

29th Infantry Division to deploy to Middle East

The Virginia National Guard's Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division has received a mobilization order for federal active duty in the Middle East, according to an announcement made Feb. 4, 2021, by Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia. In Spring 2021, more than 500 Soldiers of the 29th will begin a 10-month long deployment in the Central Command Area of Operations as Task Force Spartan to provide leadership, command, control and in-depth staff analysis for Operation Spartan Shield. While based at Fort Belvoir, Soldiers assigned to the 29th ID live all throughout Virginia and Maryland.

"The Soldiers of the 29th Infantry Division embody the National Guard motto 'Always Ready, Always There,'" Williams said. "This is not the first time that the 29th has been called on to play a key role on the world stage in support of theater security operations. These highly-qualified and experienced professionals are ready to do their part in serving our nation and our global partners. What is truly inspiring is to see their willingness to step up, and not just the Soldiers but also their families and employers. This is what makes our Army and our nation great!"

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xsa7b>



The Virginia National Guard's Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division assists federal agencies in securing the nation's capital during the 59th Presidential Inauguration, and now is in the final stages of preparing for federal mobilization.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Army National Guard transitions cyber task force mission

The Virginia National Guard's two cyber protection battalions conducted a quiet and seamless transition from the fourth to fifth iteration of Task Force Echo under the operational control of the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade and enables cyberspace operations in support of U.S. Cyber Command.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xsa7G>

Rose promoted to major general

Brig. Gen. Michelle M. Rose was promoted to major general Dec. 18, 2020, during a ceremony in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and she is the first woman from the Virginia National Guard to achieve the rank of major general.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xsa7e>

VNG SGM chosen for U.S. Army Sergeant Major Academy Fellowship

A Virginia Army National Guard sergeant major has been selected for the U.S. Army Sergeant Major Academy Fellowship Program and will spend two years as an instructor at the USASMA in Fort Bliss, Texas.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xsa4x>

VNG preventive medicine officer talks vaccine, service and diversity

For 1st Lt. Andrew Curtis, joining the Virginia National Guard seemed like the perfect opportunity for a change of pace from his corporate career after years of considering joining the military.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/xsa44>

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

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

Va. Defense Force

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

Join the Virginia Army National Guard Alumni Network

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

VNG completes mission in Washington, D.C.

The last group of Virginia National Guard personnel assisting civilian law enforcement with security operations at the 59th Presidential Inauguration and the days before and after the event departed Washington, D.C., Feb. 8, 2021. On Inauguration Day, approximately 2,400 VNG troops were among the more than 25,000 National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from across the country on duty assisting authorities with keeping people safe and protecting property. A group of about 1,000 VNG personnel remained to assist with the enduring National Guard support following the inauguration.

Governor Ralph Northam, Senator Mark Warner, Senator Tim Kaine and Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton were on hand to send off the last group from the D.C. Armory and express their appreciation to the Soldiers and Airmen who left their loved ones, jobs and schools to answer the call of duty.

"We are here to let you know how proud we are of you, and also to thank you," Northam said. "I couldn't have been prouder to initially send in our Virginia State Police and then deploy our National Guard, and within 24 hours, you were on the ground to protect our democracy and bring order back to the United State Capitol."

Joining the elected officials were Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Carlos Hopkins, Deputy Secretary Kathleen Jabs, Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, Maj. Gen. William J. Walker, commander of the D.C. National Guard, Maj. Gen. John M. Rhodes, 29th Infantry Division commanding general, and Brig. Gen. James W. Ring, VNG director of the Joint Staff.

Northam also acknowledged families make a sacrifice along with the troops, and he asked the troops to extended his thanks to their families as well.

"I think in the proud history of the Virginia National Guard, this will go down as one of your most important missions," Warner said before he and Kaine presented unit thank you letters to Col. Chris Samulski, commander of the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

According to Maj. Brandon Price, the 116th IBCT operations officer, the 116th deployed with elements of all their organic battalions, including the Kentucky National Guard's 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry Regiment, as well as elements of the 329th Regional Support Group and the 192nd Wing and units from additional states. On Inauguration Day, the 116th was leading a total of 22 battalion-sized elements from 25 different states with more than 9,000 personnel.

Price said missions included leading four distinct task forces with missions ranging from securing the Library of Congress, providing a quick reaction force to D.C. Metro Police and U.S. Park Police, secured the Capitol Grounds from Jan. 12-23 including providing security through the 59th Presidential Inauguration, providing assistance to the U.S. Capitol Police as they expanded the security perimeter around the Capitol Grounds, providing QRF elements to the U.S. Secret Service staged at the White House,



Senator Mark Warner and Senator Tim Kaine present thank you letters to Col. Chris Samulski, commander of the Virginia National Guard's 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Feb. 8, 2021, in Washington, D.C.

followed by a return to QRF duties with the USPP.

As the mission came to a close, the 116th operations team coordinated to have all VNG personnel tested for COVID-19 prior to departing the Washington, D.C., area for out processing.

He acknowledge what a challenging situation the rapid deployment created for families and what a great job they did reacting and supporting their troops.

"This is a historic moment," Samulski said. "Our Soldiers volunteered to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, and they came here and did that on short notice. I am proud of them and proud of the legacy they leave for this unit."

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

MORE ON THE WEB

VNG COVID-19 Vaccination Resource Page

<https://va.ng.mil/COVID-19/Vaccine/>

Photos: Saber Soldiers extend enlistments at Capitol

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157718182449876>

Photos: Thunder Soldiers extend enlistments at Captiol

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157718175763362>

Photos: VNG begins second dose of COVID-19 vaccine

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157718087737258>

Photos: AG, SEL thank Red Dragons for PI59 service

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157718082328971>



@VaNationalGuard



@VaNationalGuard



@VaNationalGuard

