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Army Secretary Christine Wormuth speaks during the opening ceremony of the Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

Wormuth: Army transforming to face uncertain future

Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth didn't sugarcoat the challenges facing the force.

"Today's Army must ask hard questions," she said, including thinking about how and when enemies choose to fight, what that might mean for the future of landpower and how the Army can best contribute to multidomain operations. "I am not convinced that we have fully thought our way through all of the challenges we may face in the future," she said.

But she also expressed confidence in what the Army could do.

"We aren't just any Army. We are America's Army," she said Monday during a keynote speech at the Association of the U.S. Army's 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition, held at the D.C. convention center.

"Every year is a busy year for the Army, but this year was extraordinary," she said, noting the major role played by troops in battling the COVID-19 health crisis, responding to natural disasters and completing the dangerous and risky withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan.

"We have a lot to be proud of, but we also have a lot of work to do," she said.

The Army is at a strategic crossroads, she said, facing expanding challenges at times of flat budgets.

China and Russia "went to school" on U.S. counterinsurgency operations and the American way of war, and they are both "steadily modernizing their militaries, including building advanced space, cyber and disinformation capabilities."

See **Wormuth**, Page 6

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‘Challenging time’ made Army stronger, McConville says

Coming out of a busy and challenging year, America’s Army remains committed to its priorities as it transforms for the future, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said.

“This has been a uniquely challenging time for the Army, but each challenge and each crisis has only made us stronger,” McConville said Tuesday during the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presentation at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C. “We have never wavered on our priorities.”

People remain the No. 1 priority, McConville said, followed by readiness and modernization.

“This past year has reminded us time and time again why people are our No. 1 priority and why it’s so important to get the right people in the right place at the right time,” he said.

From medical soldiers who supported COVID-19 missions at home to soldiers who deployed to support the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, soldiers continue to respond whenever called, he said.

Putting people first means building cohesive teams that are “highly trained, disciplined and fit and are ready to fight and win, where each person is treated with dignity and respect,” McConville said. It also means improving quality of life for soldiers



Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville speaks at the Eisenhower Presentation during the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

and families and pursuing talent management programs, he said.

“Putting people first means taking care of our people so our people can remain ready and transform for the future,” McConville said, “because the United States Army must be ready to fight and win as a member of the joint force in order to protect the nation.”

As the Army builds the force, it is focused on foundational readiness, McConville said. That means building readiness “from the soldier up” with troops who are masters of their craft and giving small-unit leaders the time they need to build cohesive teams.

On top of these efforts, the Army is

modernizing its doctrine, technology and command and control systems, McConville said.

From leap-ahead equipment to the Project Convergence exercises, which put soldiers in the dirt with scientists to test new technologies, the Army’s ambitious modernization effort is already producing results, he said.

By fiscal 2023, the Army plans to field hypersonic missiles, fly prototypes of its next-generation assault and attack aircraft, field the Next-Generation Squad Weapon, test prototypes of the Optionally Manned Fighting Vehicle, field prototypes of a directed energy-based system to counter unmanned aerial systems—a threat McConville called the improvised explosive devices of the future—and more.

“All told, we’ll have 24 of our 31 plus 4 signature systems in the hands of soldiers by FY23,” McConville said, referring to the Army’s priority modernization programs.

All its efforts are focused on one purpose, McConville said.

“The United States Army exists for one reason, to protect this great nation from all enemies, both foreign and domestic,” he said. “We do this by remaining ready to fight and win the nation’s next wars.”



The Army is focused on building readiness ‘from the soldier up’ with troops who are masters of their craft, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Preston receives Marshall Medal for selfless service to soldiers, Army



Retired Gen. Bob Brown, left, AUSA president and CEO, presents the George Catlett Marshall Medal to retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston. (AUSA PHOTO)

The Association of the U.S. Army's highest award for dedicated and selfless service to the nation was presented Wednesday to retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston, a career cavalry soldier who dedicated himself to improving the military profession and making lives better for troops and their families.

Preston, a former AUSA vice president for NCO and Soldier Programs, retired from active duty with 36 years of service after a final assignment as senior enlisted adviser to two successive Army chiefs of staff.

He is the first NCO to receive AUSA's top award.

Preston "epitomizes what it means to be a truly humble, dedicated and inspirational leader," said retired Gen. Bob Brown, AUSA president and CEO. "In my opinion, it is about time that an NCO—the backbone of our Army—received the Marshall Medal."

In his post-service life, Preston worked for a nonprofit providing housing for severely wounded veterans, co-chaired the Army chief of staff's Retired Soldier Council, and served on the boards of the USO, the Army Historical Foundation, the Army and Cavalry Heritage Foundation and

many other groups.

"Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston has had a lasting impact on the United States Army, more than its current, former and future soldiers and families will ever know," says his medal citation.

His wife, Karen, their daughter and two sons and 10 grandchildren were in the audience for the medal presentation on the final day of AUSA's 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition.

Preston said he was "a little amazed, a little overwhelmed and very humbled" to receive the award.

In a room filled with soldiers he'd served with and other friends, Preston said, "There is no doubt in my mind as I stand here before you that each of you, in so many ways, influenced, forged and molded me."

It was like modeling a sculpture, Preston said.

"In my time in the Army, time spent with many of you was very special and filled with countless memories," he said, adding that he remembered the joys of "crazy jobs" and missions that were often carried out in the rain, cold or scorching heat.

"I am who I am today because of you," he said.

AUSA Extra

Voice for the Army –
Support For the Soldier

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Army names winners of 2021 Best Warrior Competition

The winners of the Army's 20th annual Best Warrior Competition were announced Monday during the Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C.

The Soldier of the Year is Spc. Justin Earnhart of Army Futures Command, and the NCO of the Year is Sgt. Adam Krauland of U.S. Army Pacific.

