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Agnes Schaefer, assistant secretary of the Army for manpower and reserve affairs, addresses an event honoring Army civilians at AUSA headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. (AUSA PHOTO)

## People remain priority for Army of 2030

**F**ifty years after the birth of the all-volunteer force, the Army's top concern is ensuring Americans understand their Army.

"Large swaths of the country ... just aren't familiar with the Army," said Agnes Schaefer, assistant secretary of the Army for manpower and reserve affairs. "We are seeing a really big and growing cultural knowledge gap about the military, and so ... we're trying to fill that."

Speaking Tuesday alongside her counterparts from the Navy and the Air Force during a discussion hosted by the Center for a New American Security, Schaefer's remarks come as the military faces one of the toughest recruiting environments since the creation of the all-volunteer force in 1973.

The Army, the biggest of the services, missed its recruiting goal by 15,000 new soldiers last year. Leaders expect the service will fall short again this year as it grapples with the lingering effects of the pandemic shutdowns, competition from the private sector and a shrinking pool of interested and qualified young people.

To combat the lagging recruiting numbers, the Army has implemented several initiatives, including reviving its iconic "Be All You Can Be" slogan, offering incentives to soldiers who refer someone to join and standing up the Future Soldier Preparatory Course.

Schaefer praised early results from the Future Soldier Preparatory Course, which helps service-eligible

individuals meet the Army's academic and physical standards and qualify to serve. About 6,000 recruits have gone through the program, which helps balance young people's desire to serve with their ability to do so, Schaefer said.

"It's only been in place for about 10 months, so I am extremely curious to see how they will do over the long term," she said.

Among those already serving, retention rates are at "historic highs," and the Army will continue to prioritize quality of life programs to keep retention rates "shored up," Schaefer said.

The Army also is looking to better manage soldiers' careers to provide flexibility while fulfilling the ser-

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AUSA'S HOT TOPICS

# ARMY CYBER



**ASSOCIATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES ARMY**

**14 JUNE 2023**

GEN Gordon R. Sullivan  
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## Benefits boost National Guard, Reserve recruiting efforts

**E**ducational benefits are vital to recruiting talented people into the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve, two senior officers told the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on defense.

Gen. Daniel Hokanson, chief of the National Guard Bureau, and Lt. Gen. Jody Daniels, chief of the Army Reserve and commander of Army Reserve Command, testified June 1 that tuition assistance and access to health care benefits are “vital for recruitment.”

“When I visit the 54 [states, territories and the District of Columbia], I always talk to recruiters and ask them what are those things, why people still come in, and education is still one of those consistent things,” Hokanson said.

With the exception of Guam, he said, the states provide Guard troops with tuition assistance, in addition to the aid provided by DoD. That helps provide “stability throughout the process,” Hokanson said.

Addressing today’s challenging recruiting environment, which will likely see the Regular Army fall short of its recruiting goals again this fiscal year, Hokanson said the Army National Guard has met or exceeded its goals in recent months.

“Our recruiters, particularly on the Army side, have really been able to adjust to the current environment,



Community members try their hand at operating explosive ordnance disposal robots during a Meet Your Army event at Fort Gregg-Adams, Virginia. (U.S. ARMY/PATRICK BUFFETT)

and we’ve seen a steady increase in our recruiting abilities,” he said. “We’ve been over 100% the last three months, and right now the Army National Guard is on path to meet our end strength by the end of the fiscal year.”

Daniels said that educational assistance is not only “vital for recruiting,” but it helps Reserve soldiers continue to grow in their civilian careers and bring enhanced knowledge and skills to their units.

“In an extremely challenging re-

cruiting environment, our highest priority is sustaining the resources required to recruit and retain the best today and into the future,” Daniels said. Daniels and Hokanson are both in the final year of their tenures.

In addition to educational benefits, Hokanson noted that premium free health care also is an important recruiting incentive, particularly as the private sector becomes more competitive.

“Many companies are now offering benefits that they didn’t before, medical, educational benefits, and so the competition out there for the same individuals is getting much stronger,” he said, adding that the National Guard is “working internally” to reduce the time it takes to get waivers and addressing other policies that may keep some from serving.

“Education, any benefits we can provide to them, is a benefit when it comes to recruiting,” Hokanson said. “Ensuring we recruit and retain America’s best in the National Guard must remain a top priority.”

### Volunteer force

From Page 1

vice’s needs, she said. “Permeability,” which Schaefer defined as the “ability to move across the components as your life changes,” is “a huge priority” for the Army, she said.

