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AUSA was born on July 5, 1950, for a clear purpose: The Army, America's foundational military force, needed to speak with one voice. (AUSA PHOTO)

## AUSA celebrates 70 years of service

**T**he Association of the U.S. Army turns 70 this weekend, a milestone in advocacy for the Army and support for soldiers that will be marked by national and local events.

"AUSA was founded in 1950 based on the hope and pledge that working together on behalf of the Total Army was an undertaking worth the effort," said retired Gen. Carter Ham, AUSA president and CEO.

"In seven decades, our now more than 216,000-member association has proven it is the loyal proponent and defender of America's Army, a tremendous asset for professional development, and a way of unifying efforts within the Army, industry, communities and people in a noble cause of making certain our nation has the world's premier land force."

"Our 70th birthday is something to celebrate, and an opportunity for us

to pledge to work even harder," Ham added.

To mark the birthday, an "AUSA Day" initiative has been launched encouraging the association's 122 chapters to hold their own day of celebration of service, giving back to their communities over a two-month period that started June 1 and ends July 31.

The goal is to conduct AUSA Day every year.

"As our association celebrates 70 years of service, we want to commemorate this day as a mighty team to show what brings us together—AUSA's enduring mission and passion to provide a voice for America's Army and support for soldiers, Army civilians and families," said retired Lt. Gen. Patricia McQuiston, AUSA's vice president for membership and meetings.

The centerpiece of the national

headquarters effort is a school supply drive in support of Operation Homefront's Back-to-School Brigade.

From July 1–31, AUSA's national staff will collect backpacks and other school supplies for military children.

Back-to-School Brigade is Operation Homefront's annual nationwide school supply collection and distribution campaign.

Since its inception, the project has distributed 350,000 backpacks to military children, according to the Operation Homefront website.

AUSA's chapters have also been encouraged to choose their own service project to celebrate the association's birthday in their local communities.

The effort also affords chapters an opportunity to earn an award ribbon at the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition in October.

See **AUSA**, Page 3

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## Digital skills, enthusiasm keys to Army recruiting push

**T**he digital skills of a younger generation of soldiers and the hands-on efforts of troops and veterans across the Army will be the keys to success in the service's push to recruit 10,000 soldiers in three days, said Gen. Paul Funk, the Army's top training and recruiting officer.

Army National Hiring Days, which kicked off Tuesday, was created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which put much of the Army on hold in mid-March and forced Army recruiters to rely heavily on virtual recruiting and communications.

"The idea behind it was to get people excited about service to their nation, to wear the cloth of their great nation and be something bigger than themselves," Funk, commander of Army Training and Doctrine Command, said Tuesday during The AUSA Noon Report, a webinar hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army.

The virtual recruiting effort that went into full effect in mid-March has been critical to launching Army National Hiring Days, Funk said during the discussion with retired Gen. Carter Ham, AUSA president and CEO.

He added that just two years ago the Army was not even recruiting over the internet, but "now we've got folks that



'We're hiring, we're looking for those folks that are looking for a way to make a difference in their nation,' Gen. Paul Funk said. (U.S. ARMY/PATRICK BUFFETT)

dominate the information space" as "digital natives."

"That's why we've got Hiring Days going on, because while we're a little behind, the enthusiasm and the professional excellence that our recruiters bring to the force are going to show, and we're going to be able to be just fine at our end strength," Funk predicted.

If the National Hiring Days effort was going to work, Funk said, it was going to "take the Army to do that."

So far, the response has been "remarkable," he said.

"From our Soldier for Life population to all of our combat units, to all of our combat service and service sup-

port units, to the drill sergeants, everybody has kind of stood up and said, 'This is my squad, and if you want to be part of it, come be part of something better than yourself,'" he said.

Funk urged soldiers everywhere to "tell the Army story" and talk about what it's like to be part of a profession with its own norms and values.

"I want you to reach out to the young men and women who are looking for a little direction, that have come out of college and don't have a job," he said. "We're hiring, we're looking for those folks that are looking for a way to make a difference in their nation."

For more on Army National Hiring Days, click here.

### AUSA

From Page 1

Some chapters have already completed their AUSA Day event.

Projects have included awarding scholarships to deserving military children, throwing pizza parties at local veterans' homes, writing thank you notes to first responders, restoring flag poles and cleaning up local cemeteries.

