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Army Reserve soldiers board buses at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, to deploy to locations across the country in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. (U.S. ARMY/STAFF SGT. SHAWN MORRIS)

## Pandemic has long-term military effects

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic will have lasting effects on the military and how it operates in the future, but a new report looking at the long-range military implications of the crisis finds the Army well prepared because of changes in operational doctrine and training.

An analysis by the nonpartisan Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments says the Army's evolving Multi-Domain Operations concept is a way to maintain a form of social distancing through its emphasis on "dis-aggregated, distributed units with varying degrees of connectivity conducting operations across the battlespace."

"These changes were motivated by adversary strategies and capabilities which threaten the current U.S. operating model, namely, responding to threats by assembling large

concentrations of forces nearby and conducting uncontested operations," the report notes.

"An unintended but worthy side-effect in light of the COVID-19 pandemic is that reducing the density of large gatherings of soldiers, surface ships, or aircraft that can be exploited by the threat achieves many of the aims of social distancing."

The military likely will not get back to business as usual, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Gen. Mark Milley said.

"I don't see how, with the effect this has had on the economy, the fact that you're sitting here all 6 feet apart, people wearing masks, the shutdown, for all intents and purposes, of major metropolitan areas," he said.

Around the world, "there's significant stress ... on the internal politics in other countries, on their economies, on resources. There is an in-

creased probability or at least a risk of instability, significant instability, in some countries," Milley said.

"We've got to take a hard look at how we, as a military, as a Department of Defense, conduct operations in the future and what we need to do to apply those lessons learned and implement them so we can continue to be effective in a post-COVID world," he added.

The military is already studying lessons learned from the pandemic, including how it employs ships, submarines and brigades, which require large numbers of troops to be in close quarters.

Army advances in training, particularly in the use of simulated training environments, also prepare for a post-pandemic environment, the CSBA report notes.

See **Post-Pandemic**, Page 3

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## DoD extends travel ban, continues COVID-19 response

**T**he military response to the COVID-19 pandemic continues, as the Pentagon prepares to extend travel restrictions, more former soldiers respond to the Army's call for help, and millions of Defense Department personnel adjust to teleworking.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Tuesday that he plans to extend orders halting military travel for troops, their families and civilian employees.

A new date will be announced once plans are finalized, he said.

"As this virus unfolds and as our mitigation measures take place, this is something we will be reviewing every 15 days to see if we can curtail it sooner or if we need to extend it longer," he said.

The original order, impacting domestic travel, went into effect March 16 as the COVID-19 virus spread across the U.S. and is slated to expire May 11.

A directive halting overseas travel for 60 days was announced March 25.

"There are a lot more people affected by this," Esper said. "Many who have suspended their lives. We're trying to take all of these factors into account. At the same time, we've got to manage the force."

### Soldiers for Life respond

Last month, the Army reached out to approximately 800,000 former soldiers, asking them to join the pandemic response effort.

So far, about 25,000 soldiers from numerous backgrounds have vol-



A Florida National Guard soldier works alongside a nurse at a COVID-19 community-based testing site in Jacksonville, Florida. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. MICHAEL BALTZ)

unteered, said Brig. Gen. Twanda Young, Army Human Resources Command deputy commanding general and reserve personnel management director.

Soldiers who are currently licensed in medical fields are preferred, but Army officials are encouraging all soldiers to step up in the fight against COVID-19.

However, the Army doesn't plan to mobilize veterans currently in medical jobs as they may be needed in their own communities, Young said.

Soldiers who are interested should provide their information using the COVID-19 Voluntary Recall Survey found on the HRC website.

### Telework expands

Teleworking capability across the DoD has become a priority during the pandemic, leading to an exponential increase and enhancements that may

continue after the threat has receded, according to the Pentagon's chief information officer.

"The way we work has changed dramatically within the last month," Dana Deasy said in a briefing Monday. "With the majority of the workforce teleworking, we have seen unprecedented demand for new equipment ranging from tablets, laptops and network equipment to secure devices."

Currently, there are as many as 4 million service members and civilians teleworking, with about 800,000 of those coming from the Army.

The Army has implemented several measures that have led to a 400% increase in network access for data and voice capacity, Deasy said.

"There will be some permanency to what we have here," he said. "There is going to be an enhanced teleworking capability that will be sustained at the end of COVID-19."

### Post-Pandemic

From Page 1

"It should come as no surprise that most of the methods by which the military currently trains and maintains readiness are in direct opposition to the social distancing practices required to stop the spread of the virus," the report says. "Whether aboard ships and submarines, operating aircraft, or training new re-

cruits in boot camp, military training and readiness activities often require gathering individuals close together in tightly confined spaces."

The future looks better for maintaining a healthy force.

"At the operational and tactical unit level, military leaders are implementing a variety of measures to maintain readiness while mitigating the risk of an outbreak," the report says.

More could be done, the report suggests.