“You may want to [leave] the active component and go to the Guard or the Reserve, you may want to be settled for a little bit as your kids are in school,” she said. “These are the kinds of things that this generation is looking for, and I think we need to

listen to those cues.”

Leaders also are looking to cultivate more talent management opportunities, particularly for enlisted soldiers.

As it works to build the Army of 2030 and beyond, the Army recognizes that prioritizing personnel is key to readiness, Schaefer said.

“Our people are key to readiness,” she said. “It doesn’t matter how many tanks we have if we don’t have the people who are trained ... to drive them or shoot them.”

## Holistic Health and Fitness builds ‘enduring resiliency’ for soldiers



A 10th Mountain Division soldier participates in a weightlifting competition hosted by the division's Holistic Health and Fitness team at Fort Drum, New York. (U.S. ARMY/SPC. ETHAN SCOFIELD)

**F**aced with changing adversaries and an increasingly complex operating environment, the Army must make sure soldiers are ready to fight, win and not just survive, but thrive, a senior Army leader said.

Speaking during the 2023 Holistic Health and Fitness Symposium at Fort Eustis, Virginia, Lt. Gen. Xavier Brunson, commander of I Corps, said the Army's transformation for 2030 and beyond doesn't just involve equipment and new technology.

"The stuff doesn't matter if the people aren't there. The stuff doesn't matter if the people aren't ready," Brunson said. "Soldiers are facing the most significant operational environments of all time."

As the Army modernizes its doctrine, force structure and equipment, its Holistic Health and Fitness system is a key part of modernizing how soldiers train, fuel and prepare, Brunson said. Since the earliest days of America, the Army has "always been about our people," he said. That's why the Army must not only evolve its equipment and tactics, "we've also got to modernize our people."

The Army's Holistic Health and Fitness, or H2F, is a comprehensive health and fitness system designed

to build soldiers' physical, spiritual, mental, sleep and nutritional readiness through performance professionals, programs, facilities, equipment and education.

One of the most visible investments of H2F is the embedded performance teams. These teams, consisting of service members, Army civilians and contractors, provide injury prevention and human performance optimization expertise to units. They include physical therapists, registered dietitians, occupational therapists, certified athletic trainers, cognitive performance specialists and strength and conditioning coaches.

So far, 28 brigades have embedded H2F performance teams, with 12 more brigades being fielded this year and plans to field at least 10 teams each year through 2030, according to the Army.

The holistic approach of H2F aims to build "truly enduring resiliency" in soldiers, Brunson said. "Soldiers face stressors that are ubiquitous," he said. "They are ever-present in their lives. H2F is more than a thing that's physical. H2F is a system to care and empower and equip soldiers to take charge of their own health and their own well-being."

# AUSAExtra

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## PERK OF THE WEEK

AUSA members can create a variety of legal documents for free with LawAssure, which now offers a law guide that provides detailed information on a range of legal compliance subjects. Create your will, trust or bill of sale, or set up an LLC and much more at [www.ausa.org/legal](http://www.ausa.org/legal).





## New officers must prepare for dangerous, changing world

**S**peaking to the graduating ROTC cadets at Princeton University, Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley, a 1980 graduate of the university and a former Army chief of staff, said the U.S. military is entering a new era of warfare.

"We, right now, are in what I would call a fundamental change in the character of war," Milley said. "It only changes fundamentally once in a while, ... and it's being driven, yet again, by technology."

Milley described to the cadets the global impact of the U.S. military. "Right now, we have a quarter of a million ... [service members] forward deployed ... on freedom's frontier in 158 different countries," he said.

The evolving nature of war means that the newest generation of service members must look ahead to effectively deter emerging threats, Milley

told the 14 cadets of the Class of 2023 during the commissioning ceremony.

"The United States military is 2.1 million strong, and we are the most competent, capable, ready, lethal force the world has ever known. That is fact," Milley said. "Each and every one of us as American citizens should be proud, but we can't just rest on our laurels. You've got to be looking to the future."

It's up to the youngest generation of service members to prevent global great-power war, Milley said.

"We cannot allow this world to devolve into a great-power war," he said. "How do you prevent it? You prevent it through the art of diplomacy, you defend it through deterrence [and] through a very competent, capable military that is just [and] ethically and morally straight."

