



The Shield

October 2021
Newsletter Vol. 3
29th Inf. Div.
TF Spartan

29th ID Resiliency Program Helps Soldiers Bring Deployment Into Focus

Story by Staff Sgt. Matt Lyman
Task Force Spartan Public Affairs

Self-awareness, self-regulation, optimism, mental agility, strengths of character and connection are all skills brought into application through the U.S. Army Master Resilience Training (MRT) program.

Staff Sgt. Al-Qiyamah Jibril, master resilient trainer, 29th Infantry Division, Task Force Spartan (TFS), guided Soldiers, from multiple units, to manifest these skills during their deployment at Joint Training Center (JTC), Jordan, Sept. 18.

"MRT provides Soldiers with competencies to cope with deployment stress, disappointments and challenges. Think of MRT, as a 'mental PMCS toolbox,' a Soldier can refer to the competencies learned and practiced," said Jibril. PMCS stands for "preventive maintenance checks and services," for equipment and is used to ensure equipment is ready or mission accomplishments.

Staff Sgt. Christina McDermott, religious affairs specialist, Spc. Debby Carmona, signal system support specialist, and Sgt. Nicole Brant, religious affairs specialist, assisted Jibril by demonstrating interactions with family and fellow Soldiers to show them how to implement resilience skills into common, every day settings.

The Army defines resilience as, "the ability to persevere, adapt, and grow in dynamic or stressful environments." Stress is a scientific element in as much as there is science to identify and mitigate its effects. Applied resilience is where science meets the art, and Soldiers are presented ways to reduce stressors in all aspects of their lives. Frequent resilience training also empowers Soldiers to identify stressors in their fellow Soldiers and offer them tools to



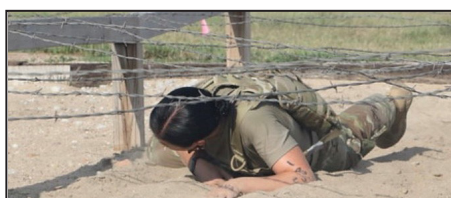
Task Force Spartan Soldiers provide resilience support to Soldiers currently deployed to Joint Training Center, Jordan, Sept. 18, 2021. A resilient force is an effective force and an effective force is composed of Soldiers who are internally motivated, committed to the Army values and recognize the individual Soldier is the most valuable asset in the U.S. Army. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Matt Lyman)

increase their own resilience. A resilient force is an effective force, and an effective force is made of Soldiers who are self-motivated, committed to the Army values and who recognize the individual Soldier is the most valuable asset in the U.S. Army.

"As leaders, we continually foster resiliency in our Soldiers

See "MRT," page 2

What's Inside ...



The Shield

TASK FORCE SPARTAN

Commanding General
Maj. Gen. John Rhodes

Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Maj. Daryl Plude

Public Affairs Officer
Maj. Scott Drugo

Deputy Public Affairs Officer
Capt. Tim Savidge

Division Public Affairs Team

Master Sgt. Brock Jones
Staff Sgt. Matt Lyman
Staff Sgt. Marc Heaton
Sgt. Marc Loi

318-480-7900
Camp Arifjan, Kuwait
APO AE 09306

The Shield is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents herein are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government or the Department of the Army. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the PA Officer.



Lt. Col. Shawn Vergott, Task Force Spartan information technology director, pins the "blue-and-gray" 29th Infantry Division patch on a Soldier's uniform during a patching and promotion ceremony Sept. 30, on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

Worn under the American flag on a Soldier's uniform, the commonly-called "combat patch" is worn to signify a Soldier's time spent in Department of Defense-designated imminent danger areas.

