



Then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley speaks with soldiers assigned to the 1st Infantry Division in 2022 in Poznan, Poland. (ARMY NATIONAL GUARD/SGT. AGUSTÍN MONTAÑEZ)

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Milley shares leadership lessons at AUSA

Today's Army demands leaders with physical and moral courage, said retired Gen. Mark Milley, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the 39th Army chief of staff.

"You've got to be able to stand there in times of intense discussions or stress, lean forward and realize that ... millions of American soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines have given their lives to preserve [the U.S.] Constitution," Milley said Tuesday during an Association of the U.S. Army Noon Report webinar. "You've got to have the physical courage to do that and the moral courage ... to do that."

A Massachusetts native, Milley graduated from Princeton University in 1980. During an Army career

that spanned over 40 years, Milley held command and staff positions in six divisions and Special Forces. His commands include the 10th Mountain Division, III Corps and Army Forces Command.

As the 20th chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from October 2019 to September 2023, Milley helped lead the U.S. military through several pivotal events, including a pandemic, the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

As the son of a Navy corpsman who fought in the Battle of Iwo Jima and who grew up in a "patriotic" community, Milley learned the value of military service at a young age.

"I grew up in an Irish and Ital-

ian neighborhood in a little suburb of Boston, ... [where] close to 100% of the adults in one way or another served in World War II," said Milley, whose mother was a Navy nurse during World War II. "I was very fortunate to grow up in that environment, and they imbued ... a sense that this is a great country, this is a country worth serving, [and] this is a country that we should pay back."

As Army leaders grow, Milley emphasized that mistakes sometimes offer the best leadership lessons.

"Leadership lessons often come from lots of mistakes and things that you've learned over the years," he said. "You get good leadership lessons from those that you want to emulate, and you get bad leadership

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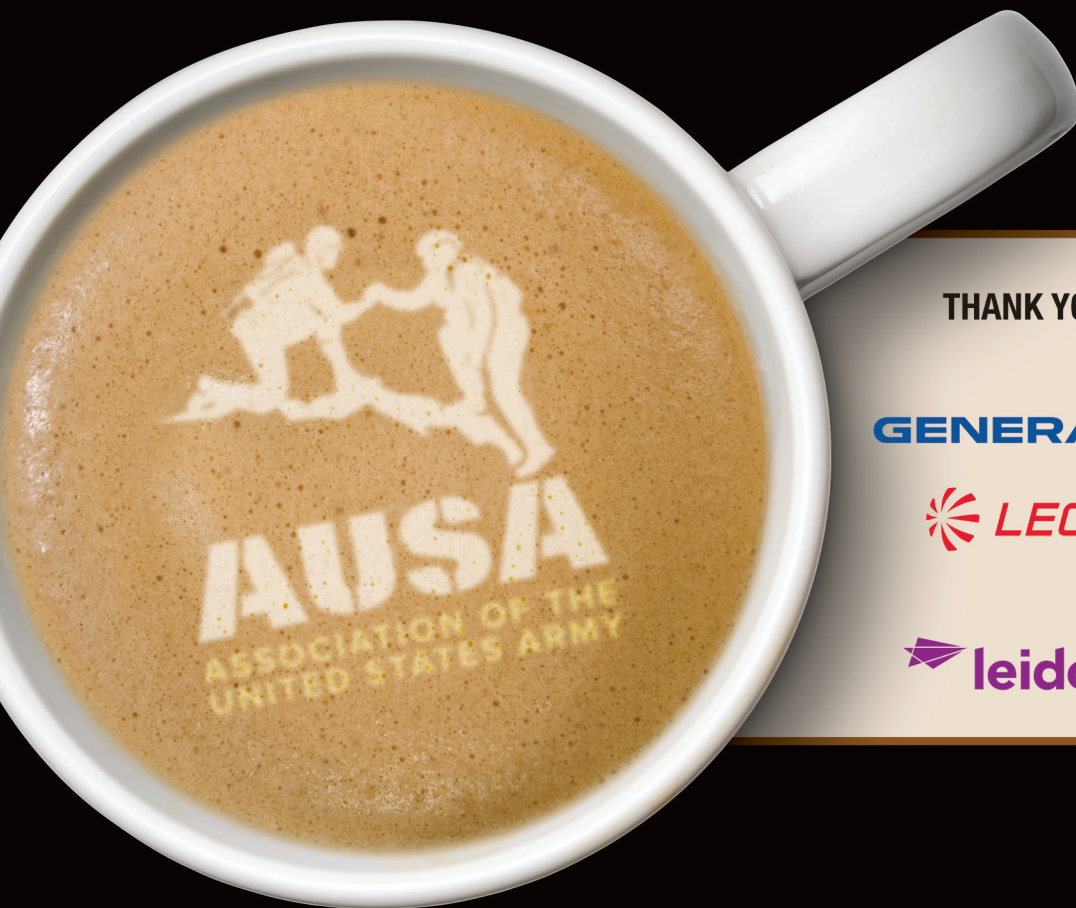
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Army seeks precision, automation for logistics operations