The stakes could not be higher, Mil-



Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley administers the oath of office to Princeton University's 14 newly commissioned officers. (PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PHOTO)

ley said. "It's on your watch over the next 10 to 20 years," he told the cadets. "The United States military is either going to adapt and be dominant in the world of military operations, and therefore deter war, or not. If it's not [effective], then a lot of things are going to be at risk, things that we don't even want to think about."



## INCREASING CAPACITY FOR READINESS



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## Reconnaissance, fires advances mean deadlier battlefields

**T**echnological advances in reconnaissance and surveillance capabilities and long-range precision fires create a deadlier and more lethal battlefield that the Army must prepare for, a panel of experts said at the Association of the U.S. Army's 2023 LANPAC Symposium and Exposition in Honolulu.

"We have to operate in less safe spaces," not just in the Indo-Pacific but globally, said Maj. Gen. Brian Gibson, commanding general of the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command.

The so-called no man's land between the trenches of World War I has now grown exponentially, Gibson said. "This is the decisive component of warfare," he said. "Many folks have rightfully said that if you can be detected, the timelines for you to survive are less and less than they ever



A High Mobility Artillery Rocket System attached to the 41st Field Artillery Brigade fires a rocket at Vidsel Test Range, Sweden. (U.S. ARMY/SPC. DEVIN KLECAN)

have been. This forms a key challenge for us."

The Army must figure out how to move forces across no-go areas and have enough forces to be decisive, Gibson said. "How do we operate in these increasingly denied environments?" he said. "Our Army capabilities like air

defense, logistics, sustainment, command and control, protection, these are all things we can do and must do as an Army to protect the joint force."

He added, "The environment is only becoming more and more congested, let alone more and more contested."

Another critical area of concern is space, said Maj. Gen. Michael Morrissey, director of strategy, plans and policy at U.S. Space Command, another panelist for the discussion focused on reconnaissance-strike complexes and their effect on land warfare.

"Our adversaries, namely China and Russia, are building exponential capabilities to counter our space dominance, to counter our way of warfighting," Morrissey said.

For its part, Space Command is partnering with 33 countries around the world. "You cannot fight alone, unless you're foolish," Morrissey said.





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Annual Turnover



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Workforce in Projects



**73** Partners from  
15 Countries



**500+** Staff



**7** Countries of  
Operation

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## Lawmakers begin work on fiscal 2024 defense budget

**A**fter averting fiscal disaster by reaching a hard-fought agreement to raise the federal debt ceiling, Congress can now focus on the routine business of passing funding and policy bills.

With keen interest, the Association of the U.S. Army and the Pentagon are watching as the armed services and appropriations committees get to work on the fiscal 2024 defense budget.

The debt ceiling compromise that passed the House 314–117 and the Senate 63–36 includes an assumption that the DoD budget will be one of the few areas where federal spending will be increasing, although not by much.

### Government Affairs

Next week, the House Armed Services Committee intends to hold subcommittee markups for the 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, the annual policy bill. The full committee is expected to meet on June 21, with hopes of bringing the full bill to the House floor in mid-July.

The Senate Armed Services Committee has announced that it plans to start writing its version of the defense policy bill on June 20, hoping to finish in three days.

Separately, the House and Senate appropriations committees must approve legislation that funds defense programs. At a May 2 discussion on the 2024 Army budget request, Army Secretary Christine Wormuth and Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville told the Senate defense appropriations subcommittee that the Army's transformation efforts require financial support to meet the vision of a more capable force by 2030.

"As old threats evolve and new ones emerge, the Army is making decisions and prioritizing investments that not only contribute to current readiness but will also pay dividends on the battlefields of 2030 and beyond," they



Brad Patout, left, a professional staff member on the Senate Armed Services Committee, receives a tour May 23 of Camp Kościuszko, Poland, from Lt. Col. Miguel Cisneros, U.S. Army Garrison Poland executive officer. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. PATIENCE GBEDEMA)

said in a joint written statement.

On-time defense policy and funding legislation is AUSA's top legislative priority, and the association is urging Congress to complete defense legislation by the Oct. 1 start of the fiscal year. AUSA also has asked lawmakers to approve the Army's request of \$1.93 billion for unfunded priorities on top of the \$185.5 billion in fiscal 2024 funding.

AUSA members can help build momentum for passage of critical legislation that supports the Army, including appropriations and the NDAA, by contacting your representatives and senators and encouraging them to act.

Additionally, the AUSA Government Affairs team would like to highlight an important resource for AUSA members—Department of Veterans Affairs Vet Centers. These community-based centers provide readjustment counseling and transition assistance, including a range of social and psychological services, to eligible veterans, service members and their families.