"With our nine regions and 122 chapters around the world, we know that something good happens every single day as a result of AUSA's support," McQuiston said. "But, we're still excited about bringing all the efforts at national, regional and local

levels into sharp focus on one day a year—the day we celebrate AUSA's anniversary."

AUSA was born on July 5, 1950, for a clear purpose: America's foundational military force needed to speak with one voice.

In a joint message, a group of World War II wartime leaders accustomed to protecting their service branch showed they were ready to lock arms for a loftier cause.

"Let us put our resources and efforts into an association that can keep in the forefront the importance and requirements of the cutting edge of our national defense—in particular, the needs of the soldiers and their

families that are the Army," declared top Army leaders from the Infantry Association and Field Artillery Association.

AUSA's first president was Gen. Wade Haislip, an infantry officer serving as Army vice chief of staff. President Harry Truman, a former artilleryman, was the honorary president.

Seventy years later, AUSA's purpose hasn't changed.

As an educational nonprofit, AUSA aims to be the Army's professional association, dedicated to educational development, advancing national security and promoting greater recognition of the Army's vital role in American life, past, present and future.



## Retired leaders say Army must stop 'unfair practices' regarding race

**T**he Army has made much progress with race relations over its history but still “struggles” with creating “an environment that always provides dignity, respect and opportunity for all,” retired Gen. Dennis Via said June 26 during a webinar sponsored by the Association of the U.S. Army.

“We have to recognize it is a problem that needs to be solved and take ownership of it,” said Via, who retired in 2016 as commander of Army Materiel Command after 36 years of service. “These are difficult areas to discuss.”

One suggestion from retired Gen. Vincent Brooks, former commander of U.S. Forces Korea, was to take a closer look at why minorities are more likely to leave the military short of a career, something that may result from the pattern of assignments.

Race and gender have been wrongly used to not put officers into some assignments, he said, calling for “bold action.”

Speaking as part of The AUSA Noon Report, Brooks, who retired in 2019 after 45 years of service, said the Army also needs to identify and stop “perpetrators of unfair practices.”

Additionally, the Army needs to “deliberately” recognize minorities who are doing exceptional work, he said.

“People don’t stay in environments where they don’t feel they belong,” said retired Lt. Gen. Nadja West, a former Army surgeon general, who said she believes there is still an undercurrent in society and the Army that holds doubts about Black officers, particularly Black men.

Her own son, who’s in the Army, has been stopped many times by law enforcement, only once because he was speeding and the other times for no reason.

West said the Army still includes people who see Blacks as being inferior. In her own career, she felt undervalued by fellow officers who believed



The Army needs to deliberately recognize minorities who are doing exceptional work, leaders said. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

she was succeeding because she was a “double minority,” a Black and a woman, a view that minimized her qualifications and hard work.

West, who retired in 2019 after 37 years of service, echoed Brooks’ view that the higher attrition rate of minorities than whites could be the result of the cultural environment.

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. James Sims served 35 years in the Army, with a final assignment as Materiel Command’s senior enlisted soldier, serving at the same time as Via.

He joined the Army in 1983 as an automated parts specialist and had nine MOSs by his retirement in 2018.

Sims cited his own example of being turned down for a command sergeant major’s billet even though he had more experience than his white competitor—a decision he said might have resulted from racial bias, might have been caused by “the good old boy’s network,” or maybe some other reason.

Sims endorsed the Army’s move to remove race as an identifier in promotions and assignment selection.

# AUSAExtra

**Voice for the Army –  
Support For the Soldier**

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## PERK OF THE WEEK

### Last free download of *Battle Digest*

There has been a change in one of our most popular member benefits, *Battle Digest*. AUSA members have had access to free digital copies of each issue as it’s released. The current issue is the final issue members may access for free, but you’ll continue to receive 20% off print subscriptions. Visit [www.ausa.org/battle](http://www.ausa.org/battle) to download *The Battle of Verdun* and learn how German Gen. Erich von Falkenhayn’s failed strategy of attrition created one of the bloodiest battles in history.



## Photos, race and gender cut from promotion board files

**O**fficial photos and data identifying a soldier's race, ethnicity and gender will no longer be part of promotion boards beginning Aug. 1, the Army announced.

