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Gen. Christopher Cavoli, commander of U.S. Army Europe and Africa, center, talks with Maj. Gen. Lapthe Flora and Navy Command Master Chief Petty Officer Alex Hebert of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti. (U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN KRISTIN SAVAGE)

## New command boosts Army's capability

**C**onsolidating Army operations in Europe and Africa under one command is better preparing the U.S. to face near-peer competitors, says Gen. Christopher Cavoli, commander of U.S. Army Europe and Africa.

Speaking Wednesday at a webinar hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army, Cavoli said the merger provides "big opportunities" because many of America's NATO allies and partners are interested in Africa.

"Many of their security challenges are closely related to the African continent," he said.

"Russia and China are actively competing for influence and access in Africa, and it's necessary for us to be able to operate there as well," he said.

The merged headquarters "gives us the ability to see across the hemisphere and not artificially divide those problem sets," he said.

The Army in November announced that it would consolidate Army Europe and Army Africa into one command that will serve as the Army service component command for U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command.

Cavoli, Army Europe's commander since January 2018, received a fourth star to lead the new command.

Full consolidation of the two organizations is not expected until 2022, according to the U.S. European Command.

Army leaders also now have more flexibility when it comes to resourcing and deploying soldiers across the

two continents, Cavoli said.

That flexibility helps the Army as it continues to build a capable force that can demonstrate its readiness and deter potential adversaries, he said.

Army Europe and Africa also is focused on building relationships with partner armies, including through exchange programs and exercising and training together.

"We can't really envision conducting operations in Europe without our allies," Cavoli said.

Many European partners are eager to embed their officers in U.S. Army units, including in the new V Corps forward headquarters in Poland.

The goal is now to see how those efforts can be expanded to Africa, he said.

See **Cavoli**, Page 5

# ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY EXCLUSIVE



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## Army works to maintain modernization momentum

**W**hile recognizing that presidential elections can often mean many changes, Army Futures Command's top general said he expects most of the Army's priorities are likely to stay the same.

"I remain committed, as long as the Army will have me, to maintain that momentum regardless of the upcoming changes with the new administration," Gen. Mike Murray said during a Jan. 25 webinar hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "Our modernization priorities have remained consistent, and they will remain consistent."

The Army's modernization priorities—Long-Range Precision Fires, Next-Generation Combat Vehicle, Air and Missile Defense, Future Vertical Lift, Network and Soldier Lethality—have not changed because leaders have been able to show that they are the six most important and pressing needs for the Army, Murray said.

The Army also will remain the most dominant land power in the world, and it must remain ready today while it transforms for tomorrow's battlefield, Murray said. This is why the service must push ahead on its ambitious modernization plans, he said.

"The incremental changes we've undergone for the past 40 years will not be sufficient," he said.

### Building capabilities

In the past three years, the Army has set—and stuck to—its six modernization priorities. It stood up Futures Command and strengthened its partnerships with industry, academia and its own acquisition partners, Murray said.

Leaders realigned more than \$30 billion to fund its most critical modernization programs, shortened the amount of time it takes to deliver new capabilities to soldiers, and are working on a Multi-Domain Operations concept.

Some of the progress the Army has made was demonstrated through



An Air Launched Effects system is loaded on a Black Hawk helicopter for testing during the Project Convergence event at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona. (U.S. ARMY/SPC. JAVION SIDERS)

Project Convergence, an umbrella event Murray calls a "campaign of learning."

The first iteration of the event took place in September at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona, and it was an opportunity for the Army to test new or developing technologies.

"What was really exciting to me is the power of bringing scientists and technicians to the soldiers in the dirt at Yuma and focusing that team, the developers and the users, on a common problem and how quickly we can actually solve problems," Murray said.

Using feedback from soldiers, "it was just incredible to watch code being written every day and every night at Yuma to solve problems," he said.

But Project Convergence is more than just technology, Murray said.

"It's about how we will fight in the future, and it's really, in many ways, how we will organize and the talents we'll need in the future."

