

## Fallen service members honored at Memorial Day events

Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen and members of the Virginia Defense Force took part in Memorial Day observations across Virginia as well as overseas May 30, 2022.

“Memorial Day offers us a purposeful opportunity express our gratitude and remember the dedication and courage of those men and women who paid the ultimate price in service to our country defending the ideals of freedom,” Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, wrote in his Memorial Day message. “As we remember those we have lost, we can honor their memory and pay tribute to their sacrifice by reaffirming our commitment to selfless service to both commonwealth and country.”

At the Commonwealth’s Memorial Day Ceremony in Richmond, Virginia, Williams delivered remarks and laid a wreath at the Shrine of Memory honoring VNG Soldiers and Airmen along with Senior Master Sgt. Roberto Mercado. Maj. Brett Johnson, VNG chaplain, gave the invocation and benediction, Spc. Adam Marcus led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mercado sang the national anthem. Members of the Virginia Defense Force volunteered their time to assist with access control for the ceremony.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/19973>



Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams and Senior Master Sgt. Roberto Mercado lay a wreath at the Shrine of Memory at the Virginia War Memorial during the Commonwealth’s 66th Annual Memorial Day Ceremony May 30, 2022, in Richmond, Virginia.

### Virginia National Guard News Headlines

#### VNG Soldiers take aim in marksmanship competition

Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers competed in the Excellence in Competition Pistol and Rifle Matches May 21-22, 2022, at Fort Pickett, Virginia. More than 40 service members participated in the event in the hopes of earning the Bronze EIC badge, awarded to the top 10% of shooters.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/19977>

#### 229th BEB, RRB Soldiers represent VNG at Region II Best Warrior

Two Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers competed for the titles of Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year during the Region II Best Warrior Competition May 17 - 20, 2022, at Camp Dawson, West Virginia.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/19978>

#### VNG’s first Filipino battery commander continues family military legacy

Capt. Samuel Ignacio is the first Filipino American to serve as a battery commander in the Virginia National Guard’s 1st Battalion, 111th Field Artillery Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/19979>

#### Food, family key to culture for VNG Soldier

When Spc. Michael Delos Trinos, a Virginia National Guard Soldier assigned to the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division, thinks about his Filipino heritage, what comes to mind first is the food and the importance of family.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/19980>

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#### Va. Defense Force

<http://vdf.virginia.gov/joinvdf/>

### Join the Virginia National Guard Alumni Network

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# VDF conducts statewide hurricane readiness exercise

Members of the Virginia Defense Force's 1st Regiment conducted the "Spring Winds 22" training exercise May 14, 2022, at multiple locations across Virginia to test their incident management assistance, access control and interoperable communication support capabilities. The exercise simulated a severe hurricane and how the VDF would support the Virginia National Guard's role as a member of the state multi-agency response team.

"The Virginia Defense Force continues to demonstrate why they are such an important part of the Virginia National Guard's domestic response capabilities," said Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia. "This exercise is the latest example of VDF leaders making readiness a priority to be sure they are ready to provide the capabilities we might need during a severe weather situation. In addition to ensuring their systems are fully functional, the exercise also helped developed VDF junior leaders, and that sets up the organization for future success and allows opportunities for growth. It is all even much more impressive when you understand they all volunteered their time to take part in the training, and that spirit of selfless service is part of what makes the VDF such a great organization. We owe them a special thanks for everything they do."

The VDF's 11th Signal Battalion, 1st Regiment operated mobile communication platforms in Warrenton and Lynchburg and high frequency radio, access control and incident management assistance teams in Fairfax, Winchester and Virginia Beach. Personnel from 31st Cyber Battalion, 1st Regiment provided role players to add realism to the training scenario, and the 1st Regiment and VDF Force Headquarters Training and Operations Sections provided exercise control.

The exercise successfully tested the VDF's communication systems including high-frequency radio voice and data as well as the Virginia Statewide Agencies Radio System and the web-based Web Emergency Operations Center, or WebEOC, used to managed incidents online at the state level.

In addition to testing systems, the exercise itself was a learning experience.

"One goal was to become more familiar with scenario-based exercises, because we have established 'Spring Winds' as our annual hurricane scenario exercise, and 'Highland Guardian' as our annual winter storm scenario exercise," explained Col. (Va.) Robin Phillips, commander of 1st Regiment. "Knowing how to handle events that may arise in an emergency is just as important as having tactical and technical proficiency in communications."

The exercise also provided an opportunity for troops from the cyber battalion to take part in the exercise by running the scenario and providing role players, Phillips said.

The exercise also was a chance for younger VDF leaders to gain valuable experience.

"This was an excellent opportunity for our company grade leaders to test their operational skills, and they knocked it out of the park." Phillips said. "This gives me a lot of confidence that



**Members of the Virginia Defense Force's 1st Regiment conduct the Spring Winds 22 training exercise May 14, 2022, in Fairfax, Virginia.**

the VDF will continue to perform at a high level for many years to come."

Phillips recognized Capt. (Va.) Douglas Easton and 2nd Lt. (Va.) Patrick McCaul from the 1st Regiment operations and training section for planning and developing the scenario along with 1st Lt. (Va.) Michael Perini, the training officer in charge from the VDF Force Headquarters G3 Operations and Training Section. All three served as the exercise officers in charge.

Perini said the exercise strengthened the knowledge and understanding of emergency management procedures and the role that the VDF plays in the support of Virginia National Guard missions.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/19976>

## MORE ON THE WEB

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**VNG's newest Warrant Officers recognized**

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**Photos: VNG, VDF join Governor's bill signing ceremony**

<https://ngpa.us/19819/>

**Photos: VNG celebrates AAPI Heritage**

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**Photos: DMA employees honored at annual luncheon**

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