"Our Army has gone through so much in the last 18 months. I am so proud to be standing with you today," said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston, who oversaw the competition.

Earnhart is a human intelligence collector who enlisted in 2019, while Krauland, who enlisted in 2017, is a signals intelligence voice interceptor.

Both soldiers were promoted, to sergeant and staff sergeant, respectively, by Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville and Grinston during the AUSA annual meeting.

Earnhart and Krauland emerged as the top contenders after 24 soldiers and NCOs representing 12 commands across the Army participated in the competition at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and in Washington, D.C., from Oct. 3-8.

"It's powerful to recognize and celebrate excellence," said Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Joseph Martin, the event's keynote speaker.

Each Best Warrior competitor has dedicated themselves to the pursuit of excellence, he said, "striving to reach the very heights of their profession."

"You are the best of the best, and words can't describe how proud I am of all of you," Martin said.

Excellence should not be an exception but "a prevailing attitude," he said. "[Best Warrior] competitors have that attitude, and we must spread it throughout the Army."

Honorary SMA

Grinston also announced that actor Denzel Washington is this year's Honorary Sergeant Major of the Army, a tradition that began in 2016



At the AUSA Annual Meeting are, left to right, Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Joseph Martin, Soldier of the Year Spc. Justin Earnhart, NCO of the Year Sgt. Adam Krauland and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston. (AUSA PHOTO)

when retired Gen. Gordon Sullivan, a past president and CEO of AUSA, received the honor.

This year, Washington was selected for his donations to the Fisher House Foundation, which builds comfort homes where families of service members and veterans can stay for free while their loved one is in the hospital.

During a presentation ceremony that took place prior to AUSA's conference, Washington said he was deeply moved to be chosen.

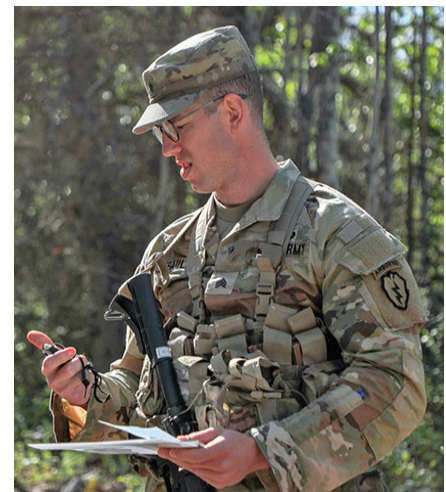
"Today is the first day of the rest of

my life. I'm a soldier now. I'll continue to do the right thing for the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps," he said.

Past honorees include legendary Army Ranger retired Lt. Gen. David Grange Jr.; former Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Frederick Kroesen; Elaine Rogers, CEO of USO-Metro; retired Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth "Rock" Merritt, veteran of D-Day, Operation Market Garden and the Battle of the Bulge; and retired Gen. Carl Vuono, a former Army chief of staff who is a member of AUSA's board of directors.



Spc. Justin Earnhart pulls security during the Army Futures Command Best Warrior Competition. (U.S. ARMY/PFC. JOSHUA TAECKENS)



Sgt. Adam Krauland conducts land navigation during the U.S. Army Pacific Best Warrior Competition. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. CHRISTOPHER DENNIS)

Grinston asks NCOs to ‘acknowledge’ struggles of soldiers

Working to get after some of the social challenges facing the force, the Army’s top enlisted leader urged NCOs to think differently about what it means to take care of their soldiers.

Outlining his top priorities Wednesday during a forum for NCOs at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C., Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston took aim at the phrase, “All I see is green,” that has become a way of telling soldiers they are all being treated equally.

“I think I learn best through my failures, and I used to say, ‘All I see is green, one standard,’ and somebody said to me one time, ‘When you say that to me, you’re not acknowledging when I take the uniform off, I will be treated differently,’” Grinston recalled. “As a leader, I wasn’t even acknowledging that this person would be struggling when they drive out the gate or that somebody wouldn’t serve them at a restaurant or whatever would happen.”

“There are standards and discipline in the Army. That is our foundation, but there are other things that are your foundation, and as a leader, you need to know that you need to acknowledge it and then recognize it and don’t ignore it,” he said.



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston discusses his initiatives and priorities for the force during a forum at the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

Grinston evoked the difficult conversations that might have taken place in 2020 after the widespread civil unrest prompted by racial inequalities.

“What was happening inside [some soldiers] ... during the unrest was, ‘I’m dealing with all this rage and pain, right here, right now, and you won’t even acknowledge it as a lead-

er,’” Grinston bellowed. “I don’t think that’s the way you should do it. Just acknowledge it, and then let’s have this conversation. You may struggle with it, but don’t ignore it. Maybe it’s an argument, but that’s what families do.”

He lamented that suicides have gone up and shared details of an email he received in the previous 48 hours of a soldier who died by suicide.

He said the soldier’s mother had been trying to call the unit to ask someone to check on her son, whom she hadn’t been able to reach.

“What that instantly says to me is, are you actually building a cohesive team? Why didn’t the mother have the unit’s number?” Grinston asked.

There is no substitute for that personal interaction, he said, describing a recent day when he spent six hours in his car visiting his soldiers in the Washington, D.C., area. He pointed out that if the sergeant major of the Army can tell the Army chief of staff that he’s taking a day off to see his soldiers, then it can be done at the company, battery and troop levels, too.

“Plan it, put it on your calendar and do it. We’ve got to check on our soldiers,” Grinston said. “If you don’t have time to go do those things, you may end up being consumed with very bad things. Do it before you lose someone in your organization.”

Wormuth

From Page 1

This is a major concern, she said.