Plans are already underway for Project Convergence 21, scheduled for the fall at Yuma and White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico.

This year's event will include the Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, Murray said.

"My plea to the joint force is, this is not about bringing your equipment to

an Army exercise," he said. "This is about coming together from the very beginning to plan and execute to solve joint problems."

In 2022, the exercise will include allies and partners, and there are early plans for an event in 2023.

### Future plans

Looking ahead, Murray said it's too early to know how the Army's modernization plans might change with the new administration—and he knows defense budgets may stay flat or decline.

"We're going to do as much as we possibly can to fully fund our priorities moving forward," he said.

Murray added that he's "fairly optimistic" because "the Army has made some really tough choices in the last three years. There's a case to be made out there that we did it right. I think we're on a great path from a modernization standpoint."

If cuts need to be made in the future, whether from force structure, readiness or modernization, "as hard as the decisions have been over the last three years, there's no easy decisions coming up for our senior leaders about where our resources come from, if they're forced to make those choices," Murray said.

## Army Guard recruiting campaign seeks 'next greatest generation'



In the new campaign, real National Guard soldiers are seen both in their civilian settings and in uniform. (ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO)

**A** new Army National Guard recruiting campaign targets the youngest eligible population by inviting them to be the next great generation that meets the challenges of a complex world.

Featuring real National Guard soldiers, the campaign was launched Jan. 26 and is titled "The Next Generation is Now."

It is designed to appeal to 18- to 24-year-olds, known as Generation Z, according to a Guard news release.

The Army National Guard ended fiscal year 2020 with 336,131 soldiers, slightly above its goal of 336,000.

Guard soldiers have been deployed almost non-stop for the past year in high-profile, ongoing domestic missions that include COVID-19 response, weather and wildfire disasters, and multiple security support missions due to civil unrest. They also continue to support operations overseas.

"What I love is that these ads accurately capture our soldiers," said Lt. Gen. Jon Jensen, director of the Army National Guard, during a virtual event with Guard recruiters to roll out the campaign. "We've got the right product. Our successes are local, and these efforts can be tailored to the local level."

In one of the campaign's new recruiting videos, viewers see young soldiers in their civilian settings and hear a

narrator affirm that they've seen it all, from a rogue virus to joblessness to skyrocketing tuition.

Later, the soldiers are seen in uniform doing their respective jobs, including as infantrymen, musicians, medics, mechanics, food service specialists and cyber warriors.

The message postures this age group as the generation that's "going to fix all this" by building bridges and hospitals, rescuing families from disasters and feeding displaced people.

Concluding with the slogan, "The Next Greatest Generation is Now," the narrator tells his viewers that "we have an appointment with destiny."

The ads aim to show young people that "there are people like them serving in the Army National Guard and finding their part-time service to be satisfying and rewarding," said Lt. Col. Stephen Warren, chief of Army National Guard marketing and advertising, in a Guard news article.

The new campaign also features several 30-second videos that will air on television and online and appear in media related to NCAA basketball and March Madness activities, the release said.

The theme and messages will also be integrated throughout the Army National Guard's national and local recruitment marketing activities.

Watch the videos here.

# AUSAExtra

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**Cavoli***From Page 1*

Another key effort underway is Defender-Europe 21.

Last year's exercise was curtailed because of COVID-19, but not before the Army was able to practice deploying soldiers and equipment across the ocean, moving about 10,000 soldiers and about 13,000 pieces of equipment.

"Defender is the U.S. Army's exercise to deploy a large force and conduct [reception, staging, onward movement and integration] for them," Cavoli said. "We got a heck of a lot out of it, and I think a lot of our allies did, too."

This year's exercise will focus on high-end enabler forces in southeastern Europe, particularly with Romania and Bulgaria, two armies that are "moving out quite quickly with their modernization plans," Cavoli said.



A soldier guides an M1 Abrams tank to a fueling station during the Defender-Europe 2020 exercise at Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area, Poland. (U.S. ARMY/JASON JOHNSTON)

"Right now, we're still in the coordination phase, and obviously with COVID there are a couple things we

need to study pretty closely, but we're looking forward to a great exercise," he said.

