

# Governor commends VNG after year busy with mobilizations

Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin and the First Lady of Virginia Suzanne S. Youngkin hosted a reception for Virginia National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and their families Dec. 4, 2022, at Virginia's Executive Mansion in Richmond, Virginia, to recognize the families of those personnel who are currently on federal active duty deployments. The governor made remarks during the event, thanking not just those serving, but the families who support them.

"To have a son or a daughter or a husband or wife, mom or dad, deployed at this time of year is a very difficult thing," said Youngkin. "But it's not just the men and women who serve, but it is their families, the heroes behind the scenes, the heroes who build a house on rock as opposed to on sand. So I want to thank all of you for the amazing sacrifices that you make."

Youngkin also recognized the historic number of VNG Soldiers and Airmen who served on federal active duty in the last year.

"As we look back on this year, we see over 2,000 brave men and women deployed around the world, in the Middle East, in Africa and in Kosovo, answering the call that America needs us," he said. "And when America needs us, Virginians show up."

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/23130>



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## Virginia National Guard News Headlines

### Youngkin, Crenshaw tour Fort Pickett, visit DMA state employees

Virginia National Guard senior leaders hosted Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin and retired Maj. Gen. Craig Crenshaw, the Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, Dec. 8, 2022, for an overview and tour of Maneuver Training Center Fort Pickett, Virginia.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/23132>

### Current, former 116th members come together at annual Muster

Veterans of the 116th Infantry Regiment and Soldiers of the Virginia National Guard's Staunton-based 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team gathered at the 54th annual Regimental Muster Nov. 13, 2022, in Staunton, Virginia.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/23133>

### VDF cyber specialists complete validation with 91st Cyber Brigade, IOSC

Members of the Virginia Defense Force's Fairfax-based 31st Cyber Battalion, 1st Regiment received official notification Dec. 2, 2022, they successfully completed a validation exercise.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/23134>

### Gambill succeeds Boyd as MEDCOM commander

Lt. Col. Christy Gambill took command of the Fort Pickett-based Virginia Army National Guard Medical Command from Col. David G. Boyd during a ceremony Dec. 3, 2022, at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/23135>

## Join the Virginia Army National Guard, Virginia Air National Guard or the Virginia Defense Force

For information about joining the Virginia Army National Guard, the Virginia Air National Guard or Virginia Defense Force, visit the appropriate link below:

### Va. Army National Guard

<http://nationalguard.com/va>

### Va. Air National Guard

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### Va. Defense Force

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

## Join the Virginia National Guard Alumni Network

<https://go.usa.gov/xzGT3>

# Secretary Crenshaw visits Winchester STARBASE Academy

Retired Maj. Gen. Craig Crenshaw, Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, and retired Brig. Gen. Walt Mercer, Virginia Department of Military Affairs Chief Operations Officer, visited students taking part in activities at the Winchester STARBASE Academy Nov. 29, 2022, at the Virginia National Guard's Cherry-Beasley Readiness Center in Winchester, Virginia. During the visit, students from Redbud Run Elementary School took part in hands-on lessons on Newton's Laws of Motion and the engineering design process. Crenshaw also met with STARBASE staff to learn more about the program as well as full-time VNG Soldiers assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

"The STARBASE fundamental, hands-on STEM introduction builds confidence and inspiration in our youth at the right time," Crenshaw said. "It can be positively life changing and is important to the security of our nation as we compete globally."

STARBASE is Congressionally-authorized as a Department of Defense Civil Military Program where licensed instructors provide 25 hours of hands-on, rigorous and real-world experiences in a high-tech environment over five days. The goal is to inspire and educate students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and expand their awareness of future STEM careers while providing a model and vision for STEM education to local school districts and educators.

"We really appreciated Secretary Crenshaw taking the time to come out and get to know our STARBASE program and staff," Mercer said. "We also had the opportunity to tour the readiness center and meet with the 3rd Battalion officer-in-charge and other full-time staff, which was informative as to how our day-to-day operations run at our RC's, and the Soldiers were able to interact with him in person."

STARBASE Academy is an integral part of the community, engaging and inspiring students to consider the possibilities for their future, Mercer said.

"The Winchester STARBASE Academy has been busy engaging and inspiring students of all ages this year," said Dr. Susan Corrigan, the Winchester STARBASE Academy director.

During the summer of 2022, the STARBASE staff hosted two weeks of summer camp at the Winchester Readiness Center for fifth grade students as well as seven half-day programs at the various Parks and Recreation Basic Rec Programs for children from kindergarten through fifth grade. As part of STARBASE 3.0, in collaboration with STARBASE programs in Kansas and West Virginia, instructors taught high school JROTC cadets how to build and program a BOE Shield Robot and accomplish a variety of challenges.

STARBASE instructors also supported the Virginia National Guard Youth Camp at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach where they helped campers make foam rockets and taught lessons using Ozobots. They also used EV3 robots with Commonwealth Challenge cadets one afternoon while they were at SMR.



**Retired Maj. Gen. Craig Crenshaw, Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs visits students taking part in activities at the Winchester STARBASE Academy Nov. 29, 2022, at the Virginia National Guard's Cherry-Beasley Readiness Center in Winchester, Virginia.**

For the 2022-2023 school year, Corrigan said they have taught 29 classes of students for the five-day, 25-hour program, reaching approximately 600 fifth grade students. By the end of the school year, they will have taught 61 classes and reached approximately 1,400 students. They also held a STARBASE 2.0, an after-school program for 20 hours over 10 weeks, at James Wood Middle School. The students used a variety of technology to accomplish different challenges such as EV3 robots, littleBits electronic circuitry, drones and virtual reality headsets.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/23137>

## MORE ON THE WEB

### VNG Total Health and Performance Newsletter - FY23 Q1

<https://ngpa.us/23111/>

### VNG Soldier competes at DEKA World Championships

<https://ngpa.us/23136/>

### Photos: Soldiers ride in Blackstone Christmas Parade

<https://ngpa.us/23063/>

### Photos: SMR hosts national Funeral Honors course

<https://ngpa.us/23054/>

### Photos: DMA employees recognized at holiday luncheon

<https://ngpa.us/23120/>