Faced with an increasingly contested operating environment, the Army is working to deliver precision sustainment and incorporate autonomous vehicles for resupply missions.

“Everybody agrees that we’ve got to get after logistics in this contested environment,” said Rob Watts, deputy director of Army Futures Command’s Contested Logistics Cross-Functional Team.

Speaking Feb. 7 during an Association of the U.S. Army Hot Topic on contested logistics, Watts said the Contested Logistics Cross-Functional Team’s first “priority effort” is predictive logistics.

“In the future, we can no longer afford to deliver two times or three times what that particular location or [area of operations] requires,” Watts said. “We don’t have the assets to move it or the assets to deliver it, so we’re going to need more precision.”

This could include using artificial intelligence tools or autonomous vehicles, which ties into another key effort for the team—autonomous resupply vessels, Watts said.

“We have to leverage machines,” he said. “We’ve got to figure out how the human and machines are integrated on the battlefield.”

The intent behind the autonomous resupply vessels would be to buy “lots of them,” Watts said, “where you can kind of envision a swarm of these autonomous vessels going out to various



Rob Watts, left, deputy director of Army Futures Command’s Contested Logistics Cross-Functional Team, and Maj. Gen. Michelle Donahue, commanding general of Army Combined Arms Support Command, address an AUSA Hot Topic forum on contested logistics Feb. 7 at the association’s headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. (AUSA PHOTO)

island chains, delivering ... ammo or blood or whatever it is, and take it to the point of need.”

The cross-functional team continues to build on that concept, Watts said, and is looking at autonomous tracks, watercraft, aerial vehicles and more.

Advanced power is another effort, as the Army looks to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels, Watts said.

Ultimately, the goal is to reduce demand for sustainment, he said, adding that if the cross-functional team’s first three efforts are successful, demand will naturally go down. Precision sustainment means fewer

trucks on the road, he said as an example.

Maj. Gen. Michelle Donahue, commanding general of Army Combined Arms Support Command, who spoke on the panel alongside Watts, agreed.

From 1970 to today, the Army’s fuel demands have increased 374%, she said. Demand for maintenance has grown 37%, she said.

“If we want to ensure sustainment isn’t a crippling piece, from a warfighter’s perspective, we’ve got to reduce demand,” she said. “The sustainment community cannot continue to be the growth industry for the United States Army.”

The Contested Logistics Cross-Functional Team, the Army’s ninth and newest cross-functional team focused on the service’s modernization priorities, is an enduring effort, Watts said. “This problem is not going to go away after we deliver our first four or five capabilities,” he said. “The environment is going to continue to change, the other signature modernization efforts are going to change, so we’re going to continue to shift.”

Milley

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lessons from those you’d never want to emulate. So, I’ve got thousands of leadership lessons.”

The best leaders don’t “have some sort of grand plan” for their career but “take it day by day, do the right thing and focus on doing the hard jobs well,” Milley said.

Serving in the military is still

worth it today, Milley said. “There’s a lot of good days, there’s a lot of bad days too. ... Any form of military service is a life of sacrifice,” he said. “I would say that military service is very worth it because you’re serving 325 million Americans. You’re serving ... for children ... to enjoy the fruits of life, liberty and happiness in the future. That’s something that knows no price, in my mind.”

Paper: US response to 9/11 holds lessons for Israel's war with Hamas

As Israel continues to wage war on Hamas, it “would do well” to consider the lessons learned by the United States in its response to the 9/11 attacks, writes the author of a new paper published by the Association of the U.S. Army.

While author Lt. Col. Jay Figurski concedes that Israel's response to the violent ambush by Hamas on Oct. 7 is understandable, civilian and military leaders now must proceed only with a viable endgame in place and a plan to restore hard-won diplomatic relations forged in recent years with their Arab neighbors.

