

# VaARNG recruiters nab top regional spots

The Virginia Army National Guard's top recruiters traveled to Bethany Beach, Delaware, Nov. 8-10, 2022, for an opportunity to be named top among their regional peers. At the conclusion of Region II's Strength Maintenance Advisory Group Conference, Staff Sgt. Sydney Mapp was named the region's top recruiting noncommissioned officer, or Director's 54; Master Sgt. Thomas L. Clarke Jr. was named the region's top section chief, or Expert 7; and Staff Sgt. DeAndre McCall was named runner up for the region's top rookie.

"Year after year, our Virginia recruiters continue to compete and represent the professionalism of the NCO Corps and they always exceed the standard," said Lt. Col. Scott Nivens, commander of the Virginia Army National Guard's Recruiting and Retention Battalion. "These boards are super important to not only award the most talented of the recruiting NCO Corps, but also to hone the skills and traditions that keep the NCO Corps the 'backbone of the Army' for all future NCOs."

At the SMAG II Conference, top NCOs from six states and the District of Columbia came together to be named best in the region.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22641>



Leaders from the Virginia Army National Guard's Recruiting and Retention Battalion stand alongside Virginia's top recruiters at Region II's Strength Maintenance Advisory Group Conference Nov. 9, 2022, in Bethany Beach, Delaware.

## Virginia National Guard News Headlines

### Veterans Day observed across Virginia

Virginia National Guard personnel honored the service and sacrifice of the men and women of the armed forces at ceremonies across Virginia Nov. 11, 2022, in honor of Veterans Day.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22643>

### Red Dragon conference room named for D-Day veteran

The Virginia National Guard's Lynchburg-based 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team dedicated the command conference room in their armory to Col. Thomas S. Dallas Sr. Nov. 10, 2022. Dallas was the battalion executive officer during the June 6, 1944, D-Day landing.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22644>

### Behind the scenes: MTC Range Ops staff keeps Fort Pickett humming

It takes a considerable amount of work to ensure all of the various training events for the vast array of units and agencies that train on MTC are conducted in a safe manner and that work is the mission of Range Operations.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22645>

### AG recognizes Fort Pickett ASP staff for operations improvements

Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, visited with and commended Virginia National Guard Soldiers assigned to the Ammunition Supply Point Oct. 20, 2022, at Maneuver Training Center Fort Pickett, Virginia.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22646>

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

## Join the Virginia National Guard Alumni Network

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# 116th IBCT HQs officially ends NATO mission in Kosovo

The Virginia National Guard's 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Headquarters officially ended their mission as Task Force Saint Lo and the mission command headquarters for NATO Kosovo Force Regional Command-East with a transfer of authority with the Indiana National Guard's 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Nov. 2, 2022, at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

NATO KFOR troops conduct peace support operations contributing to a safe and secure environment for all people in Kosovo while healthy political dialogue continues between Kosovo and Serbia.

During the ceremony, the 116th IBCT cased their unit colors, signifying the end of their nine-month mission in Kosovo. The 76th IBCT, mobilized as Task Force Nighthawk, then unfurled their unit's colors, representing the beginning of their support of KFOR's mission. The 116th's rotation was the 30th of U.S. military forces based at Camp Bondsteel.

The KFOR commander, Maj. Gen. Angelo Ristuccia, thanked Col. Christopher Samulski, outgoing RC-E commander, for his commitment and duty to KFOR.

"Your actions and contributions have been invaluable and will have lasting impacts for years to come," said Ristuccia.

As he said farewell to KFOR, Samulski spoke about the friendships the 116th IBCT had formed during their time in Kosovo and how their combined efforts had laid the foundation of future successes.

"To our partners, it was our pleasure to work with some of the finest soldiers from all over Europe," Samulski said.

Samulski closed his speech thanking the people of Kosovo for sharing their culture, food and views with the team.

"Everyday when I met people throughout Kosovo, I was always greeted with a smile and kind word," said Samulski. "We admire your work ethic; we felt your love and appreciation and hopefully we made some meaningful friendships that will continue into the future. Thank you for being wonderful hosts."

As the multi-national brigade assigned to RC-E, Task Force Saint Lo commanded more than 1,000 personnel from 10 different nations to maintain a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement throughout Kosovo. The leaders and staff planned and executed three separate named operations to decrease tensions related to Serbian elections, License Plate Reciprocity, and securing energy infrastructure.

The brigade was also responsible for working with the Serbian armed forces to ensure all parties were in compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of 1999 and the Military Technical Agreement. The focus of RC-East was to provide the opportunity to resolve tensions in the Balkans through political dialogue focused on normalizing relations between Serbia and Kosovo.

They planned and participated in multinational training events with the German contingencies to earn the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge and Schützenschnur and with the Danish contingencies to participate in the DANCON march. They also



**Col. Christopher Samulski and Command Sgt. Maj. Irving Reed Jr., the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team command team, case their organizational colors and officially end their mission during a transfer of authority ceremony Nov. 2, 2022, at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.**

hosted the U.S. marksmanship badges for two NATO nations.

Senior leaders took part in more than 70 engagements with the Kosovo Police, local mayors and Serbian armed forces. The Civil-Military Cooperation section executed 10 projects valued at more than 70,000 euros.

Each unit in RC-E supported the safety, security and freedom of movement for all the communities in Kosovo in accordance with KFOR's mandate as per UNSCR 1244 of 1999.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22642>

## MORE ON THE WEB

**Photos: Gloucester HS JROTC tours VNG aviation facility**

<https://ngpa.us/22576/>

**Photos: Va. Army National Guard selects top recruiters**

<https://ngpa.us/22539/>

**Photos: 276th Engineers conducts busy drill weekend**

<https://ngpa.us/22540/>

**Read more about the 116th IBCT**

<https://ngpa.us/22647/>

**Read more about the VaARNG RRB**

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