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Registration is required to view programming and visit the exhibit halls during AUSA Now, the 2020 virtual annual meeting of the Association of the U.S. Army. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. MITCHELL RYAN)

Registration opens for AUSA Now

Registration is now open for AUSA Now, the 2020 virtual annual meeting of the Association of the U.S. Army that will be held Oct. 13–16.

A combination of live and prerecorded programming is planned, including an opening day address from Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville and many other Army leaders also will speak.

A splashy opening ceremony is planned for Oct. 13, beginning about 10 a.m.

The schedule for other programs will be set to accommodate live viewing in most time zones.

Several contemporary military forums are planned, as well as special

programs for NCOs and soldiers featuring Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston, military family seminars and a town hall meeting with Army leaders, and programs aimed at the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and for cadets at the U.S. Military Academy, ROTC and Officer Candidate School.

Retirement planning and benefits presentations are also in the works.

The final day of AUSA Now is set aside for AUSA chapter and region events.

Simultaneous streaming is planned over multiple channels to accommodate the varied programming, which will include Warriors Corner presentations from the Army, xTech-Search briefs from competitors in the Army's innovation competition, and seminars for small businesses, including the ability to speak directly to Army representatives.

Virtual exhibits will also be part of AUSA Now, including industry engagement opportunities.

Registration is required to view programming and visit the exhibit halls. There is no fee. Membership in AUSA is encouraged but not required, and some member-only promotions are expected.

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



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McCarthy: Tough conversations about race will continue

The demonstrations and emotional calls for social justice across the country this summer led to tough conversations between Army leaders and their soldiers—and Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy plans to continue those talks as the service works to eliminate bias in the ranks.

The death of George Floyd while in the custody of Minneapolis police officers reverberated across the country, McCarthy said.

“It was a powder keg that ignited the country, and the anger and the frustration spilled out on the streets, and, quite frankly, they should have,” he said during a virtual discussion hosted by the Reagan National Defense Forum.

During “significant protests” in Washington, D.C., McCarthy was out in the streets, talking to the National Guard soldiers and airmen mobilized to support local authorities.

“We didn’t have a single soldier or airman put a hand on a protester. If anything, they were giving hugs and handing out water, but being out



‘I don’t know what it’s like to be a Black man in America, but I’ve got to listen. I’ve got to learn,’ Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy said. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. JAMES HARVEY)

there, you see it and you feel it,” McCarthy said.

In response, Army senior leaders have resolved to listen, learn and put in place initiatives to make sure every soldier can meet his or her potential.

“I don’t know what it’s like to be a

Black man in America, but I’ve got to listen. I’ve got to learn,” McCarthy said. “Twenty percent of our formation represents that demographic. You know that tension is in our ranks, it’s in our cities, so we’re going around the country, we’re having sensing sessions.”

Army must remain nonpartisan in ‘political environment’

Arrmy Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said it is the Army’s duty to remain nonpartisan and nonpolitical, and to “bring the force together to make everyone feel part of the team.”

Speaking at a virtual conference in a politically charged year, McConville said the Army’s mission is to take a closer look “at the things that may divide us” while building cohesive teams.

He declined to talk about politics or politicians but acknowledged “we live in a political environment.”

“We should not wake up every day and take for granted the trust of the nation,” McConville said.

Keeping that trust means having an Army that reflects the nation’s diversity and allows inclusion, some-

thing that McConville said he and other Army leaders are striving to provide.

“When we have issues—racism or anything else that divides this nation—we should take action,” he said.

“Any kind of racism or extremism in our Army has to be totally eliminated. We cannot have those type of things,” he said. People with extremist or racist views “cannot serve in our Army.”

Asked about the Army’s role in domestic policing, particularly in the face of protests and riots, McConville said domestic deployments of active-duty troops should happen only in “extreme conditions.”

“The job of the American military is to protect the nation, not police the nation,” he said.



Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said the service’s mission is to take a closer look at divisive issues while building cohesive teams. (U.S. ARMY/LAURA BUCHTA)

Soldiers to be recognized for heroic actions in separate Iraq missions



Sgt. Maj. Thomas Payne. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

A special operations soldier will receive the Medal of Honor for his role in a daring hostage rescue mission in 2015 in Iraq, while a second soldier could posthumously be awarded the nation's highest award for valor for his actions in 2005.

Sgt. Maj. Thomas Payne will receive the Medal of Honor during a ceremony Friday at the White House.

Payne, a Ranger assigned to Army Special Operations Command who has deployed 17 times, will be the seventh service member—and second living recipient—to receive the Medal of Honor for actions in Iraq.

A posthumous Medal of Honor could be awarded later this year to Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn Cashe, who died in 2005 from wounds suffered while trying to rescue his fellow soldiers from a burning Bradley Fighting Vehicle in Iraq.

Cashe and his soldiers from 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, were on patrol in Samarra on Oct. 17, 2005, when their Bradley was hit by a bomb.

Cashe suffered second- and third-degree burns over 70% of his body when he ran back into the Bradley multiple times to rescue soldiers trapped inside, the Associated Press reported.

He died Nov. 8, 2005.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper endorsed the Medal of Honor for Cashe.

Now Congress must waive the five-year time limit, and it must be ap-



Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn Cashe. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

proved by the president.

On Oct. 22, 2015, Payne, then a sergeant first class, was an assistant team leader on the mission to rescue hostages being held by the Islamic State group in Hawija.

"With speed, audacity and courage, he first led his team as they quickly cleared the assigned building, liberating 38 hostages," according to the White House.

Payne then heard a call on the radio for help clearing the other building, and he and a teammate exposed themselves to enemy fire as they bounded across the compound.

Payne entered the building under intense enemy fire, amid smoke, heat and flames, to find the armored door that was imprisoning the hostages, according to the White House.

Payne and other members of his team took turns using bolt cutters to cut the locks on the door.

Choking on smoke and heat, Payne reentered the building once again and finally broke through the door, freeing 37 hostages.

He made sure every hostage was safe before evacuating the compound.

Payne said he doesn't consider himself the recipient of the Medal of Honor.

"I consider myself the guardian of this medal," he said. "What is important for me is my teammates' legacies will live on with this Medal of Honor."

AUSAExtra

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Army seeks feedback on Arlington burial restrictions

Members of the public can register to view upcoming virtual meetings to discuss capacity challenges facing Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, which is quickly running out of space.

The public also can submit in advance comments or feedback before the meetings, which come as the Army is proposing new criteria that would dramatically tighten the eligibility criteria for burial at the cemetery.

If approved, the new criteria would limit the number of service members eligible for below-ground interment at the cemetery and restrict even farther those who would qualify for above-ground inurnment.

The fiscal 2019 National Defense Authorization Act directed the Army secretary to establish revised eligibility criteria to keep the cemetery functioning as an active burial ground “well into the future,” the Army said last fall when it first revealed the proposed changes.

The cemetery just outside Washington, D.C., one of America’s most hallowed grounds, is running out of room, and there have been several initiatives to try to preserve space for the future, including expansion projects and proposals to tighten eligibility requirements for burial there.

The Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery’s honor subcommittee will meet from 2–4 p.m. Eastern time Sept. 21. The full committee, an independent group chartered to provide the Army secretary advice and recommendations on the cemetery, meets from 2–4 p.m. Eastern Sept. 22.

Both bodies will receive briefings on the current burial demand and capacity challenges impacting the life of the cemetery, among other topics.

Also meeting is the remember and explore subcommittee, which will convene from 9 a.m. to noon Eastern Sept. 21 to discuss ways to maintain the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Monument and other issues pertain-



Soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) conduct military funeral honors for WWII veteran Carl Mann at Arlington National Cemetery. (U.S. ARMY/ELIZABETH FRASER)

ing to commemorative monuments at the cemetery.