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## Army prepares to roll out new pay and personnel system

**A**s the Army gears up to implement its modernized human resources system by the end of this year, every soldier in the Regular Army and the Army Reserve must update their personnel files in the current system in order to make the new one effective, the service's top personnel officers said.

The paper-driven human resources system the Army has used for decades is on track to be replaced by December with the Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army. Also known as IPPS-A, it is an electronic, data-driven system that brings personnel, pay and talent management information into one place.

But the new system "is only as good as your data" that exists in the current system, said Roy Wallace, assistant deputy Army chief of staff for personnel.

To make sure the new system is in top form by the December fielding timeline, the Army has launched a Data Correctness Campaign to push soldiers to update their pay, training, education and personnel details.

The Army National Guard became the first component to fully transition to IPPS-A, a transfer that was completed in March 2020 and now includes 335,000 soldiers.

By the time the Regular Army and Army Reserve make the transfer in December, there will be more than 1 million personnel on the system.

Training on how to use the system is being conducted now with the Army's human resources specialists and commanders. By summer and through the end of the year, there will be training available for every soldier.

An app that can be accessed on a mobile device and on government



Training for the new system will be available for every soldier by the end of the year. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. JAMES GEELEN)

and personal laptops will help get soldiers into the new system once it's launched, and lots of information is already available on the IPPS-A website and Facebook page.

"Go into the current system, look at your data, make sure it's right, because when the data is bad the outcomes are bad," Wallace said.

Learn more here.



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# AUSA members save with new TaxAct affinity partnership

By Susan Rubel

It's tax time. I hate the process, and I'm never pleasantly surprised with a giant refund, but I can get a little excited this year because of a new affinity relationship between the Association of the U.S. Army and TaxAct.

TaxAct provides our members with an excellent discount—25% off federal and state filings—and supports AUSA scholarships at the same time, so it's a win-win.

The company is a leading provider of affordable digital tax prep solutions for individuals, business owners and tax professionals. TaxAct backs your tax filing process with a \$100,000 Accuracy Guarantee (click here for details). All forms are IRS- and state-approved.

I decided to try TaxAct this year because of the discount, its support of AUSA scholarships and the excel-

## Member Benefits

lent reviews the company has received.

I'm happy to share that I found the system easy to navigate and painless to use. I still didn't get the surprise giant refund, but I feel certain my e-filed taxes are correct, and I saved a few dollars on the service.

Should you need it, with TaxAct Xpert Help you can connect with the company's accountants for real-time, one-on-one tax support.

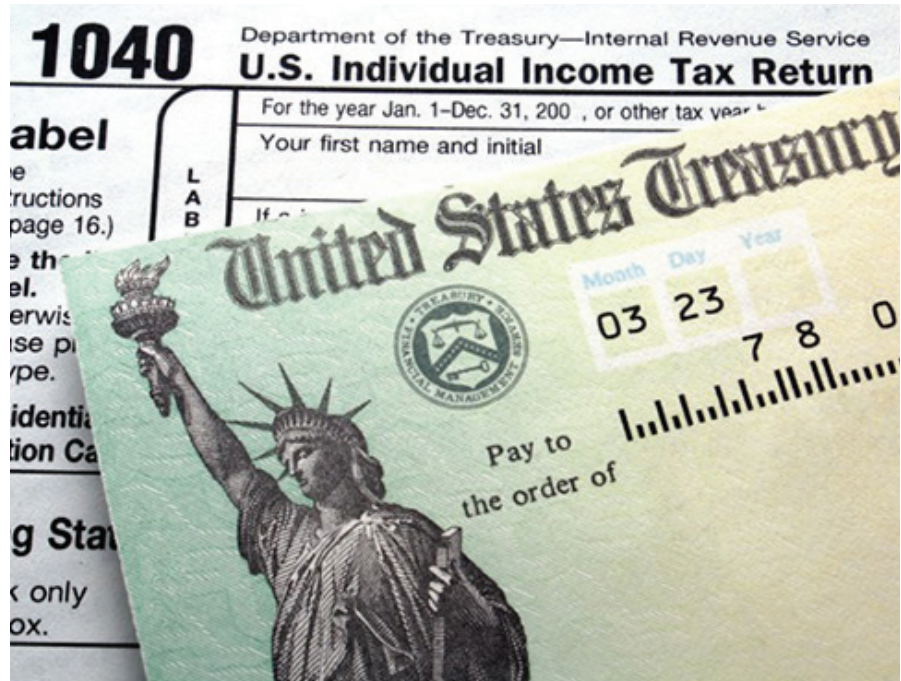
The suite of tax prep products provides easy and comprehensive step-by-step guidance to help you complete your taxes and get the best possible result without paying a premium price.