For example, "Depending on the size, type, and mission of a given military organization, some have chosen to execute 2-shift operations, disinfecting all surfaces in between and separating the shifts by one hour so that no members come in contact with anyone from the previous shift."

Read the full report here.

## AUSA extends deadline to apply for national scholarships to June 30

**T**he Association of the U.S. Army has extended the deadline to apply for its national scholarships until June 30 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

AUSA will award more than \$325,000 in national scholarships this year. Most will be awarded by AUSA, but some are administered by the association in conjunction with the Army.

To be selected for most of the AUSA national scholarships, applicants must be members of the association.

Membership is not a prerequisite for the Army scholarships administered by AUSA.

National scholarships include science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs and general studies.

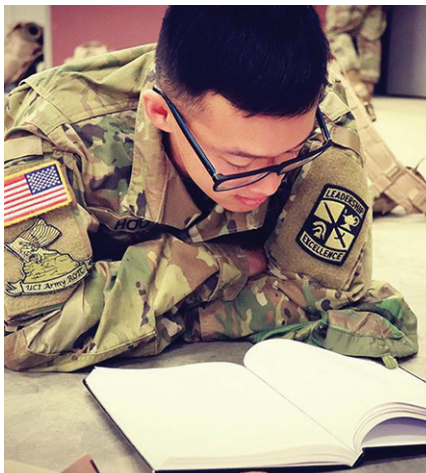
In the STEM category, AUSA will award 10 Delta Dental Oral Health and Wellness Scholarships valued at \$2,000 each; two Joseph P. and Helen T. Cribbins Scholarships valued at \$10,000 each; and six Nicholas D. Chabraja Scholarships valued at \$5,000 each.

The Delta Dental program provides scholarships to Army family members and transitioning soldiers for the advancement of oral health and wellness.

The Joseph P. and Helen T. Cribbins Scholarships honor the memory and legacy of Joseph and Helen Cribbins, longtime supporters of the Army and AUSA, while the Nicholas D. Chabraja Scholarships honor the past chairman of AUSA's Board of Directors.

The general studies scholarships consist of the SMA Leon Van Autreve Scholarship Program; General Jack N. Merritt Scholarships; complete coursework debt reduction; and three full scholarships for degrees offered by Trident University.

In honor of Van Autreve, the fourth sergeant major of the Army, eight scholarships are available: one for \$25,000, one for \$10,000, one for \$5,000, and five for \$2,000, for a total of \$50,000.



Scholarships include awards for science, technology, engineering and math programs and general studies. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Two \$5,000 scholarships will be awarded in honor of retired Gen. Jack Merritt, a former AUSA president.

For young professionals with debt from completion of college courses or professional certifications, eight \$2,500 scholarships are available.

Three scholarships valued at up to \$48,000 each will be awarded for Trident University, an accredited online institution offering bachelor's and master's degrees with credit for leadership and professional experience.

In 2020, AUSA has nine new offerings for cadets in Junior ROTC programs, named in honor of retired Lt. Gen. Theodore Stroup Jr., a former vice president of Education at AUSA.

Membership is not required for these scholarships.

These awards will recognize high school junior and senior JROTC cadets based on submission of essays.

One award of \$1,000 and eight awards of \$500 will be presented.

Recipients of the SGM Larry Strickland Leadership Award and Scholarship, the SGM Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship and the JROTC scholarships are selected by the Army and funded by AUSA.

For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

# AUSAExtra

*Voice for the Army –  
Support For the Soldier*

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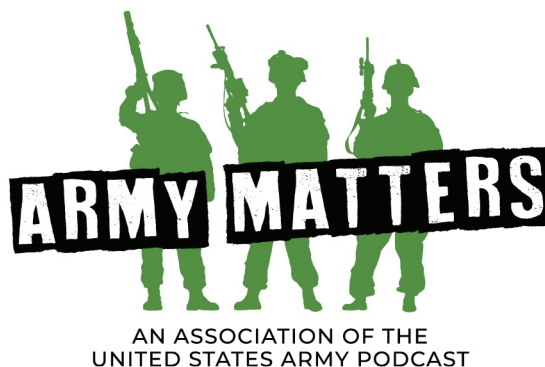
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# New ribbon, chapter challenge implemented for 2020

By Victoria McAdoo

At the Association of the U.S. Army's annual chapter presidents' dinner, chapter leaders are presented with colorful ribbons from various AUSA departments to recognize their yearlong success in a variety of areas.

This year, the ribbon ceremony will feature the new NCO & Soldier Programs ribbon.

Beginning in March, all chapters are eligible and encouraged to participate in attaining the new icy blue ribbon.

Given the start date, the ribbon will not count toward chapter points for this year. However, all activities or events that meet the ribbon criteria are being grandfathered.

Criteria for the NCO & Soldier Programs ribbon were carefully selected to highlight the efforts and achievements of chapter board members and their volunteers to promote, engage in and develop programs that meet the needs of their members and surrounding community.