“If deterrence fails and either China or Russia makes the strategic mistake of threatening our vital interests with military aggression, we can no longer count on having months to project combat power overseas from an uncontested homeland, nor can we count on quickly establishing air superiority so that our forces can precisely strike targets with relative impunity,” she said. “We could even face attacks here in the United States itself.”

Wormuth expressed confidence, saying, “We are up to the challenge if we move decisively.”

“The future is a lot closer than some of us think,” she said. “Fortunately, the Army has not been standing still. Far from it. We are designing new formations to bring us into the future where you’re innovating and experimenting. We are developing new weapons systems so that we remain the world’s premier land force.”

Today’s Army has substantially transformed how it modernizes and develops weapons while also focusing

on soldier-centered design, she said.

In fiscal year 2022, she expects to see prototypes of directed energy weapons and fielding of robotic combat vehicles. More weapons will appear in following years.

“I am very proud of what the Army has accomplished, but we have so much more work ahead,” she said. “Change is hard when there is uncertainty about what the future will bring. There are no easy changes to make. I feel this pressure myself, but we can no longer defer the big decisions about how to forge the Army we need for the future.”

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POWER TO PROTECT

Senior leaders hear from Army families at AUSA meeting

The Army's top leaders fielded questions from family members on a variety of issues—from marijuana use to food insecurity to moving household goods—while reassuring them that no matter what the issue, the leaders are there to help.

“Every time we do this, I learn more and more about our Army,” Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said Tuesday at the Association of the U.S. Army's 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition, held at the D.C. convention center.

“I just ask of our families, if you ever have a problem, bring it up to the chain of command, get it up to us. It could be policy, it could be just execution at a certain level, but we have a program for just about everything in the Army,” he said. “We don't necessarily ... always get it right, but there are a lot of people working hard to take care of families, and we want to make sure we're doing that.”

Army Secretary Christine Wormuth, noting that this was her first time at the AUSA Annual Meeting in years, took a surprise question about marijuana use, explaining that while weed is legal in several states, the Army is “grappling with and sorting through” some instances of positive drug tests, including some cases with prospective soldiers.

“We are running into the fact that many Americans are growing up in states where marijuana is legal,” she said.

Wormuth also explained that soldiers can get waivers if they have legitimate health or religious reasons for not wanting to get the COVID-19 vaccine, but she reminded the audience that the vaccine requirement is a legal order from the secretary of defense.

“It's so helpful for us to hear directly from families about what their concerns are, whether they're very specific concerns that we're able to follow up on in short order or whether they're about some of these broader policy is-



Left to right, Army Secretary Christine Wormuth, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston address questions from military family members during the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

sues,” Wormuth said. “We value the opportunity to hear directly from you.

A chunk of the 90-minute forum was spent discussing some of the issues that arise during permanent change-of-station moves and delays in receiving household goods. Things are getting better, McConville said, “but we're still seeing people having problems.”

McConville noted that the supply chain delays and shortages caused across the country by the COVID-19 pandemic have also affected the Army's ability to enforce standards for moving companies. However, he and



First Sgt. Justin Dixon of the 82nd Airborne Division and his wife, Tawni, AUSA's Volunteer Family of the Year, stand with Holly Dailey, AUSA's director of Family Readiness, during the town hall forum. (AUSA PHOTO)

Lt. Gen. Duane Gamble, the Army deputy chief of staff for logistics, beseeched families to file inconvenience claims so the Army can hold industry accountable for excessive delays.

Addressing a question about food insecurity among the troops, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston acknowledged that some soldiers had indicated as much in recent surveys.

He noted, however, that it could be more an issue of educating soldiers on how to budget their money so that feeding their families is not secondary to buying a snazzy car or a boat.

“If a soldier needs food, we have food, we're going to get them food, but we also want to help them manage their money,” Grinston said during the forum.

The leaders also addressed questions about access to behavioral health care, the Exceptional Family Member Program, recreational programs, the Army Emergency Relief Fund, domestic violence and spousal employment.

“When you bring us difficult things, that's what we do,” Grinston said. “That's what makes our Army great. We may not have the answers, but we take those hard, difficult questions on and we don't forget about it, and we've had those at these family forums.”

Leaders of character create reliable, cohesive teams

Character, not weaponry or any material goods, is the Army's most valuable asset, retired Gen. David Perkins said at the Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition.

"The secret sauce to the United States Army... [is] the character and cohesion, built on trust, of the people in the Army, and the good thing about that is it can't be stolen," said Perkins, a former commander of Army Training and Doctrine Command. "Without those things, you can't even start thinking about doing the things that we do day in and day out in the Army."

Character is cultivated, said Lt. Gen. Darryl Williams, superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. The men were part of a contemporary military forum on how character is the building block for cohesive teams.

"Character is caught, character is taught, and character is sought," Williams said. "It's very important that they catch our goals, our character, our ethos, how we aspire to being in the Army."

West Point encourages its cadets to "live honorably, lead honorably and demonstrate excellence," including during hard moments at summer



Lt. Gen. Darryl Williams, West Point superintendent, speaks during a forum at the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

training, said Cadet Holland Pratt, first captain of the Corps of Cadets.

For Pratt, character boils down to one question: Who can be relied upon when things get hard?

"All those scenarios require that you get through hard moments, whether that be adverse weather conditions, whether that be physically strenuous events," Pratt said. "What are the traits of people that define good character ... that I can rely on and go to when things get hard?"

That ability to rely on teammates also is key to readiness and accomplishing the mission, Pratt said.

"Your team was successful not because you guys all had individual techniques that made you special," she said. "Your team was successful because you could all rely on one another to do your individual parts to accomplish that mission set."



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Garrett ‘concerned’ about stress on Guard, Reserve

Service members in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve are critical to the Army’s success, but this upcoming year may be an opportunity for leaders to reassess what citizen-soldiers are called upon to do, a senior Army leader said.