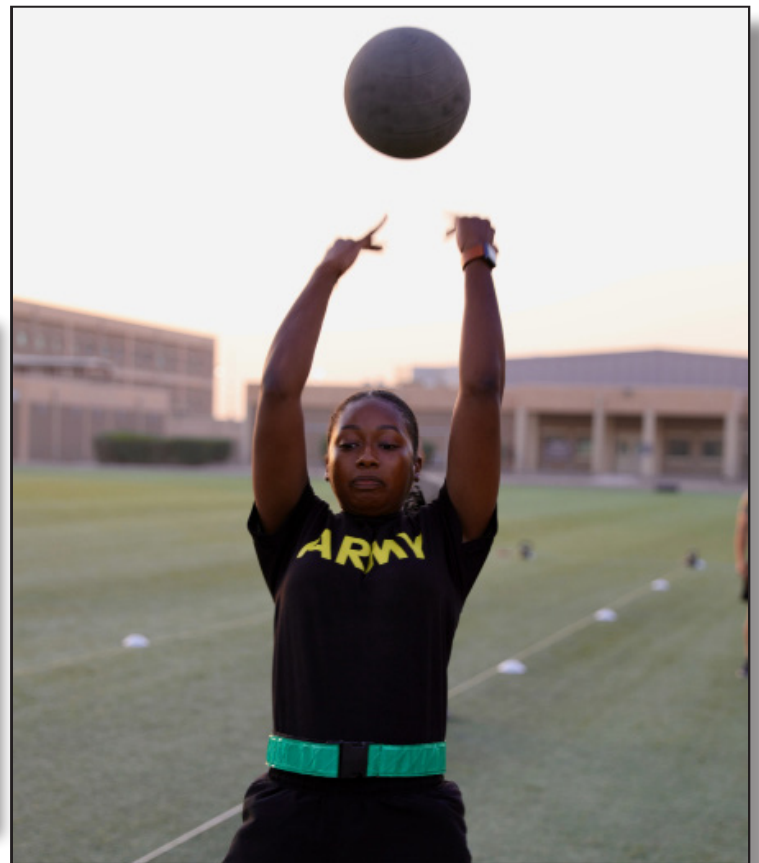
For more photos, follow Task Force Spartan on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram under @TFSpartan. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Marc Loi)

From "MRT," page 1

because we don't know what or when the 'weight' stress, challenge or disappointment will occur. As I say, the 'weight' is going to come. The MRT 'mental PMCS' readies us for the 'weight,'" said Jibril.

TFS Soldiers assigned to Jordan are deployed in support of U.S. Army Central (ARCENT). Their daily battle rhythm can be stressful as they are away from loved ones. Many Soldiers are on their first deployment and some are still new to the Army. Resilience is for every Soldier and includes skills each can do to increase their personal resilience and assist other Soldiers to increase theirs.

TFS is the headquarters element for Operation Spartan Shield (OSS). OSS is the U.S. effort to strengthen defense relationships, build partner capacity, and when necessary, execute contingency plans within the Southwest Asia area of responsibility. Soldiers assigned to the Fort Belvoir, Virginia-based 29th ID make up the headquarters staff for Task Force Spartan, support ARCENT, and coordinate the operational efforts of subordinate units within the ARCENT area of responsibility.



A 29th Infantry Division Soldier assigned to Task Force Spartan performs the Standing Power Throw (SPT) during the Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT). SPT is one of six events in the new ACFT Soldiers will test for record. Despite the high deployment operation tempo, 29th ID Soldiers have found the time to take diagnostic tests to gauge their fitness level prior to taking the test for record. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Marc Heaton)

Task Force Spartan Soldier wins prestigious award, speaks on heritage, culture

Story by Sgt. Marc Loi

Task Force Spartan Public Affairs

A 29th Infantry Division Soldier deployed to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Spartan Shield was named a 2021 Latina Style Distinguished Military Service winner.

Maj. Sandra Wright, a division engineer, was one of three Soldiers to receive the award. The Virginia native was honored in a virtual ceremony Sept. 23. The award ceremony took place during Hispanic Heritage Month, which highlights the accomplishments and achievements of Hispanic-Americans.

For Wright, being Latina and American allows her to be at her most optimal for the Army. While she can enjoy the benefits of being American that she otherwise wouldn't have gotten were she not, Wright also gives back because of her background. Born to Argentinian parents, Wright said she grew up learning certain values and

"I get to celebrate the 4th of July and the 9th of July (Argentina's Independence Day.) It also means ... my family in South America cheering me on and excited to see me in uniform and working hard for the U.S." Maj. Sandra Wright, Task Force Spartan Division engineer.



Maj. Sandra Wright, an engineer assigned to 29th Infantry Division, performs the low-crawl during a fitness event. Aside from physical fitness, Wright said she also enjoys sharing her culture and heritage with other Soldiers. (Courtesy photo)

practices that she brought with her into the Army, which helped her connect with more people to build a stronger team.

