

Memorial Day ceremony honors, remembers the fallen

The 2021 Commonwealth's Memorial Day Ceremony held May 31, 2021, at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, Virginia, honored and remembered the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces who paid the ultimate price in nation's defense. Virginia Air National Guard Master Sgt. Damon L. Obasi led the Pledge of Allegiance and sang the national anthem during the ceremony, and retired Col. Mike Harris joined Acting Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Kathleen Jabs placing a wreath at the Shrine of Memory for the Global War on Terrorism and Beyond.

"We are here today to pay tribute to Staff Sgt. Maxwell, Pfc. Harris, along with all the other mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, grandparents, all of the heroes who have died defending our country, our way of life and the freedoms we live every day," Jabs said. "It is a privilege to serve and to give back to our country, and yet that service entails risk and requires a willingness to sacrifice. Then men and women whose names are etched on the walls in these sacred Shrines of Memory answered the nation's call. They wanted to protect the country which has given them, and all of us, so much."

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/x62Fx>



Attendees at the 2021 Commonwealth's Memorial Day Ceremony pay tribute to fallen service members during the playing of taps May 31, 2021, at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, Virginia.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

VNG Soldiers perform well at Region II Best Warrior Competition

Virginia National Guard Soldiers turned in strong performances at the Army National Guard Region II Best Warrior Competition held May 11-14, 2021, at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, placing second in the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year competition and third in the Soldier of the Year competition.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/x62Fk>

Virginia's aviation assets test tools as hurricane season nears

As hurricane season inched closer to the East Coast, aviators from the Virginia National Guard participated in an exercise managed by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to test the state's air operations plan.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/x62FW>

29th Infantry Division welcomes new Command Sergeant Major

Command Sgt. Maj. Daryl Plude took responsibility as the command sergeant major of the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division from Command Sgt. Maj. Alan Ferris May 8, 2021, in Bowling Green, Virginia.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/x62FZ>

Recruiter helps bring Vietnam War Memorial replica to local community

When Virginia Army National Guard recruiter Staff Sgt. Chris Dickenson heard about the Wall That Heals, he knew it was something he wanted to bring to his community in Southwest Virginia.

Read more: <https://go.usa.gov/x62F4>

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>

DMA employees recognized for outstanding job performance

Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, and Walt Mercer, the Chief Operations Officer for the Virginia Department of Military Affairs, presented agency-wide awards May 18, 2021, at Fort Pickett, Virginia, to recognize outstanding state employees for their accomplishments.

Williams and Mercer presented the DMA Agency Star Award to Tracey Perdue in the Army Personnel Branch and Rebecca Moses in the Virginia Army National Guard Chief of Staff's Office. They also presented the Award for Customer Service to Tanisha Roberts in the Army Personnel Branch, the Award for Community Service and Volunteerism to Todd Phillips in Maneuver Training Center Range Operations, the Award for Workplace Safety and Health to Christal Spake in MTC Billeting and the Award for Teamwork to James Snead, Brian Reekes, Clarence Hart, Josh Gulbranson, Timothy Morini and Timothy Bradford in MTC Range Operations.

Previously, DMA conducted the State Employee Recognition Day by providing a banquet and an awards ceremony at two different locations, Maneuver Training Center Fort Pickett and the State Military Reservation, that totaled more than 400 participants. The 2021 awards ceremonies to recognize job performance and service anniversaries will be conducted at the department level to ensure all safety precautions are met for DMA employees.

The State Employee Recognition Program is designed to encourage employees to make a performance difference either individually or through teams. Individual awards can be given to up to 50% of a department's staff in May, and supervisors have the option of submitting staff throughout the year for Individual "Impact" Awards separately. The sole purpose for the Employee Recognition Program is to recognize employees for their achievements above and beyond those duties outlined in their Employee Work Profile. The recognition program recognizes the employee's dedication and hard work, which contributes to the overall mission and success of the DMA.

Agency-wide awards are given to exceptional employees who are top performers in their area or who demonstrated excellence in one of several unique categories such as Customer Service, Innovation, Teamwork, Career Achievement, and others. Senior staff officers are responsible for nominating their employees for agency-wide awards by completing the agency-wide awards form. No more than one individual or team may be nominated by a senior staff officer, and they are selected by a panel in a very competitive process.

The following additional awards will be presented at a future event along with a "Thank You" letter from the Adjutant General and a \$500 monetary award:

The New Employee Award will be presented to April Hand-Cameron in Commonwealth Challenge. This award recognizes an individual who has been employed two years or less with DMA and has achieved noteworthy accomplishments, demonstrates a positive attitude and a grasp of DMA mission and displayed a willingness to learn and develop professionally.



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The Award for Career Achievement will be presented to Susan Smead in Facilities Management. The award recognizes the employee with a record of consistent achievement over time that has significantly improved the efficiency and effectiveness of Commonwealth operations.

The Award for Innovation will be presented to Tristan Bradsher in Facilities Management. The award recognizes the employee who produces results such as increased productivity, efficiencies or cost savings through creativity and bright ideas that are implemented within the agency or state government.

Read more: <http://go.usa.gov/x6CT9>

MORE ON THE WEB

Adjutant General's 2021 Memorial Day Message

<http://go.usa.gov/x6xgm>

Photos: Rappell Master students face final challenge

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157719229650131>

Photos: VDF personnel recognized for COVID-19 support

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157719386988775>

Photos: VNG's top marksmen recognized

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157719281363404>

Photos: Bravo Co. welcomes Hemby as new commander

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/albums/72157719210916438>