“We would have failed a long time ago were it not for the Army Guard and the Army Reserve,” said Gen. Michael Garrett, commanding general of Army Forces Command. “Thank you for not only serving in our reserve component, but thank you for serving with the level of stamina and resilience you and your soldiers bring to your mission.”

Speaking Monday during the Moorhead National Guard/Army Reserve Forum at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C., Garrett said it’s not enough that America has the National Guard and Army Reserve.

“We need you to be ready to fight and win the nation’s wars, and that takes work, that takes planning, it takes blood, sweat and tears, and it takes your hearts and your souls,” he said.

Garrett said he is concerned about the readiness of some Guard and Reserve units, “especially over the last 20 months.”

Reserve component soldiers have been called upon to help fight the



Gen. Michael Garrett, commander of Army Forces Command, speaks at a National Guard and Army Reserve Forum during the 2021 AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

COVID-19 pandemic, provide security at the U.S. Capitol, support the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, respond to wildfires, floods and hurricanes, and more, Garrett said.

“All of these missions consume readiness, and no amount of blood, sweat, tears and soul alone can rebuild or sustain this readiness,” he said. “I cannot expect any more from Army National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers than you’ve already been giving.”

Some in the reserve component may not agree and instead want more tasks, Garrett said. But as he talks to young officers and NCOs, “I am con-

cerned,” he said.

“There have been a number of young men and women who have to make tough decisions about doing what they love, and that’s serving in the Army, but also doing those things that they have to do for their families,” he said.

The new year, 2022, could be the Army’s opportunity to “reset” what it asks of the Guard and Reserve, Garrett said.

“Should we adjust the ways in which we consume the readiness that you work so hard to build? I don’t know the way forward, but for the sake of candid discussion, you deserve to know what’s on my mind,” he said.

To start, the Army is rolling out the Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model, or ReARMM, its new force generation model “designed to provide more stability and predictability for our forces,” he said.

“We’re working very hard to extend this to the Guard and Reserve to provide them the very same level of predictability that we seek [in the active component],” he said.

Garrett encouraged Guard and Reserve leaders to have “tough conversations” about their people, their force and their readiness expectations.

“I am always interested in hearing your perspective,” he said.



A soldier with the Louisiana National Guard helps with rescue operations in LaPlace, Louisiana, after Hurricane Ida tore through the area. (NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO)

Project Convergence helps shape future of the Army

Project Convergence 21 kicked off Tuesday as senior leaders outlined the importance of this “campaign of learning” to the Army’s efforts to shape the force for the future.

“It informs how the Army’s going to fight in the future and how we organize for the future, and it also informs our [science and technology] investments going forward,” said Lt. Gen. James Richardson, deputy commanding general of Army Futures Command.

Speaking at a contemporary military forum at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition, Richardson said Project Convergence is not just a single event at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona.

“We have had 22 events this year that have led up to Project Convergence 21,” he said.

Leaders envision the six weeks soldiers will spend at Yuma Proving Ground and other locations starting Tuesday as more of a capstone event, said Gen. Mike Murray, commanding general of Futures Command.

“It’s a year’s worth of experimentation with a capstone event,” he said, adding that “at its heart, Project



Gen. Mike Murray, commander of Army Futures Command, discusses Project Convergence 21 during a forum at the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

Convergence is a campaign of learning for the Army, and it’s more than just the technology.”

The technology and how it’s used “really drives us to begin to learn about how we will have to fight differently in the future,” Murray said.

It’ll also help the Army determine what types of units are no longer valuable on the future battlefield, what units must be modified, and

what new units are needed, he said.

This year, Project Convergence will include the other services, Richardson said.

“We’ve done that because we don’t fight as an Army, we fight as a joint team,” he said.

Three-star representatives from all the services, including the Space Force, have been planning and preparing for Project Convergence 21 for months, Richardson said.

Project Convergence 21 was “joint from inception,” Murray said, and the exercises will study seven “joint problems we think future joint force commanders will face in the future.”

Also this year, soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division and the Multi-Domain Task Force at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, will be the centerpieces of the six-week exercise.

“It’s soldiers in the dirt with scientists, looking at these technologies, experimenting with these technologies,” Richardson said. “Some things are going to work, and some things are not ... it’s a good thing to call the ball and stop spending money if something is not going to work.”



An autonomous weapons system known as Origin maneuvers through desert terrain during Project Convergence 20 at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Sustainment transformation requires tactical planning

There will be no place to hide from the violence, speed and lethality of future warfare, where the enemy will be able to “pretty much see the whole battlefield,” the Army’s top operations officer said.

During a forum Tuesday to discuss the transformation of the Army’s sustainment capabilities, Lt. Gen. James Rainey, deputy Army chief of staff for operations, said the “rear area” of the future fight “is going to be like the worst day we saw in [2005–2006] in downtown Baghdad.”

“It’s going to be violent, it’s going to be contested, and there’s no sanctuary. There’s no place where you can relax or rest or let your guard down,” Rainey said during the forum at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition, held at the D.C. convention center.

“We’re going to fight an enemy that



Lt. Gen. James Rainey, deputy Army chief of staff for operations, listens to a question from the audience at an AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition forum. (AUSA PHOTO)

can pretty much see the whole battlefield and has ... range and depth to hit anything he can see,” he said.

Complimenting the Army’s logisticians for having “spoiled your operational maneuver brothers and sisters

over the past 20 years” by fulfilling all their needs easily, Rainey said that standard won’t work on the next battlefield where the same courses of action will be “unfeasible.”

Sustainers must have ground tactical plans that consider the limitations of maneuver units to sustain themselves, he said, and they must demand a “seat at the table” where war plans are being developed.

Wrapping up his “clear-eyed assessment” of future war against a “good enemy,” Rainey also offered some optimism, putting forth that, along with its allies and partners, the U.S. military is the best in the world.