"My mother taught me that you don't show up empty-handed," Wright said. "So, I would bring snacks to every command and staff meeting I had with my previous units."

Because sharing food is an intimate act, doing so can also bring Soldiers closer together and introduce others to cultures they otherwise wouldn't have been exposed to. As an example, Wright said a Soldier from her previous unit once brought pupusas – the Salvadoran flatbread filled with different meats and spices – to a battle assembly to share with other Soldiers.

"Many Soldiers had no idea what they were," Wright said. "But everyone dug in and loved them. Every weekend, they would ask when they would get pupusas. We [all] learn from one an-



Maj. Sandra Wright

other's rich cultural backgrounds."

Besides food, language also helps Wright provide more impact as a Soldier. On a recent mission in El Salvador to build a school, Wright and other Spanish-speaking Soldiers also served as translators when there weren't enough to go around.

"Everyone thought it was great that three of my Soldiers and I could speak Spanish and engage Salvadoran engineers, material vendors, and locals on that trip," Wright said.

Despite her forward-facing presence, Wright said she never thought of herself a role-model.

"I am not ready to own that title yet, but I am working to be worthy of it one day," Wright said.

Still, Wright said she embraces the duality of her heritage as a Latina and an American Soldier.

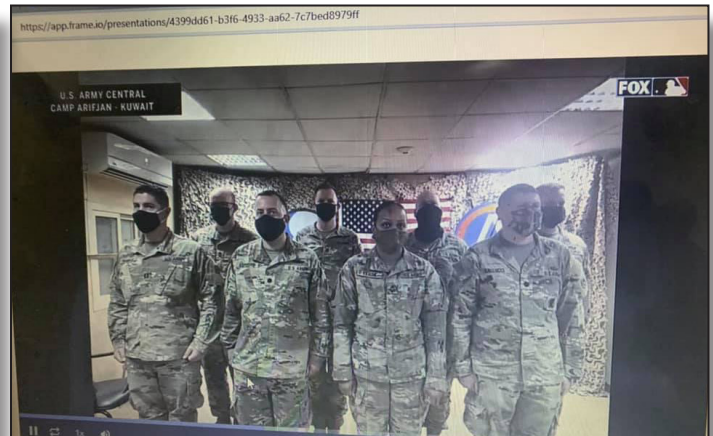
"I get to celebrate the 4th of July and the 9th of July (Argentina's Independence Day)," she said. "It also means I have a huge family in South America cheering me on throughout my career and excited to see me in uniform and working hard for the U.S., because they feel I'm representing my strong upbringing here."



Left: A perplexed camel looks on as Staff Sgt. Marc Heaton, Task Force Spartan public affairs non-commissioned officer, poses for a photo near Camp Buehring, Kuwait. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Tim Savidge)

Below: Soldiers assigned to Task Force Spartan stand at attention during the playing of the National Anthem at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, prior to the Mets-Yankees game Sept. 11, 2021. The ceremony was in honor of first responders and servicemembers who provided support to New York City on and since September 11, 2001. The ceremony, along with the footage of 29th Infantry Division Soldiers standing at attention during the ceremony, were broadcast on Fox Sports. (Courtesy photo)

Below left: Soldiers assigned to Task Force Spartan share tea with their Kuwaiti counterparts prior to a planning meeting in Kuwait City recently. (Courtesy photo)



29th ID Promotions

Please congratulate the following Soldiers on their promotion.

- Maj. Daniel Tarrant
- Capt. Benjamin Stewart
- Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Crotty
- Spc. Luther Lee
- Spc. Conner Walz
- Spc. Louise Murray
- Spc. Jeremy Ghannoum

29th Infantry Division leaders look on during the commemoration ceremony honoring victims and first responders of the deadliest attacks on American soil Sept. 11 at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Marc Heaton)

Bright Star 21



American servicemembers and those of eight other nations participate in training exercise Bright Star 2021 in Egypt. Bright Star is a series of military training exercises hosted in Egypt in cooperation with the U.S. every two years. It was last held in 2018, as the training was canceled in 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The first Bright Star took place in 1981 and has since taken place nearly every two years.

In all, more than 200 Task Force Spartan Soldiers participated in the exercise.



(U.S. Army photos by Master Sgt. Nikki Glanton and Spc. Amber Cobena)