Visit [www.taxact.com/ausa](http://www.taxact.com/ausa) for more information and to get started.

## Retail discounts

At [www.ausa.org/savings](http://www.ausa.org/savings), you'll see a lot of logos you can click on for discounts and offers at those companies.

However, there are hundreds of



Through an affinity partnership with TaxAct, AUSA members can save 25% off federal and state filings and support AUSA scholarships. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

other top brands offering you discounts that you don't see on that page because AUSA's relationship isn't directly with the brand but with a provider of exclusive discounts.

For example, click on the Abenity logo (or visit [www.ausa.org/abenity](http://www.ausa.org/abenity)), sign up and access thousands of discounts on apparel, accessories, automotive services, business products, education, electronics, family and kids, financial services, food and dining, gifts and flowers, health and wellness, home and garden and more. This is also where you'll find a special deal for Costco memberships.

One of my favorite things about Abenity is all the local discounts for restaurants, dry cleaners, automotive services and more. I also like the mobile app, where you can choose to receive location-based notifications.

Another provider is MemberDeals. This is where you'll find discounts for everything fun at places you know and love, or new things to explore.

Bookmark the page and return when it's finally time to get out again.

Savvy spenders can find deals for movie theaters, theme parks, ski and golf resorts, bus tours and much more.

Additional deals include 40% off a Sam's Club membership, 65% off luxury long stem roses at Rose Farmers, 20% off eHarmony and \$40 off Calm, the No. 1 meditation and sleep app.

For everything outdoors and adventurous, click on the Provengo logo or visit [www.ausa.org/provengo](http://www.ausa.org/provengo) for discounts of up to 60% on top brands in fishing, hunting, biking, camping and other activities.

Available brands include 5.11 Tactical, Adidas, Benchmade Knives, Blackhawk, Bushnell, Camelbak, Costa Del Mar, Crye Precision, Foot Joy, Gerber Gear, Luminox USA, Ray-Ban, Shimano, Under Armour, Yeti and more.

In addition to the listed discounted prices, you can add promo code AUSA15 for an additional \$15 off your first order.

**Susan Rubel** is AUSA's Affinity Programs Director.

## AUSA paper: U.S. should be wary of Chinese speed, scale

**T**he Chinese army can “orchestrate mobilization” at a speed and scale that should make the U.S. hesitate, according to a new paper published by the Association of the U.S. Army.

“Since World War II, China has mobilized on a large scale several times—and the United States has not,” author and retired Army Col. Larry Wortzel writes.

In his paper, “Military Mobilization in Communist China,” Wortzel highlights five military campaigns between 1955 and 1979 to demonstrate China’s mobilization strength and its efforts to improve.

According to Wortzel, the current supreme commander of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army “has breathed new life into mobilization” through new policies and reserve units and improved training.

Now, he warns, China’s military



‘U.S. military leaders would do well to note this significant ability of a great-power competitor,’ the paper says. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

can be augmented by reserve units—or “modernized forms of militia”—around the country.

“U.S. military leaders would do well to note this significant ability of a great-power competitor, exam-

ine the corresponding shortcomings in U.S. capabilities and adjust the training of American forces accordingly,” Wortzel wrote.