Those who wish to attend or submit their comments should contact Matthew Davis at matthew.r.davis.civ@mail.mil or 1-877-907-8585.

For more on the meetings, click [here](#).

To attend a meeting, submit your full name, organization, email address and phone number, and which meeting you would like to attend. Requests must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Sept. 17.

Written comments must include the author’s name, title or affiliation, address and phone number and be submitted via e-mail at least seven days before the appropriate meeting.

Proposed changes

During fiscal 2018, about 6,500 service members, veterans and eligible family members were buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

The proposed changes come after more than two and a half years of deliberation, public outreach and surveys, including feedback from veterans and military service organizations, according to the Army.

If no changes are made, the cemetery will be closed to new interments by the mid-2050s, the Army said.

The proposal directs the cemetery to preserve 1,000 gravesites for current and future Medal of Honor recipients.

It also would restrict below-ground interment for service members who are killed in action, recipients of the Silver Star or above who also served in combat, Purple Heart recipients, combat-related service deaths while conducting uniquely military activities, former prisoners of war, presidents and vice presidents of the United States, and veterans with combat service who also served out of uniform as a government official and made significant contributions to the nation’s security at the highest levels of public service.

Above-ground inurnment in vaults would be reserved for World War II-era veterans, to include legislated active-duty designees; retirees from the armed forces who are eligible for retired pay but are not otherwise eligible for interment; veterans who have served at least two years on active duty and who have served in combat; and veterans without combat service who also served out of uniform as a government official and made significant contributions to the nation’s security at the highest levels of public service.

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

Chapters honored for supporting NCOs and soldiers

By Victoria McAdoo

Twelve Association of the U.S. Army chapters are the proud recipients of the new NCO and Soldier Programs ribbon.

The icy blue ribbon, AUSA's newest ribbon, was launched in March with the goal of encouraging AUSA chapters to increase programming for and focus on NCOs and soldiers.

The first ribbons will be awarded as part of the presentations given to chapter presidents during AUSA Now, the 2020 virtual annual meeting scheduled for Oct. 13–16.

The chapters being honored this year are:

- Dix
- Capital District of New York
- Fort Campbell
- Major General Harry Greene, Aberdeen
- Fort Rucker-Wiregrass
- Greater Augusta-Fort Gordon
- Marne
- Braxton Bragg
- Arkansas
- Henry Leavenworth
- Rock Island Arsenal
- Pikes Peak

One requirement to earn the ribbon was the appointment of a chapter vice

NCO & Soldier Programs

president of NCO and Soldier Affairs, with the goal of connecting chapters with NCO and Soldier Programs at the national level.

The person in this position is responsible for helping to create, assist with and implement programming directly related to NCOs and soldiers.

Retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel Dailey, vice president of NCO and Soldier Programs at AUSA headquarters, will host a virtual meet and greet for the newly appointed chapter NCO vice presidents in mid-September.

Other requirements for earning the ribbon include having an actively serving NCO or soldier from any Army component on the chapter board; participating in an NCO or soldier recognition or retiree award ceremony;



The new ribbon was launched in March with the goal of encouraging AUSA chapters to increase programming for and focus on NCOs and soldiers. (U.S. ARMY/CLAUDIA LAMANTIA)

hosting an event with a like-minded organization; and hosting a leadership seminar led by a senior NCO.

Chapter Plus Challenge

The AUSA NCO and Soldier Programs team also wants to congratulate this year's Chapter Plus Challenge winners.

This year's winner is the Pikes Peak chapter. The Fort Campbell chapter came in second place, followed by the Greater New York-Statue of Liberty chapter.

The Chapter Plus Challenge was created to encourage chapters to produce additional programming geared toward NCOs and soldiers.