The changes are outlined in a June 26 memo signed by Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy and Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville, just one day after senior leaders announced the Army was removing photos from officer promotion boards.

The June 26 memo expands the decision to include warrant officer and enlisted selection boards and calls for identifying race, ethnicity and gender data to be redacted from the Officer Record Brief and the Enlisted Record Brief.

"Diversity is critical to every aspect of talent management in our Army, but it is especially important in the selection board process," the memo states.



The changes are part of Project Inclusion, a new initiative aimed at improving diversity across the force. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

"Our soldiers must be confident that equal opportunity exists at every stage of their career."

The changes are part of Project Inclusion, a new initiative aimed at improving diversity, equality and inclusion across the force.

"We as a leadership team recognize we need to take a harder look at our-

selves and make sure that we're doing all that we can to have a holistic effort to listen to our soldiers, our civilians and our families in enacting initiatives that promote diversity, equity and inclusion," McCarthy said during a press briefing June 25 announcing Project Inclusion.

Army leaders have put together about 20 initiatives to drive diversity and build unit cohesion, McConville added. This includes a comprehensive assessment to ensure the military justice system remains fair for all soldiers, regardless of race.

It's important for Army leaders to talk to their soldiers and have "the uncomfortable kind of conversations that are required to learn more," McCarthy said.

"We know we have to do more," he said, adding that "this will be an enduring effort for the Army."

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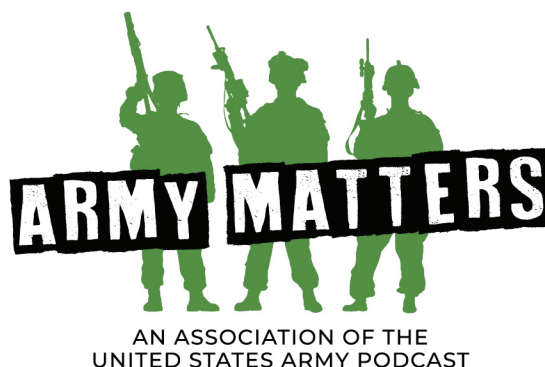
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# New member discounts on shipping, shopping and more

By Susan Rubel

**W**e've launched several new programs to provide even more savings to Association of the U.S. Army members.

Our member benefit partners support AUSA's mission, so please check out your discounts.

## PODS

Members can now save at PODS, or Portable on Demand Storage.

With 20 years of experience and more than 3.7 million deliveries, PODS changed it all with portable storage containers delivered to you and kept in your driveway, stored with them or moved locally or long distance.

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AUSA members save 10% off initial delivery, first month's container rental, and long-distance transportation with promo code AUSA by visiting [www.ausa.org/pods](http://www.ausa.org/pods).

## Member Benefits

## Calm

In these unprecedented times, many of us could use some additional calm.

"Calm" is a meditation, sleep and relaxation app designed to introduce you to the amazing benefits of mindfulness.

Members get an annual subscription for \$29.99, more than half off the public price of \$69.99.

Visit [www.ausa.org/entertain](http://www.ausa.org/entertain) and view "shopping memberships."

## Authentically American

Authentically American's goal is to help bring manufacturing jobs back to America by selling premium, competitively priced apparel that is made in the U.S.

AUSA members receive a 20% discount by using code AUSA20 and 25% off bulk orders.

We're also happy to announce an em-



A discount from Portable on Demand Storage is just one of several new benefit programs available with your AUSA membership. (COURTESY PHOTO)

broidery option, where you can choose to have the AUSA logo embroidered for \$10 more. Visit [www.ausa.org/aa](http://www.ausa.org/aa).

## Goodsey

From jewelry and home décor to pet treats and gourmet goods, Goodsey has something for every occasion.

Whether you're shopping for a birthday, an anniversary or just because, you'll find thoughtful gifts for all of life's special moments.

Members take 15% off with code GDArmy15 at [www.ausa.org/goodsey](http://www.ausa.org/goodsey).

If you're in the gift-giving mood, you also receive discounts at Harry & David, Wolferman's, Simply Chocolate, Stock Yards, the Popcorn Factory, Personalization Universe, Harry & David, Fruit Bouquets and 1800-Baskets, all 1800-Flowers companies.

