

VNG provides vital support to OAW task force

The last group of Afghan nationals temporarily housed as part of Operation Allies Welcome at Maneuver Training Center Fort Pickett, Virginia, departed Feb 1, 2022, and the Department of Homeland Security said more than 10,000 Afghan guests processed through the installation. While a multi-service task force was in the lead for OAW, Soldiers and civilian staff assigned to MTC provided vital support key to the success of the operation.

“I am extremely proud of the work of our installation team supporting Task Force Pickett,” said Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia. “These dedicated professionals were instrumental to the extraordinary success of the task force.”

Since August 2021, Fort Pickett served as one of eight safe havens in the United States designated to provide transportation, temporary housing, medical screening and general support for Afghan evacuees in permanent or temporary structures.

Despite the massive scale and short-notice nature of the operation, Col. Timothy Pillion, MTC Fort Pickett garrison commander, said his staff was up to the challenge.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xt7uA>



Soldiers assigned to the 229th Military Police Company receive challenge coins and certificates of appreciation Jan. 24, 2022, at Fort Pickett, Virginia, for their work supporting Operation Allies Welcome and Task Force Pickett.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Combat medics receive vital refresher training

More than 20 Virginia Army National Guard combat medics conducted refresher training Jan. 25-29, 2022, in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Presented by the VaARNG Medical Command, the five-day course included classroom and hands-on instruction, followed by a medical assessment and trauma lane.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xt7J4>

Field Artillery officer continues family legacy of Army service

In Capt. Adrian Fonville’s family, military service is tradition. Both his grandfathers served, as did his mother, father and stepfather. His is an all-Army family.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xt7JB>

Black History Month chance to celebrate, recognize trailblazers

Even though military service seemed inevitable for Staff Sgt. Brandon L. Huntley, he tried to avoid it. Military service was his father’s thing and Huntley felt strongly about forging his own path, building his own legacy.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xt7JN>

Meet the VDF: Cpl. (Va.) Regina Harris-Goard

Meet Cpl (Va.) Regina Harris-Goard! She serves as a Civil Support Security Team Leader in the Force Training Detachment, Support Operations Group. She joined the VDF seven years ago after seeing an information flyer.

Read more: <http://go.usa.gov/xtGC9>

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\$20K bonus available for field artillery enlistments

As 2022 began, the Virginia Army National Guard put extra emphasis into recruiting 13B Cannon Crewmembers offering a \$20,000 sign-on bonus for those who enlist for six years. Currently, the hefty \$20,000 bonus is only available for the 13B military occupational specialty, or MOS.

“The Army is expanding our artillery force, and Virginia is a part of this effort,” said Col. Todd Hubbard, chief of staff for the Virginia Army National Guard. “Over the past few years, we have fielded the most modern guns we have ever seen. The M119A3 105mm howitzer and the M777A2 155mm howitzer are the same as used by our active duty counterparts, plus the fire control systems are fully digitized with the latest technology.”

The field artillery, dubbed the “King of Battle,” is one part of the U.S. Army’s combat arms team. The artillery uses some of the most technologically advanced weapons systems ever created to deliver long-range indirect fire, which means the projectile does not follow the line of sight to the intended target. The field artillery’s mission is to destroy, defeat or disrupt the enemy to ensure dominance during large scale ground combat operations.

“It’s one of the best MOSs in the military,” said Capt. Adrian Fonville, the battalion fire direction officer for 1st Battalion, 111th Field Artillery Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. “Once we fire, all you have to do is look at the smiles on the faces of the Soldiers manning the guns and know why you should be a 13B.”

In the Virginia Army National Guard, the state’s field artillery capability is organized under the Norfolk-based 1-111th FA, with units in Hanover and Hampton as well. The battalion includes three batteries of six howitzers each, two firing the M119A3 105mm howitzer, and one firing the M777A3 towed 155mm howitzer.

“Field artillery is responsible for shaping the battlefield,” explained Hubbard. “We plan which targets to engage and when to engage them.”

Now, Hubbard explained, is an opportune time to start a career in the field artillery as it continues to expand and modernize.

“There will be opportunities for quick advancement, if you have what it takes,” Hubbard said.

In addition to firing the most lethal weapons in the U.S. Army’s arsenal, service as a 13B in the Virginia Army National Guard includes benefits beyond the \$20,000 sign-on bonus. State and federal tuition assistance provides up to \$11,000 per year for use at colleges, universities or trade schools, with additional benefits like the Montgomery G.I. Bill Kicker providing a monthly stipend of up to \$350. Low-cost health, life and dental insurance are also available, for single Soldiers and their families. The student loan repayment program can also pay up to \$50,000 on existing federal student loans.

“Outside of the incentives, there’s opportunity,” Fonville said. “You look at acquiring a security clearance, you look at gaining the discipline the military brings, you look at having that overall experience of being in the military and then taking that experience



Virginia National Guard Soldiers assigned to the Norfolk-based 1st Battalion, 111th Field Artillery Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team blank fire a ceremonial 19-gun salute with M119A3 105mm howitzers at the inauguration of the 74th Governor of Virginia Jan. 15, 2022, in Richmond, Virginia.

to your civilian sector, that’s huge.”

Training to become a 13B starts with 10 weeks of Basic Combat Training, or BCT, followed by seven weeks of advanced training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. There, Soldiers learn how to calculate targets, how to handle ammunition, artillery tactics and, of course, how to operate the gun systems.

“Being a cannoneer isn’t an easy job,” Hubbard said. “It takes both physical and mental ability. If you like a challenge and want to prove yourself, join the field artillery.”

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xt7uH>

MORE ON THE WEB

Brothers in Arms: VNG siblings serve together in Kuwait

<https://go.usa.gov/xt7Jd/>

U.S., Jordanian Soldiers build relationships

<https://go.usa.gov/xt7J7>

VNG staged on the Eastern Shore for storm response

<http://go.usa.gov/xtUGm>

Photos: 1032nd Soldiers receive Governor’s Medal

<https://ngpa.us/18274>

1st Battalion, 111th Field Artillery on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/1Bn111FA/>



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