“We have better people, volunteer forces fighting for democracies, especially leaders and commanders, and we have maneuver warfare,” Rainey said. “It’s a war we don’t want to have, but we need to be ready for it if we do.”

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Army must build, sustain readiness for ‘the next war’

As the Army prepares for the next war, the service must decide what kind of readiness it needs and how it can be sustained over time, a panel of senior leaders said Monday during the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition.

“In 2021, no fighting force can afford to build readiness they will not require,” said Gen. Michael Garrett, commander of Army Forces Command. Any more than that would be “irresponsible,” he said, and sacrifice much needed time and resources that can be devoted to developing soldiers and leaders.

Speaking at a contemporary military forum titled “Revisiting the Readiness Balance,” Garrett said the Army faces critical questions as it works to prepare for strategic competition and near-peer adversaries after 20 years of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations.

“What might the next war look like?” Garrett said. “How can we prepare for the next war, how prepared can we afford to be, and how do we sustain that preparedness over the long term?”

One of the Army’s major initiatives is the Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model, or ReARMM, a new force generation model designed to give soldiers and units predictable, dedicated periods for missions, training and modernization.

As the Army implements ReARMM in fiscal 2022, it will learn and hone the model, said Lt. Gen. James Rainey, deputy Army chief of staff for operations.

“It’s very important—we need to generate readiness through a training cycle and provide war-winning readiness, war-winning units to our combatant commanders,” he said.

The Army has soldiers serving in 139 countries around the world, Rainey said. “We’ve got to train, generate that readiness and consume it in a meaningful way,” he said.



Gen. Michael Garrett, right, commander of Army Forces Command, meets with soldiers at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

It’s also important to make sure leaders are ready, Rainey said, calling it “the biggest challenge I spend a lot of time thinking about.” In the chaos and confusion of the future battlefield, leader readiness is “probably the most significant thing we can focus on,” he said.

This is a good time for the Army to reset its focus, Garrett said, quoting Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf who said, “The more you sweat in peace,

the less you bleed in war.”

More than any time in the past 20 years, the Army is at peace, he said.

“It’s time for us to start sweating more, because we don’t know when or where the next war will happen, but when it does, I don’t want to see soldiers bleed,” Garrett said.

The next war will be more violent and complex than anything the Army has seen in decades, so “we have got to be ready,” Garrett said.



A member of the audience asks a question during a forum on readiness as part of the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

Experts: Land power crucial for deterring future conflicts

The hazy future is a big concern as the Army stands ready for a near-term conflict and the U.S. government and military continue to wrestle with what the future of warfare will look like, a panel of experts said Tuesday.

The term “strategic competition” gets thrown around a lot, but a key question that must be asked is, “What does warfare look like? What does it look like when it goes bad?” said Vikram Singh, senior adviser at the U.S. Institute of Peace’s Asia Center.

Singh, who participated in a forum titled “Transforming Land Power to Meet Global Challenges” at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition, said there’s a tendency to emphasize air and maritime capabilities, particularly in the Pacific, as well as technology, cyber and information capabilities.

“But what you need to remember is when it comes to deterrence, and when it comes to fighting and winning, if we end up in conflict, land power is absolutely essential,” he said. “I think it’s easy to get distracted and think it’s not.”

If America’s adversaries don’t believe the U.S. is willing to deploy land forces in a conflict, “our deterrence is fundamentally weakened,” Singh said. “While wars get fought in all domains, at the end of the day, you’re fighting for your towns, your cities, your people, your population. You’re fighting for what’s on the ground.”

In Europe, the Army has been building its capabilities, adding new units such as the newly created 2nd Multi-Domain Task Force and the 41st Fires Brigade, a rocket launcher brigade stationed in Germany, said



Staff Sgt. Tylor Williams, an operations adviser the 5th Security Force Assistance Brigade, trains alongside Indian forces in Rajasthan, India. (U.S. ARMY/STAFF SGT. JOSEPH TOLLIVER)

Gen. Christopher Cavoli, commander of U.S. Army Europe and Africa.

“The big, topline message from U.S. Army Europe is we have been and are preparing, training, organizing and equipping for large-scale ground combat operations,” he said.

Similar activities are taking place in the Indo-Pacific, said Gen. Charles Flynn, commander of U.S. Army Pacific.

“The adversary and the capabilities that they’re presenting to the joint force create challenges for us, but some of the capabilities that the Army has brought to bear in Europe, we’re attempting to do in the Pacific as well,” he said.

The Army’s first Multi-Domain Task Force has been operating for two years, and the 5th Security Force Assistance Brigade is now operating in 10 countries in the region, he said.

Looking ahead, the Army—and the other services—doesn’t have the luxury of optimizing to just one set of challenges, said Kori Schake, senior fellow and director of foreign and de-

fense policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

Mackenzie Eaglen, also a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, agreed.

“I think there are several sets of big unanswered questions by civilians that the Army needs clarity on to continue to keep the unsteady peace,” she said.

This includes determining whether the goal is deterrence or winning the fight, or whether the military should employ specialized forces or general-purpose forces, and what happens once the initial missiles are fired.

“What if war is more than just the giant missile exchange? What if that doesn’t end it, then is war still giant missile salvos or is it a battle of people and wills?” Eaglen said.

“The Army is at a moment of trying to figure out how it fits into this new era of conflict,” Singh said. “The Army has a critical role across the board ... [and] I think that we are at a point of shifting our attention and resources, [but] make no mistake, where the Army goes, so goes our ability to deter and prevail in both these theaters.”

“While wars get fought in all domains, at the end of the day ... you’re fighting for what’s on the ground.”

