

Veterans Day observed across Virginia and overseas

Virginia National Guard personnel honored the service and sacrifice of the men and women of the Armed Forces at ceremonies across Virginia as well as overseas Nov. 11, 2021, in honor of Veterans Day.

Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, delivered remarks during the Commonwealth's Veterans Day Ceremony at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, Virginia, and Sgt. Samuel Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance. Johnson is assigned to Maneuver Training Center Fort Pickett and represented the VNG at the Region II Best Warrior Competition.

"The last 24 months have underscored how important today is for a multitude of reasons one of which is to recognize the great things our men and women in uniform do for us," Williams said. "The utilization of the VNG from 2019 to today has been extraordinary. Our Soldiers, Airmen and Defense Force personnel have been called forward at a rate that we haven't seen since World War II supporting our state and our nation in a wide array of operations working with multiple state and federal partner agencies to help keep our fellow citizens safe."

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xe9G6>



Sgt. Samuel Johnson, the Virginia Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, leads the pledge of allegiance at the Commonwealth's Veterans Day Ceremony Nov. 11, 2021, at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, Virginia.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

New historic artifacts in place at VNG headquarters

Thanks to the hard work of the Virginia National Guard History Program and a group of volunteers, the VNG Sergeant Bob Slaughter Headquarters is home to several new historic artifacts on permanent display.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xe97N>

29th ID Soldiers' resilience proves useful in escort mission

With just a bit more information than the fictitious Rangers who boarded a plane with "mission undetermined, destination unknown," a handful of Soldiers from Task Force Freedom and the 29th Infantry Division showed the same grit and determination when they accepted their mission during Operation Allies Refuge.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xe97Q>

Named after Gen. Colin Powell, a VNG Soldier mourns his passing

The young medic who bears a general's name was just wrapping up his day when news broke that the man for whom he was named had died. His first thought was that life was too short.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xe97m>

CSM Smith's Foxhole Report – 8th Edition

Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Smith, the Virginia Army National Guard State Command Sergeant Major, talks about supporting federal mobilizations, tips for avoiding pay problems and recognizes senior NCOs in his latest update.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xe97d>

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116th Infantry Regiment holds 53rd annual muster

Veterans of the 116th Infantry Regiment and Soldiers of the Virginia Army National Guard's Staunton-based 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team gathered to remember the unit's history and enjoy fellowship at the 53rd annual muster Nov. 13, 2021, in Staunton, Virginia. This year's theme was "Remembering Our History: The Global War on Terrorism & Honoring Our Deploying Soldiers."

Maj. Gen. John M. Epperly, Deputy Commanding General, Army Futures Command, was the keynote speaker, and Col. Christopher J. Samulski, commander of the 116th IBCT, provided an update on the past year for the brigade.

Retired Brig. Gen. Charles B. Faulconer, Jr., Honorary Colonel of the Regiment, announced the Bedford-based Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th IBCT, as the recipient of the 116th Regiment Superior Unit Award. Samulski and Command Sgt. Maj. Irving N. Reed, Jr., presented the award to Capt. Daniel K. Fida and 1st Sgt. Thomas E. Barrett, the Alpha Company command team.

"The brigade has continued to distinguish itself across the formation as the premier fighting force in the Army as well as a vital and necessary asset for the governor, citizens of Virginia and even our nation's capital," Samulski said in his Report of the Brigade Commander.

"I want to begin by thanking our Soldiers and families that have endured, on a moment's notice, the call to support and defend our citizens here in our own towns and state," Samulski said. "In the last year, the brigade has mobilized to protect and serve due to civil disturbances in Lynchburg, Richmond and Louisville, Kentucky. Over 1,000 of our troops from multiple battalions have conducted civil support missions across the two states that comprise this brigade."

Samulski said while the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the globe, the brigade was notified of the following federal active duty mobilizations:

- Virginia and Kentucky National Guard Soldiers assigned to Lynchburg-based 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team are scheduled to mobilize later this month as Task Force Red Dragon to provide a security force in support of Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa.

- Soldiers assigned to the Norfolk-based 1st Battalion, 111th Field Artillery Regiment, 116th IBCT will deploy to the Central Command Area of Responsibility to provide personnel and site protection using the Counter-Rocket, Artillery and Mortar System.

- Soldiers assigned to the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Headquarters will mobilize for federal active duty in early January 2022 to take responsibility for the NATO-led Kosovo Force Regional Command-East.

"As we began preparing for these missions, I would be remiss to not remind everyone of the month-long mobilization to our nation's capital in which this brigade was not only called upon but responded to our nation's call within four hours and was on the grounds of the Capitol that evening," Samulski said. "The



The Bedford-based Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, receives the 116th Regiment Superior Unit Award during the 116th's 53rd annual regimental muster Nov. 13, 2021, in Staunton, Virginia.

brigade was tasked as the lead brigade for the Task Force Capitol Grounds in command of 9000 Soldiers and 22 battalions over 14 different states. Our Soldiers endured cold, wet conditions for the month of January and February to ensure our peaceful exchange of administration continue just as we have done over the last 240 years."

Epperly, a former commander of the 116th IBCT and 29th Infantry Division, said in his keynote address the brigade's mobilizations all over the world were meant to ensure our enemies would never again attack our homeland.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/x97B>

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