To learn more about the services provided and locations near you, visit [www.vetcenter.va.gov](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov) or call 1-877-927-8387.

**Mark Haaland** is AUSA's Government Affairs director.



AUSA is urging Congress to complete defense legislation by the Oct. 1 start of the fiscal year and approve additional Army funding. (ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL PHOTO)



## Chapter supports junior ROTC cadets' robotics teams

**J**unior ROTC cadets from George M. Steinbrenner High School in Lutz, Florida, supported by volunteer leaders from the Association of the U.S. Army's Suncoast chapter, recently were named national champions in their division at the 2023 VEX Robotics World Championship.

The competition, presented by the Northrop Grumman Foundation, took place April 25 through May 4

### Suncoast

at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in

Dallas. The annual event brings together top teams from robotics competitions around the globe, including 130 teams from Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Space Force JROTC programs.

Marilyn Westropp, incoming president of AUSA's Suncoast chapter, was first invited to meet with the Steinbrenner High School JROTC cadets in late February, when the team was participating in the state-level competition. Westropp has represented colleges and universities as a motivational speaker for more than 14 years in high schools across Florida, providing resources for students and inspiring them to reach their goals.

"Being a representative of AUSA's



Junior ROTC cadets from George M. Steinbrenner High School were named national champions at the 2023 VEX Robotics World Championship. (STEINBRENNER HIGH SCHOOL PHOTO)

Suncoast chapter was beyond exciting for me, and I was truly looking forward to meeting each and every student," said Westropp, who will take office July 1. "I found the students to be professional, kind, helpful, full of anticipation and excited to explain their projects."

Steinbrenner High School fielded two teams for the competition, but instead of being solely focused on victory, the cadets were encouraging and supportive of each other, said

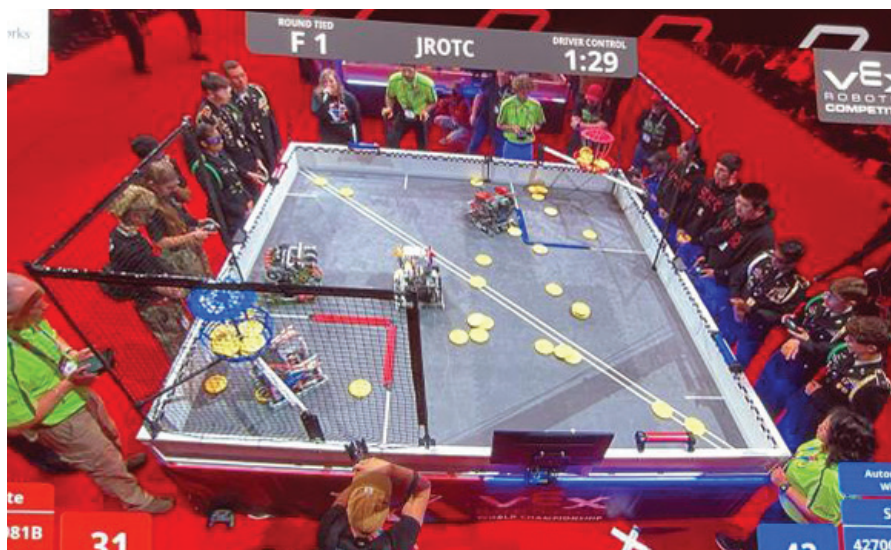
Westropp, who continued to support the cadets on their journey, though she was unable to attend the national competition.

After winning the state-level competition, the Steinbrenner High School cadets were partnered with teams from Hawaii and Indiana for the national event. Both teams finished first in their divisions, resulting in a face-off for the national championship.

In the title match, the Steinbrenner team that was partnered with a team from JROTC Hawaii won two out of three matches and finished first in the national competition.

Westropp's efforts on behalf of the cadets resulted in a video that is being produced by local organizations featuring the cadets' path to national recognition, as well as photos for the students and instructors to commemorate their achievements.

"I am touched, moved and inspired by all these young cadets—their passion for life, their positive outlook, the way they carry themselves and the pride they show in being a cadet," Westropp said. "I look forward to my upcoming years as president of AUSA's Suncoast chapter and will continue to be all that I can be."



Both teams of Steinbrenner High School JROTC cadets participate in the final match of the 2023 VEX Robotics World Championship in Dallas. (STEINBRENNER HIGH SCHOOL PHOTO)





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