Completing the challenge required the following steps:

- Participate in a local chamber of commerce event
- Host an AUSA livestream viewing party, Soldier Today discussion group or podcast listening party featuring an NCO or soldier as a guest
- Register five new actively serving soldiers as AUSA members
- Conduct a briefing to speak about the benefits of AUSA membership

- Host an additional NCO leadership seminar

Chapter presidents were then asked to submit a summary of all the relevant events.

This year's top three chapters will receive a monetary award to use for future programs and events.

Despite the late start and the added challenge and restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, AUSA chapters continued to do what they all do so well—constant providers of events, programming and services to local members, soldiers and communities.

It is our hope that chapters see the value in obtaining the NCO and Soldier Programs ribbon, just like the other ribbons they strive for throughout the year.

The AUSA NCO and Soldier Programs team is looking forward to highlighting the efforts and achievements of all the chapters, their volunteers and their local military communities.

For more information, please contact me at vmcadoo@ausa.org.

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

Commendation medal awarded to chapter president

The president of the Association of the U.S. Army's Fort Pitt chapter received a Pennsylvania Commendation Medal for his contributions to the Meet Your Army-Pittsburgh outreach event.

Carlos Carmona, president of the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania-based chapter, received the award from Rory Cooper, civilian aide to the secretary of the Army for Pennsylvania (West) and Maj. Nicholas O'Brien of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

"AUSA in Pittsburgh was the key veteran service organization involved in the planning and execution of Meet Your Army-Pittsburgh. We worked very closely with the Pennsylvania National Guard, Army Reserve and Army Recruiting Command," Carmona said.

The chapter worked with recruiters from all components to target key high schools to engage in senior leader discussions, he said.

The National Guard provided senior leaders to meet with school superintendents and administrators, discuss key programs and promote Army participation in the schools.

These visits resulted in some schools



Right to left: Rory Cooper, civilian aide to the secretary of the Army for Pennsylvania (West), Carlos Carmona, his wife Beth, son Dakota and daughter Hope. (AUSA PHOTO)

going from no military involvement to requesting Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery tests for the following school year. Other schools asked for Army leaders and recruiters to return next year.

Chapter members also set up a senior leader and senior corporate executive luncheon for a handful of local companies to meet and discuss veteran hiring, Carmona said.

Finally, the chapter worked with Cooper to increase military involve-

ment in the Pittsburgh Marathon by setting up and paying for local military units to participate in the marathon relay and paying for National Guard and Best Ranger winners to participate in the marathon and provide visibility.

They also coordinated to have military formation runs during the children's marathon and Pittsburgh 5K race and for military leaders to be at the finish line and present medals to marathon finishers, Carmona said.

Chapter presents scholarships to outstanding students

The Association of the U.S. Army's Fort Rucker-Wiregrass chapter recently awarded \$10,000 in scholarships to outstanding local students.

Ten high school seniors and undergraduates received \$1,000 toward their continuing education.

Scholarships are based on academic achievement, personal achievement and community involvement, according to a Facebook post from the chapter.

The funds may be used for tuition

and other academic expenses.

"Seeing these young Americans strive for greatness and work diligently towards their goals is truly inspiring," said Kevin Shoun, the chapter's vice president of scholarships for the past two years. "I am excited to see what the future holds for this year's scholarship winners."

The scholarship recipients are:

- Alison Best of Fort Rucker, University of Texas at Austin
- Mackenzie Capehart of New Brockton, University of Alabama
- Christina Haken of Enterprise, Samford University

- Matthew Hutson of Enterprise, University of Alabama

- Corinna Jones of Enterprise, Barnard College of Columbia University, New York

- Sarah Jane Levine of Enterprise, Auburn University

- Kaitlin McInnis of Enterprise, University of Alabama at Birmingham

- Joanna Paris of Ozark, Naval Academy Preparatory School, followed by the U.S. Naval Academy

- Lauren Tucker of Fort Rucker, Auburn University

- Wyatt Wymann of Newton, Marion Military Institute



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