D.





## Leaders Should Offer Support to Survivors *SUPPORT Continued from page 1*

For the command team, it is important to realize that if a Soldier in their unit starts to exhibit these unhealthy behaviors that are out of the norm, it may be due to a sexual assault or other trauma. Soldiers can get help through services like behavioral health, Military and Family Life Counseling, a chaplain, or Military OneSource.

White said other behavior changes sexual assault victims may express include sadness, depression, anxiety, feeling uncomfortable talking in groups, withdrawing, expressing irritability, and gaining or losing

weight. Victims may also be at increased risk of suicidal ideation. Additionally, men who are sexually assaulted may not express emotion in the same way, but may become more aggressive and easily agitated, White said.

Trauma can also manifest in sleep deprivation, as sexual assault victims may be having nightmares. This can cause them to be late to formation, take naps on the job, or make them unable to concentrate at work resulting in their performance tanking, White said.

Commanders and first sergeant should be aware of

behavior changes that may be a sign of trauma and be ready to engage in a conversation with their Soldiers. If they don't know what to say to their Soldier, they can reach out to behavioral health for help on how to start the conversation.

"It's best to address the issue upfront," White said, while ensuring they remain respectful of the survivor's boundaries. "(Soldiers) appreciate when their commander's and first sergeant's actions reflect honesty and genuine compassion."

## Understanding SHARP Services After a Sexual Assault

By Antonietta Rico, Army Resilience Directorate

The decision to report a sexual assault can be challenging for victims who are already struggling to cope with the trauma of the assault. Anxiety about reporting can be compounded by not knowing what to expect during the process. Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Victim Advocates can help Soldiers understand their options as well as be a source of support to lean on.

Soldiers can reach out to their unit or any SARC or VA to report a sexual assault. SARC's provide immediate coordination for crisis support, including helping Soldiers get medical care and preserve evidence of the assault, and follow up support like connecting them to resources for their healing and recovery such as mental health counseling.

"We will be professional, open to listening, and they will definitely be heard," said Sgt. 1st Class Brandy Jackson-Frazer, a SARC at the U.S. Army NATO Brigade.

### Restricted Vs. Unrestricted

Victims can report a sexual assault to law enforcement, their chain of command, SARC's or VA's. SARC's and VA's can receive a restricted report; reporting to the chain of command or law enforcement first makes the report unrestricted.

An **unrestricted report** serves as an official notice to law enforcement and their chain of command, who will immediately launch an investigation of the assault. SARC's will be on hand to provide advocacy, support, and coordination of resources for victims. If a Soldier wants a VA appointed to them, the VA can go with them to their appointments and be there every step of the way through the investigation and legal process, which can be lengthy.

Sgt. 1st Class Monique Oxenford, a SARC with the 4th Infantry Division Sustainment Brigade, wants Soldiers to know someone is on their team during the process.

"Regardless of how hard it gets, I'm there," Oxenford said.

Reporting only to a SARC or VA (instead of chain of command or law enforcement) provides the option of filing a **restricted report**, which means the victim can access support services (such as medical, legal, and counseling), but law enforcement or their chain of command is not involved and there is no investigation. If they choose to switch their report to unrestricted, they will walk them through the process.

Whether a victim files a restricted or unrestricted report, and even after a legal case is closed, SARC's will ensure Soldiers don't feel alone.

"My main concern is the victim's safety...letting them know that I am available, I am present to assist them," said Jackson-Frazer, "I'll be there as a resource to support them on the road to recovery—as they transition from victims to survivors."

## REPORTING A SEXUAL ASSAULT

1. Soldier contacts Sexual Assault Response Coordinator or Victim Advocate.
2. SARC/VA provides crisis intervention, explains reporting options, and provides resources available.

### UNRESTRICTED

Will officially notify chain of command and law enforcement and begin an investigation. It gives a victim access to all available support services:

- Military Law Enforcement is notified
- SARC or VA is notified, and they provide crisis intervention, explain resources available and give support
- Medical Care, Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (to preserve evidence) and Mental Health/Counseling Services.
- Legal Services, including access to a Special Victims' Counsel and Victim Witness Liaison
- Victim can request Military Protective Order and/or Expedited Transfer
- SARC/VA will continue to provide, as long as needed, ongoing support and advocacy services and resources to victim
- Commander must provide victim regular updates on status of the legal case

\*To make an unrestricted report contact a SARC, VA, your chain of command or law enforcement.