“The desires for retribution and responding with overwhelming force are human,” Figurski writes in his paper, “What Israel Can Learn from the U.S. Global War on Terrorism,” published by AUSA as part of its Land Warfare series. But “in times of crisis, leaders must have the patience and courage to think several steps ahead and to consider the ramifications of the actions they take,” writes Figurski, a Middle East foreign area officer who is retiring from the Army and most recently was the Israel desk officer for the Joint Staff strategy, plans and policy directorate, J5.

It is understandable, he writes, that as head of state, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would want to immediately demonstrate that the gravity of the Oct. 7 attack warrants overwhelming force by Israel Defense Forces. That day, Figurski writes, “has become Israel's 9/11,” and Netanyahu's speech to the Israeli people resembled the response by then-President George W. Bush to the American people on Sept. 11, 2001.

However, Figurski points out that as the U.S. war on terrorism stretched into 20 years, the U.S. “would find itself stuck in quagmires that had little to do with the threats that had first been responsible for the terrorist attack.”



Soldiers with the 1st Infantry Division move to a suspected weapons cache in 2011 near Camp Taji, Iraq, with cover from Black Hawk helicopters. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Further, Figurski writes, the United States' fight was sustained over the years by more abundant financial resources than Israel and, more importantly, an all-volunteer professional military, “in which the direct impacts of war are borne by the less than one percent of Americans. ... Israel, however, does not have these luxuries.”

“With these constraints in mind, Israel would do well to pay heed to the lessons that the United States learned in the Global War on Terrorism: determine the end game, consider the war for hearts and minds and the cost of ‘going it alone,’ avoid a multi-front war, and beware unintended consequences,” Figurski writes.

As the United States discovered in Afghanistan and Iraq, military campaigns to eradicate deeply rooted, political-military movements usually fail. And that is exactly what Hamas is, with roots that extend far beyond Gaza, Figurski writes.

“It is imperative to U.S. interests and regional stability that Israel sets attainable objectives and meets them as soon as possible,” he writes.

Read the paper here.

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Through AUSA's partnership with Active and Fit Direct, members can access a variety of gyms for just \$28 per month. There are no long-term contracts, and cancellation is easy. Visit www.ausa.org/gym for more information and to join.

Spotlight on AUSA Association Partner: TCRA

The Transportation Corps Regimental Association was formed in September 1990 with the mission to promote the Transportation Corps, preserve its history and traditions, foster member professional development and provide academic scholarships.

Established in 1942, the Transportation Corps is one of the Army's younger branches, but its history extends to the Revolutionary War, when Gen. George Washington used animal-driven transportation to move American and French forces from New York's Hudson Valley to Yorktown, Virginia, more than 450 miles away. "So important was transportation in the American Revolution that Washington advised Congress to establish the position of Wagonmaster General to provide the Army's essential mobility," the association website says.



During World War I, the Transportation Service was created, carrying 2 million men and their supplies across 3,000 miles of ocean. When the U.S. entered World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt established the Transportation Corps in November 1942.

"Ultimately, the Transportation Corps conducted operations in the

deserts and wastelands of North Africa, the jungles of the Pacific, the mountains and valleys of Italy and Asia, and over the beaches of Normandy," according to the association.

In addition to supporting the chief of transportation and the corps' soldiers and families, the association administers several awards programs, including the Military Order of Saint Christopher, the Patronus Rotae Award and the Eagle Award.

For more information, please visit <https://tcra.wildapricot.org/>.

If your association is interested in partnering with AUSA, contact Susan Rubel at srubel@ausa.org.

Association Partnership with AUSA is an opportunity for like-minded military service organizations to join AUSA in support of the Total Army—soldiers, DoD civilians and their families.



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Soldiers, AUSA members gather toys for military children

In a heartwarming display of camaraderie and community spirit, soldiers from the 1st Space Brigade at Fort Carson, Colorado, alongside members of the National Guard and other military personnel, braved the wintry chill to participate in Operation Reindeer Ruck.

Hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army's Pikes Peak chapter, this annual event aims to spread holiday cheer by collecting toys, books and games for Army families in need.

On a crisp December morning, about 60 dedicated soldiers donned

NCO & Soldier Programs

their rucksacks and embarked on a mission of goodwill. Laden with

gifts, they marched through the picturesque landscapes of Colorado, making their way to the Mountain Post Santa's Workshop on Fort Carson. Their mission: Gather hundreds of toys to brighten the holidays for children ages six months to 12 years old.