Since each chapter is demographically different, AUSA worked to ensure that the criteria are realistically attainable.

From the largest to the smallest, all chapters should feel equally empowered to be successful.

It is our hope that chapters see the benefit of obtaining the NCO & Soldier Programs ribbon by hosting NCO leadership seminars or participating in NCO and soldier recognition or retiree award ceremonies.

The ribbon brings prestige to the chapter and serves as a reminder of how it stayed engaged with members and the community during the program year.

As a bonus, AUSA's NCO & Soldier Programs directorate also initiated a Chapter Plus Challenge for chapters that want to push themselves to produce more programming for sol-



Ribbons bring prestige to the chapter and serve as a reminder of how it stayed engaged with members and the community during the program year. (AUSA PHOTO)

diers, their families and community partners.

The top three chapters in the challenge will receive monetary awards that can be used to plan future chapter events.

Prior to the implementation of the new ribbon and chapter challenge, the NCO & Soldier Programs team met several times and sought additional support from AUSA's chapter and membership departments.

Once the criteria were chosen, the blueprint was submitted to regional

presidents for review and input.

Some adjustments were made, and the NCO & Soldier Programs ribbon was approved by retired Gen. Carter Ham, AUSA's president and CEO.

With the support of AUSA's national leadership, the NCO & Soldier Programs team is proud to create opportunities specific to the recognition and professional development of the NCO and soldier community.

While the blueprint is a guideline for attaining the ribbon, the chapters are encouraged to be as creative as possible.

The NCO & Soldier Programs team is excited to see what new and innovative programs, fundraisers and community partnerships form in chapters' quest to be among the first to receive this new ribbon and Chapter Plus Challenge recognition at the 2020 AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition in October.

The NCO & Soldier Programs initiative is led by each chapter's vice president of NCO & Soldier Affairs and supported by the NCO & Soldier Programs team at the national level.

For more information, contact me at [vmcadoo@ausa.org](mailto:vmcadoo@ausa.org).



Retired Gen. Carter Ham, AUSA president and CEO, speaks at the 2019 chapter presidents' dinner. (AUSA PHOTO)

**Victoria McAdoo** is AUSA's senior coordinator for NCO & Soldier Programs.



## Army spouse recognized for service to soldiers, families

A member of the Association of the U.S. Army's Pikes Peak chapter was recently named the Armed Forces Insurance Military Spouse of the Year for the Army.

Yvonne Coombes, the chapter's vice president for special activities, is now in the running to earn the title of Military Spouse of the Year for all branches of the military.

The overall winner is scheduled to be unveiled at an awards dinner May 7 at the Army Navy Country Club in Arlington, Virginia, in conjunction with National Military Spouse Appreciation Day, which is May 8.

"I know a lot of military spouses who volunteer, and I don't think this is just lip service," Coombes said.

### Pikes Peak

"A lot of us say we don't do this type of thing for recognition, and we don't, but when you do get a little bit of that spotlight, it is a bit overwhelming. I'm extremely honored but still spinning a bit."

Coombes, who has been a military spouse for 19 years, was nominated for her work with Operation Deploy Your Dress, a nonprofit organization she co-founded in 2015 while stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas.

"We were all friends living in the same neighborhood, and we wanted to do a dress swap, which is not uncommon on most military installations," she said. "We thought we would col-



Yvonne Coombes is the AFI Military Spouse of the Year for the Army. (COURTESY PHOTO)

lect a couple hundred dresses in a community center over a weekend."

When the dress swap gained national media attention, a couple hundred dresses turned into a few thousand, and Operation Deploy Your Dress was born.

The organization has expanded significantly since then, with outlets at seven military installations.

"For the last year and a half, ODYD has been extremely fortunate by being gifted with a couple of grants and to work with some very supportive organizations, like the Association of the United States Army," Coombes said.

AUSA has partnered with ODYD to host three pop-up events at its national headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.

When Coombes, her husband, Lt. Col. Mike Coombes, and their two children arrived at Fort Carson, Colorado, in June 2019, she quickly found space at the Fort Carson Thrift Shop to set up an ODYD location.

"Yvonne literally hit the ground running after she arrived at Fort Carson," said Marrisa Wentling, the Pikes Peak chapter's vice president for family programs.

"For her, it isn't just about deploying dresses for our military spouses, it's about so much more," Wentling said. "We partnered to help distribute almost 200 tons of food with the Care and Share Food Bank one weekend, made multiple goodie bags for Operation Homefront, and then she closed out the year making sure to help track Santa for children all over the globe."

"People don't have to be military or military affiliated to get involved with Operation Deploy Your Dress," Coombes said. "Our donations and support come from all over the country, and we are giving the American population a unique way to support the troops."



Service members and spouses search for dresses during an Operation Deploy Your Dress event at AUSA headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. (AUSA PHOTO)





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