### RESTRICTED

Confidential report that does not involve chain of command, law enforcement, nor an investigation. It allows victims access to the following support services:

- Medical Care, Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (to preserve evidence) and Mental Health/Counseling Services
- Legal Services, including access to a Special Victims' Counsel
- SARC will preserve confidentiality while reporting non-personally identifying information to victim's commander
- SARC/VA will continue to provide, as long as needed, ongoing support and advocacy services and resources to victim
- Victim can use the CATCH program database anonymously to identify if the perpetrator may have assaulted anyone else previously
- Can switch to an unrestricted report at any time

\*A restricted report can only be made to a SARC or VA. If a victim contacts law enforcement or their chain of command first, only the unrestricted reporting option is available to them.

If you are not ready to talk to a SARC or VA, the DoD Safe Helpline provides anonymous and confidential support 24/7. Call 877-995-5247 or go to [www.safehelpline.org](http://www.safehelpline.org)

To learn more visit [www.armyresilience.army.mil/SHARP](http://www.armyresilience.army.mil/SHARP)

(Source: [www.sapr.mil](http://www.sapr.mil), Sexual Assault Response Report Flow Chart)



## People First: New Task Force Seeks Army-Wide Changes

By Devon Suits, Army News Service



Capt. Joseph Wishart, a company commander assigned to 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, provides feedback following the completion of an infantry squad situational training exercise at Fort Carson, Colo., June 3, 2020. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Daniel Parker)

WASHINGTON—Leaders of the new People First Task Force said Dec. 16 they are committed to restoring an Army-wide culture of dignity and respect as they work to aggressively address the results of an independent report.

Army senior leaders recently established the PFTF to respond to the list of findings and recommendations within the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee report released Dec. 8.

Lt. Gen. Gary M. Brito, deputy chief of staff, G-1; Diane M. Randon, assistant deputy chief of staff, G-2; and Sgt. Maj. Julie A.M. Guerra, deputy chief of staff, G-2 sergeant major, will serve as the tri-chairs.

The task force has “three tri-chairs who have committed their lives to this institution,” Randon said. As a member of the senior executive service, Randon has 35 combined years of federal service and a record

of leadership expertise pertaining to Army personnel, installations and quality of life issues.

“We are all team members and leaders,” Randon added. “We are going to actively and aggressively address these findings and recommendations ... that will change the trajectory of the Army’s culture.”

### Plan of action

The PFTF will develop a plan of action to address the report’s findings as they reassess current policy and programs.

Recommendations will then be submitted to Army senior leaders for review and implementation as quickly as possible.

To read the full article, visit <https://www.army.mil/article/241878/people-first-new-task-force-seeks-army-wide-changes>

## Despite Prevalence, CBD Still Illegal for DoD Members

By Patrick Buffett, USAG Fort Lee Public Affairs Office

FORT LEE, Va.—“Regardless of its widespread availability, it’s a federally prohibited substance and, therefore, illegal within the DoD workforce,” stated Katina Oates, the Fort Lee, Virginia, Army Substance Abuse Program manager.

Her remark is in reference to products containing cannabidiol extract, or CBD, which have exploded in popularity as a result of aggressive civilian advertising that touts their benefits as pain relievers, stress reducers, depression inhibitors and more.

“CBD is everywhere,” a recently released Army News article pointed out. “You would be hard-pressed to enter any pharmacy, mega-mart or health food store and not find it on the shelves. CBD can even be purchased online from the comfort of your couch.”

Hemp oil and cannabidiol are one and the same. The array of delivery methods include, but are not limited to, gummy chews, cigarettes and vape pens, oils and skin creams, and sleep medications. CBD is frequently used in personal care treatments at nail salons and by some massage therapists.

“Military members should not confuse the prevalence of such products with their legality,” Oates said. “Soldiers are prohibited from using hemp products of any sort, whether or not they have been legalized in certain jurisdictions.”

Due to CBD being both unregulated and often containing small amounts of THC, the DoD still considers it to be an “illicit drug” and its use by service members and government civilians is unauthorized, the Army News article warned.

An excerpt from Army Regulation 600-85, dated July 23, 2020, reads as follows: “The use of products made or derived from hemp (as defined in 7 USC. 1639o) ... regardless of the product’s THC concentration, claimed or actual, and regardless of whether such product may lawfully be bought, sold and used under the law

To read the full article, visit <https://www.army.mil/article/242993/despite-prevalence-cbd-still-illegal-for-dod-members>.

## ARD Introduces New Outreach Materials for SHARP and Suicide Prevention Program

By Maria D. James, Army Resilience Directorate

The Army Resilience Directorate recently released new awareness and prevention materials for the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) program and Suicide Prevention Program (SP2). The awareness materials, available in both print and digital format, provide information and resources for sexual assault and suicide prevention.