Planning, cooperation led to effective pandemic response

Facing COVID-19, a new and silent enemy, the Army fought back with a level of cooperation and created “a synergy that was unprecedented,” Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. R. Scott Dingle said Wednesday at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition.

“It was a teamwork that transcended not just the services, not just the interagencies, not just partnerships, but states, communities [and] local hospitals, through teamwork that was unprecedented,” Dingle said during a contemporary military forum on lessons learned from the Army’s pandemic response. “It is imperative that we continue to keep our foot on the pedal of force health protection, not just of our soldiers and our civilians, but of our family members and the nation.”

The Army’s ability to plan and respond quickly was vital to its effective pandemic response, said Maj. Gen. Robert Whittle, deputy commanding general of U.S. Army North.

“You’ll hear people out there say that there was no plan for pandemic,” he said. “We all know there were a lot of plans for the pandemic.”

At a time when the U.S. was still figuring out mask protocols, the Army was already conducting vital missions to evacuate people from



Lt. Gen. R. Scott Dingle, left, the Army surgeon general, discusses the service’s COVID-19 response during the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

breakouts on multiple cruise ships, Whittle said.

“We ended up evacuating ... 329 [people] from a ship called the Diamond Princess ... and another 1,989 from the Grand Princess,” he said. “So, your Department of Defense, your Army, was doing all of that from the very beginning.”

When disaster strikes and the mission is tough, the Army is constantly operating several steps ahead, said retired Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite, who served as chief of engineers and commanding general of the Army Corps of Engineers at the height of the pandemic.

When Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis

asked the Corps of Engineers to construct a facility for COVID response at a convention center days earlier than planned, Semonite leaned into his Army training to accomplish the mission.

“We went to 24-hour operations, we prepacked stuff in warehouses and brought in wiring harnesses to be able to build the whole thing out,” Semonite said. “When the mission gets tough, you’ve got to figure out how to accomplish the mission and get ahead, and that’s exactly what we did.”

The Army will continue to lead the fight against the pandemic, said Maj. Gen. Joe Robinson, commander of the Army Reserve’s 3rd Medical Command.

“Even though we haven’t beat COVID yet, Army medicine is leading to transformational change,” he said. “We remain ready to fight and win our nation’s wars on the battlefield.”

More than anything, the Army’s medical response gave Americans hope that the nation can turn the corner on the pandemic soon, Semonite said.

“When I got home, I woke up to these amazing tweets,” Semonite said. “They were all in the theme of, ‘Man, the Army is here, DoD is stepping up. We now have a chance.’”



Spc. Shion York of the Washington National Guard administers the COVID-19 vaccine at a mass vaccination event in Chehalis, Washington. (ARMY NATIONAL GUARD/SGT. ALEC DIONNE)

Building national resilience bolsters homeland security

National resilience requires close cooperation between the Department of Homeland Security, DoD and the Army, experts said Tuesday at a forum held during the Association of the U.S. Army's 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition.

"Our country is no longer a safe haven for those who want to do us harm," said Lt. Gen. A.C. Roper Jr., deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command.

Building national resiliency is national defense, he said, noting potential adversaries have been watching as the U.S. responds to disasters and are ready to react if given a chance.

The more the U.S. does in response to natural disasters, civil strife and medical emergencies like COVID-19, the more it deters someone from trying to take advantage when the nation's attention might be weakened,



Members of the Connecticut Army National Guard run a security checkpoint in Washington, D.C., prior to the presidential inauguration. (U.S. ARMY/JASON CUTSHAW)

Roper said.

"A global war will cast an impact on the homeland," he said, stressing the importance of showing now that the U.S. can launch a whole-of-government effort on resiliency.

Lt. Gen. John Evans, Army North commanding general, a command

that has homeland defense as its top priority, said natural disasters are getting bigger, with needs stretching over wider areas and more states.

On top of that, deployments of U.S. units from the U.S. to overseas missions are no longer guaranteed to be uncontested, Evans said.

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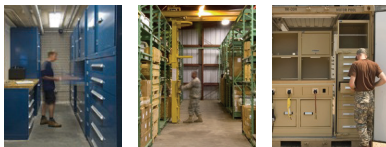
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Listening to family voices creates ‘system of support’

Military families are ready to take on a more vocal, active role in military family readiness, Patricia Barron, deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy, said during a military family forum at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition.

“Families want a voice. They want a loud voice on how to navigate that journey ... given the parameters of military life,” said Barron, a military spouse of over 30 years who previously served for nine years as AUSA’s director of Family Readiness. “This truly is a system of support. We need everyone involved.”

Family readiness, just like unit readiness, is an essential part of operational readiness, experts said during the Tuesday forum.

The concept of family readiness originates from a 2012 DoD Instruction and champions military family well-being through various services, including health, finances, career,



Patricia Barron, deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy, speaks at a military family forum during the AUSA Annual Meeting. (AUSA PHOTO)

social and community services.

The inaugural Health of the Army Family Report, released this fall, revealed that soldiers and their families struggled with mental health during the pandemic, said Laura Mitvalsky, director of health promotion and wellness at the Army Public Health Center.

“Two-thirds of the married or partnered soldiers reported their partner spouse was having difficulty coping as a result of the pandemic. Half the soldiers with at least one child in their household report their child or their children appeared to have emotional, behavioral and other difficulties,” Mitvalsky said. “The health and satisfaction of our Army families today directly impact the future fighting force of our nation.”

Looking to the future, it is vital to keep prioritizing the voices of military families, Barron said.

“Because we are members of this community, we know the challenges and what this life brings. We lived them, and we want to make it easier for the generations that come after us,” Barron said. “So, let’s work together. We must be innovative in our thinking and not bogged down by bureaucracy. And most importantly, we must trust our families by listening to them and providing opportunities to make their voices heard.”