While toy drives are not uncommon, what sets apart Operation Reindeer Ruck is the unique fusion of charity and fitness. Participants not



Members of AUSA's Pikes Peak chapter collect toys, books and games for Army families in need at Fort Carson, Colorado. (AUSA PHOTO)

only contribute to a worthy cause but also embrace the physical challenge of rucking, aligning with the AUSA chapter's fitness goals.

The success of Operation Reindeer Ruck was further amplified through strategic community partnerships. Thanks to collaboration with a local Walmart, the Pikes Peak chapter

was able to buy additional toys at a discounted rate, filling three shopping baskets with gifts for military families.

Bret Mayo, the chapter's vice president of NCO and Soldier Programs, expressed his gratitude for the overwhelming support from volunteers and community partners. "The chapter had a wonderful time, as did the soldiers who used this event as an opportunity to give back to their fellow service members," Mayo said.

Operation Reindeer Ruck exemplifies the spirit of giving and underscores the strong bond between the military and civilian communities. By coming together, these soldiers and volunteers made a difference in the lives of military families, spreading joy and goodwill during the holiday season.

As their footsteps faded in the snow, the legacy of Operation Reindeer Ruck continues to shine brightly, serving as a beacon of hope and compassion for years to come.



Participants in Operation Reindeer Ruck bring hundreds of gifts for military children to Fort Carson's Mountain Post Santa's Workshop. (AUSA PHOTO)

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Julie Guerra is AUSA's director of NCO and Soldier Programs.

Chapter supports interactive Family Wellness Day

Members of the Association of the U.S. Army's Henry Leavenworth chapter demonstrated their commitment to soldiers and families during a recent Family Wellness Day at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

The Feb. 2 event, hosted by the Army Corrections Brigade at the installation's McHugh Training Center, was intended to empower readiness and resiliency for local military families.

**Henry
Leavenworth**

"Our chapter was honored to support such a wonderful and informative event for Army families [with] great resources as well as networking opportunities," the chapter said in a Facebook post.

To prepare for the event, Fort Leavenworth leaders identified trends affecting the readiness, health and well-being of the formation. Their aim was to amplify positive effects and apply information, education and resources to assuage negative trends, Melissa Kreitzer, an AUSA chapter member and Army spouse, said in an Army news release.

"This work cannot be done alone, it requires a village," Kreitzer said in an article published by the *Fort Leavenworth Lamp*. "The Fort Leavenworth community came together in an incredible way to support the Griffin Brigade's service members,



Soldiers and family members speak with community representatives during a Family Wellness Day at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. (FORT LEAVENWORTH LAMP/PRUDENCE SIEBERT)

families and civilians by showcasing support providers and programs available, with more than 30 community agencies represented."

The day's agenda included a spiritual wellness program overview, a brief from garrison leaders on quality-of-life initiatives and a readiness session from the Fort Leavenworth Ready and Resilient Performance Center. The AUSA chapter provided funding for the event, and several chapter members were on the coordination team for the Wellness Day.

"The brigade soldiers and spouses serve as a team, and we have a duty to support and honor that. Army

families know when you care," Kreitzer said. "They shouldn't meet the leaders for the first time on their best or worst days; there needs to be an established rapport, a relationship of trust that's built over time."

Resources presented during the event include the Military Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program; the Stronghold Food Pantry for food, diapers and other family needs; services such as the Neighborhood Navigator to learn about local communities; and tax consultation provided by Military OneSource.

Child care solutions also were at the forefront of the day's discussions. "In January, the Department of Defense implemented its new fee schedule for on-base child care, designed to reduce fees for lower income military families," said Carole Hoffman, Fort Leavenworth Child and Youth Services coordinator.

The interactive event "was a great effort by the chapter in unison with the Army Corrections Brigade leadership to bring resources to our military spouses in the brigade and on the installation," said Judy Bauer, the AUSA chapter president. "We plan to make it an annual event since it was so successful."

Community Partner Challenge

The following chapters are the January winners of AUSA's Community Partner Challenge in their award categories. Each winner receives \$500 and 5 points toward Best Chapter in their group.

- Fort Novosel-Wiregrass – Award Group 1
- Greater Augusta-Fort Eisenhower – Award Group 2
- Northern New York-Fort Drum – Award Group 3
- National Training Center-High Desert – Award Group 4
- Tucson-Goyette – Award Group 5

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