Wortzel, a former director of the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College, says the U.S. “must be aware of the military implications” of the Communist Party of China’s control, as well as its influence throughout the government and society.

The speed and scale of China’s mobilization is linked to its economy, industry, infrastructure, population and centralized planning system, he says.

Sending expeditionary forces into China “would likely create more support” for its Communist Party, which relies on mass mobilization, combat power generation and logistics for support, Wortzel says.

Read the full paper here.



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## Army Reserve Ambassadors address chapter meeting

**A**rmy Reserve Ambassadors help connect the component with communities across the country through outreach, education, recruiting, networking and more, two members of the program said during a recent forum hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army's Suncoast chapter in Tampa, Florida.

Ambassadors "are appointed by the chief of the Army Reserve for three-year terms and are assigned to bring the Reserve's mission and activities to the civilian community," said retired Lt. Col. Roger Trout, who is also a chapter member.

### Suncoast

Ambassadors also support Army recruiting efforts by "being the conduit between a recruiting command and local businesses," using their contacts on both the military and civilian sides, Trout said.

The relationship between the Army Reserve and the state of Florida is more important now than ever, Trout said. The Reserve "has an economic impact of more than \$400 million" and brings 4,200 non-DoD jobs and \$123 million in wages to the state, he said.

Many civilians still think of the Reserve as a "one weekend a month" organization, but with more than 50% of the standing force in the reserve component, that's no longer the case,



Soldiers in Army Reserve Urban Augmentation Medical Task Forces have deployed across the nation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. (U.S. ARMY/STAFF SGT. SHAWN MORRIS)

Trout said.

"There are hundreds of units that have to be ready within 30, 60 or 90 days, so there has been significantly accelerated training," although many drills have been held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

The pandemic has also created new missions for the Reserve.

In 2020, "the Army Reserve stood up 15 Urban Augmentation Medical Task Forces" that provide expeditionary, deployable and scalable teams of medical soldiers to reinforce hospitals in hard-hit communities across the nation, Trout said.

As the Army transitions to a new division-centric force generation model, the Army Reserve "will maintain the readiness we have now, continue to build readiness ... and shape tomorrow through this new strategy," said retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mary Burnham.

Lt. Gen. Jody Daniels, chief of the Army Reserve, "has communicated the need for units to take advantage and be ready to move into this new model," which is known as the Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model, or ReARMM, Burnham said.

## Chapter holds essay contest for cadets, junior soldiers

**T**he Allegheny-Blue Ridge chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army is holding an essay contest for local Junior ROTC cadets, soldiers ranked E-4 and below, and civilians who are thinking about enlisting.

Submissions must be received by March 1.

Cash prizes will be awarded for the top three essays, which should focus on a leader who was a positive influence in the author's life.

### Allegheny-Blue Ridge

Essays can be emailed to [rwhankins@yahoo.com](mailto:rwhankins@yahoo.com) or mailed to: AUSA, Allegheny-Blue Ridge c/o VP, NCO & Soldier Programs PO Box 21233, Roanoke, VA 24018 Submissions must be between 750 and 1,000 words, written in Microsoft Word and double-spaced in 12-point font.

Authors should include their name, military status if applicable, address, email address and phone number.



All essay submissions must be received by March 1. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)





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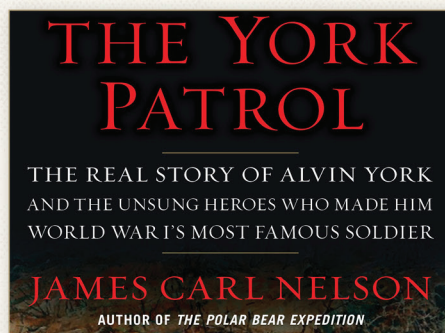
# MEETINGS & EVENTS



**AUSA'S NOON REPORT –  
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February 24, 2021


WEBINAR



**AUSA'S THOUGHT LEADERS –  
JAMES CARL NELSON**

February 25, 2021

WEBINAR



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