Future Army recruiters will rely on technology, mobility

In the next five years, the Army’s recruiting force is likely to shrink as more emphasis is placed on technology and mobility, according to the general in charge of recruiting the service’s enlisted force.

Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen, commander of Army Recruiting Command at Fort Knox, Kentucky, also foresees a reduction in brick-and-mortar recruiting stations and adding to the list of 22 major cities that are the current focus in the Army’s recruiting efforts.

“We’ll have recruiting NCOs that will be mobile, using vehicles with a suite of technology and using the recruiting stations as sort of the [forward operating bases] where they will refit, do some paperwork, get their stuff squared away and go back out and be mobile,” Vereen said during a contemporary military forum on the



Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen, commander of Army Recruiting Command, speaks at a forum during the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

Army’s People First strategy at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition, held at the D.C. convention center.

After missing its 2018 recruiting target by 6,500 soldiers, the Army overhauled its approach to recruiting, which included, in part, “surge opera-

tions” in 22 cities where there had been significant population growth and where Army recruiting efforts had underperformed in the past.

Vereen said recruiting has “got to continue to stay connected with all parts of the United States.”

“We’ve got 22 major cities, but we want to be even more present in some of the locations that we don’t necessarily have a lot of presence,” he said.

Vereen was joined on the panel by Maj. Gen. Johnny Davis, commander of Army Cadet Command at Fort Knox, who predicted that in coming years the Army can expect to see a wave of new officers who have selected high technology as their areas of study.

Davis suggested this will be necessary for the Army as it moves toward multidomain operations.

Army adapts in pandemic to better serve, care for families

After an unprecedented year, from the COVID-19 pandemic to wildfire response and more, the Army is continuing to adapt to ensure that soldiers and their families have access to the support and resources they need, according to a panel of experts.

The pandemic and several natural disasters “added to the mission,” said Dee Geise, director of the Soldier and Family Readiness Division. “We continue our focus on housing, health care, child care [and] spouse employment,” Geise said.

Speaking at a military family forum on quality-of-life issues at the Association of the U.S. Army’s 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition, Geise and other experts talked about the challenges facing soldiers and their families.

During the pandemic, the Army sig-



Lee Kelley, director of Military Community Support Programs, discusses mental health care at family forum during the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

nificantly expanded its virtual health appointments, said Regina Julian, chief of the Healthcare Optimization Division at the Defense Health Agency. The effort helped the Army balance caring for patients with keeping medical teams safe.

“By the end of 2022, we want to have an industry standard at your fingertips,” Julian said. “We’re going to use virtual health to integrate our entire system, direct care and private sector care globally, to meet patient demand, wherever it is.”

Military OneSource experienced many calls related to mental health and marital issues during the pandemic, said Lee Kelley, director of Military Community Support Programs.

In particular, Kelley said, Military OneSource adapted to the mental health care needs of teens.

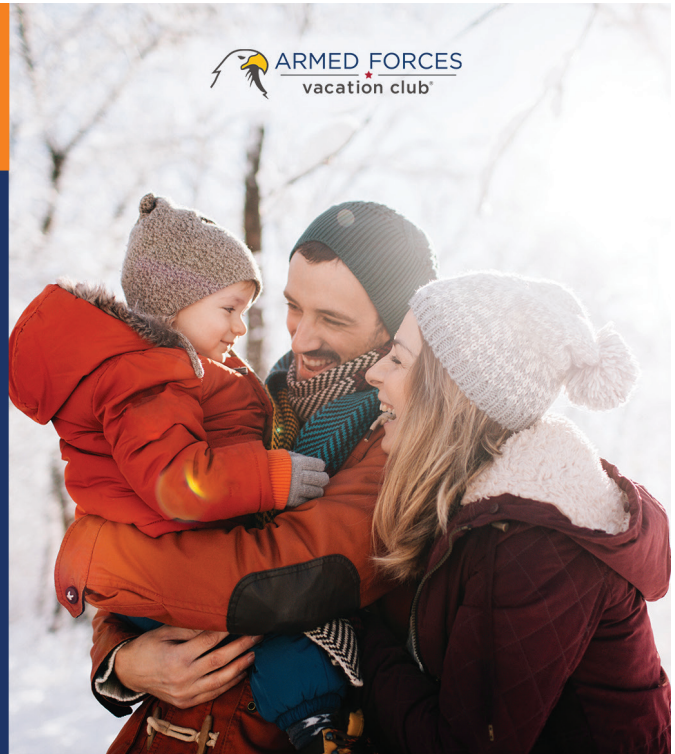
“Understanding that our military adolescents were at home and were struggling, we modified Military OneSource to provide non-medical counseling assistance for military youth age 13 to 18,” Kelley said. “It has to be in that family dynamic.”

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AUSA 2021 attendees get updates on Army modernization

Several of the Army's cross-functional teams provided updates on their modernization efforts during Warriors Corner presentations at the Association of the U.S. Army's 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition.

Topics covered Tuesday included the critical ties between aviation modernization and the new modular open systems approach; the role of the Unified Network in enabling decision dominance; the asymmetric advantage provided by synthetic training; and advancements in next-generation combat vehicle development.

"In the future, our adversaries are going to put up in front of us integrated air defense systems and integrated fires complexes that we will be required to penetrate, disintegrate and then exploit," said Maj. Gen. David Francis, commanding general of the Army Aviation Center of Excellence and Fort Rucker, Alabama.

Speaking at a presentation on the modular open systems approach, he added, "We're going to be doing this as part of the joint force [and] combined force. ... In order to do that, we have to have systems that have the speed, range, lethality, survivability and sustainability that are required to operate in this hyperactive environment."