The new SHARP materials, developed specifically for ROTC and West Point cadets, aim to help prevent sexual harassment and sexual assaults before they occur by providing information to promote a climate that respects the dignity of every member of the Army Family. Resources include an overview of the sexual harassment and sexual assault continuum of harm, steps for bystander intervention, and how to support survivors, as well as contact information for the

DoD Safe Helpline and the Army Resilience Directorate website.

The SP2 awareness materials provide information to help build a culture of resilience with engaged leadership that encourages help-seeking behavior and intervention. Messaging emphasizes that strength and support can be found in those at your side, such as battle buddies, friends, and Family members. Resources include information such as learning warning signs, responding to a Soldier in crisis, steps to developing a safety plan, growing connectedness, and how to practice self-care. The materials, including posters, brochures, and banners, can be placed in unit day rooms, gyms, or other high-traffic areas or used as handouts for outreach engagements. The digital downloads can be used in unit newsletters, social media, or in other command information products.



To order or download the awareness materials, register for a free ARD Products on Demand site account here: <https://marcomcentral.app.pti.com/Ironmark/ARDmaterials>. Once inside, find the SHARP and SP2 materials under ‘This is Our Army.’



# ARMY RESILIENCE

THE ARMY RESILIENCE DIRECTORATE NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021

## HAIL AND FAREWELL

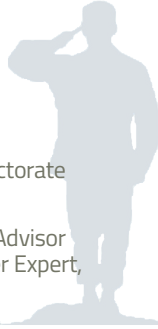
We invite the Army Resilience Directorate community to join us in welcoming new members to ARD headquarters. Congratulations to current members on taking new positions, and a fond farewell to outgoing members departing the Directorate.

### Hail

- Dr. Melinda Key-Roberts, Research Psychologist, Science and Research
- Lt. Col. Sumesh Sagar, Systems Branch Chief, Assessments Division
- Sgt. 1st Class Mary Wright, Army Resilience Directorate

### Farewell

- Sgt. Maj. Gabriel D. Harvey, ARD Senior Enlisted Advisor
- Master Sgt. Christopher Windless, Subject Matter Expert, SHARP Division



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### APRIL

#### Human Performance & Biosystems Summit

April 7-8: Dr. James A. Helis, ARD Director, is scheduled to participate in a panel discussion on April 7. This year's summit will feature the latest updates and innovations in the areas of personalized assessment, education, and training, system interfaces and cognitive processes, and protection, sustainment, and warfighter performance.

**Location:** Alexandria, Va. **Learn more:** <http://humanperformance.dsigroup.org/>

#### AUSA Thought Leaders Webinar

April 8: Dr. James A. Helis, ARD Director, will present during the Association of the United States Army's Thought Leaders April webinar. The series hosts military Thought Leaders to educate the public on critical issues affecting land forces and strategy.

**Location:** Online **Learn more:** <https://www.ausa.org/events/thought-leaders-helis>

#### AUSA Army Real Talk Podcast

April 12: Sgt. Maj. Sharita N. Onugha, ARD's senior enlisted advisor, will appear on the AUSA Army Real Talk podcast, which aims to support the Army community by reaching out to the younger generation of Soldiers, leaders, and Family members. The segment will air May 10.

**Location:** Online **Learn more:** <https://www.ausa.org/our-podcasts>

## NEW SAAPM 2021 MATERIALS

ARD has SAAPM 2021 outreach materials available for download to use during your installation's observance.



Visit the ARD Products on Demand website today:  
<https://marcomcentral.app.pti.com/Ironmark/ARDMaterials>

## SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

### TOP FACEBOOK POST



Reach: 13.4K

### Follow @ArmyResilience

Please coordinate with your Public Affairs Office to share or retweet @ArmyResilience content on Command or Installation Facebook and Twitter platforms. Contact Chet Curtis for questions regarding ARD social media at [chester.r.curtis2.civ@mail.mil](mailto:chester.r.curtis2.civ@mail.mil).

### TOP TWEET



Impressions: 30.4K

## Army Resilience Directorate

ARDCOMMUNITYLINK

March 1, 2021. Volume 5, Issue 1

The ARD Community Link newsletter is an authorized bi-monthly publication produced by the Army Resilience Directorate for the Army community. The contents of the ARD Community Link are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army. The editorial content of the ARD Community Link is the responsibility of the Communications, Outreach & Leadership Engagement branch at ARD. For questions, or to subscribe or submit articles and photographs to ARD Community Link, please contact the editor at [antonietta.rico.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:antonietta.rico.ctr@mail.mil). This publication is available for download at: <https://www.dvidshub.net/publication/1102/r2-community-link-newsletter>

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