## Sam's Club

Members receive a \$45 annual Sam's Club membership for just \$24.88, plus a \$5 Sam's Club gift card for total savings of more than \$25.

Visit [www.ausa.org/savings](http://www.ausa.org/savings) today and click the Sam's Club logo.

## UPS Savings

I recently had to return an online order and pay the return fees myself. At the UPS store I learned the fee was going to be \$80—not worth returning because that was almost what I paid for the item.

Then I remembered our AUSA member discount, so I went home and

checked the site. It was only \$40 with my discount, and I arranged for UPS to pick it up from my home.

Whether you have a business shipping many packages or you're an individual with occasional packages, you will save money with this program.

Visit [www.ausa.org/ups](http://www.ausa.org/ups) to sign up or call 1-800-MEMBERS and tell them you're an AUSA member wanting to sign up for UPS discounts.

## Tel-A-Doc

AUSA members have outstanding medical discounts available.

If you don't have telemedicine benefits through your insurance, check out [www.ausa.org/dma](http://www.ausa.org/dma) and sign up for Plan 4 or 5, which includes Tel-A-Doc for just \$5.13 per month.

This gives you 24/7 live doctor access, and members pay nothing any time they have a visit with a doctor anywhere in the U.S.

## GEICO

Members are eligible for additional auto insurance savings at GEICO. Visit [www.ausa.org/geico](http://www.ausa.org/geico) to get a quote.

If you're already insured with GEICO, call them and let them know you're an AUSA member and you'll likely receive additional savings.

If you have any questions or comments about AUSA savings programs, contact me at [srubel@ausa.org](mailto:srubel@ausa.org).

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

## Chapter honors disabled veteran on Army birthday

The Association of the U.S. Army's Sunshine chapter recently conducted a celebratory drive-by event in Chuluota, Florida, to honor retired Spc. Joseph Eason, a disabled veteran with progressive amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

"Specialist Eason has been a long-time supporter of the Sunshine chapter and the annual Army Birthday Ball," said retired 1st Sgt. Daila Espeut-Jones, president of the Orlando, Florida-based chapter. "The idea came to fruition because COVID-19 canceled the annual event, and we didn't want Joe to not be able to celebrate the Army's birthday."

### Sunshine

The drive-by event took place June 14, on the Army's 245th birthday.

Eason joined the Army after high school in 1987. His first four years of service were with the 10th Mountain Division, after which he served with the Florida Army National Guard until 1994.

Eason reenlisted after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

While deployed to Iraq in July 2003, he was hit by a mortar round and severely wounded, retaining 13 pieces of shrapnel in his lower extremities.

After his rehabilitation and medical retirement, Eason worked in the information technology field and is currently attending Syracuse University.

He is also battling amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease, named after the baseball player who was diagnosed with the disease.

ALS is a progressive nervous system disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, causing loss of muscle control, according to the Mayo Clinic.

The drive-by event drew a large crowd including chapter members, the Patriot Guard Riders, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10139, Civilian



Retired Spc. Joseph Eason, right, received challenge coins from several groups, including the AUSA Sunshine chapter and the Patriot Guard Riders. (AUSA PHOTO)

Aides to the Secretary of the Army Allie Braswell and Landy Dunham, and other well-wishers, Espeut-Jones said.

The procession consisted of several vehicles and motorcycles stretching about a mile long, with a law enforcement escort provided by the Seminole County Sheriff's Office.



Retired Spc. Joseph Eason and his wife and caregiver, Karen. (AUSA PHOTO)

The convoy moved from Lawton Chiles High School in Oviedo, Florida, to Eason's home in Chuluota.

Upon arrival, attendees gathered on the lawn and participated in a military-style ceremony hosted by Espeut-Jones.

Friends, family members and guests dressed in formal and military dress attire in recognition of the annual Army birthday ball.

Attendees sang the national anthem and the Army song, and a special salute was rendered to Eason.

He was presented with an Army statue, a centerpiece made especially for the ball, an AUSA certificate of appreciation and challenge coins from the Sunshine chapter, the two CASAs, Army Contracting Command-Orlando and the Patriot Guard Riders.

Eason also received a flag representing his last unit of assignment, the 10th Mountain Division.

"His wife, Karen Eason, read a very touching message on Joe's behalf," Espeut-Jones said. "There were no dry eyes during the reading of the message."





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