The modular open systems approach is a strategy designed to create and implement affordable and



Speaking at the Warriors Corner during the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition are Maj. Gen. David Francis, left, commanding general of the Army Aviation Center of Excellence and Fort Rucker, Alabama, and Brig. Gen. William Glaser, director of the Synthetic Training Environment Cross-Functional Team. (AUSA PHOTO)

adaptable technologies through a widely supported systems interface or architecture, according to DoD.

Because of the standardization that comes with the modular open systems approach, it is "absolutely critical," Francis said.

"As opposed to what we've done in the past, our ability to rapidly integrate the latest technology, in terms of aircraft survivability equipment, weapon systems, navigation systems and communication systems, is going to be vital to our ability to operate on this future battlefield," he said.

A separate Warriors Corner presentation focused on the newly published Army Unified Network Plan.

Speakers explained that the plan focuses on being able to integrate and organize across all domains, describing it as a "data-centric document"



that will help provide commanders with benefits that include enhanced data reachback capabilities.

They emphasized that the new plan is not a single modernization effort but rather a concept synchronizing multiple efforts.

For the Synthetic Training Environment Cross-Functional Team, a key focus is "modernizing soldiers with training," said Brig. Gen. William Glaser, the team's director.

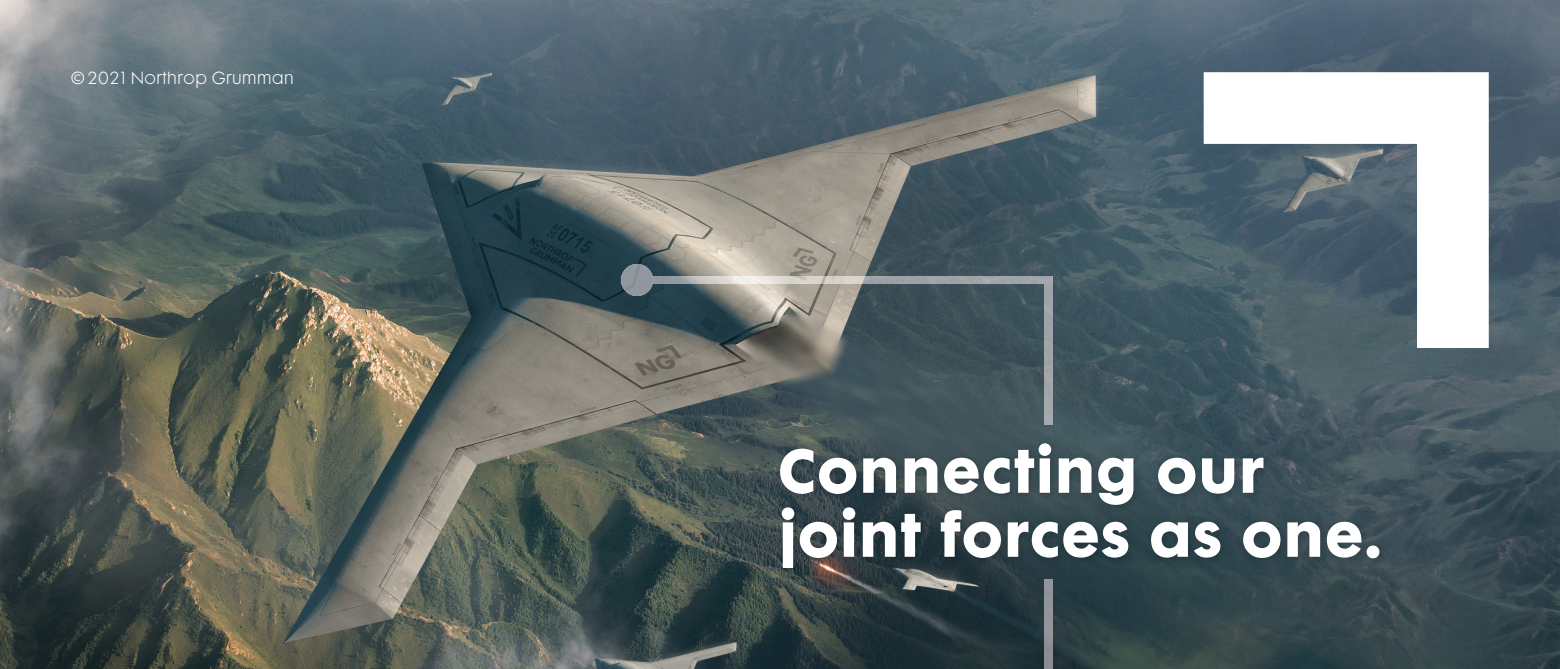
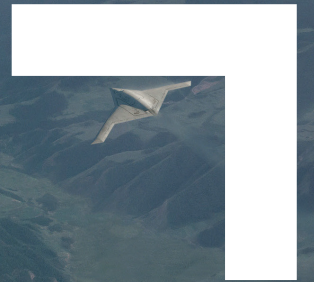
Speaking at the Warriors Corner, Glaser acknowledged that some parts of industry seem confused about some of the team's efforts, so he identified ways industry can help support the process going forward.

Closing out the day's Warriors Corner presentations was the Next-Generation Combat Vehicle Cross-Functional Team. Maj. Gen. Ross Coffman, the team's director, provided updates on key efforts including the Optionally Manned Fighting Vehicle, Robotic Combat Vehicles Heavy and Light, Mobile Protected Firepower and the Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle.

Highlighting the clear differences in programmatic approach from past vehicle development and acquisition efforts, Coffman concluded, "We believe that we're going to learn a lot of lessons, but this is going to be the basis for all future vehicle requirements and procurement."



Conference attendees listen to a presentation at the Warriors Corner. (AUSA PHOTO)



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Cross-functional teams partner to modernize the force

The Army's cross-functional teams are expanding their partnerships as the service races to deliver on its sweeping modernization priorities, several team leaders said during a Warriors Corner presentation at the Association of the U.S. Army's 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C.

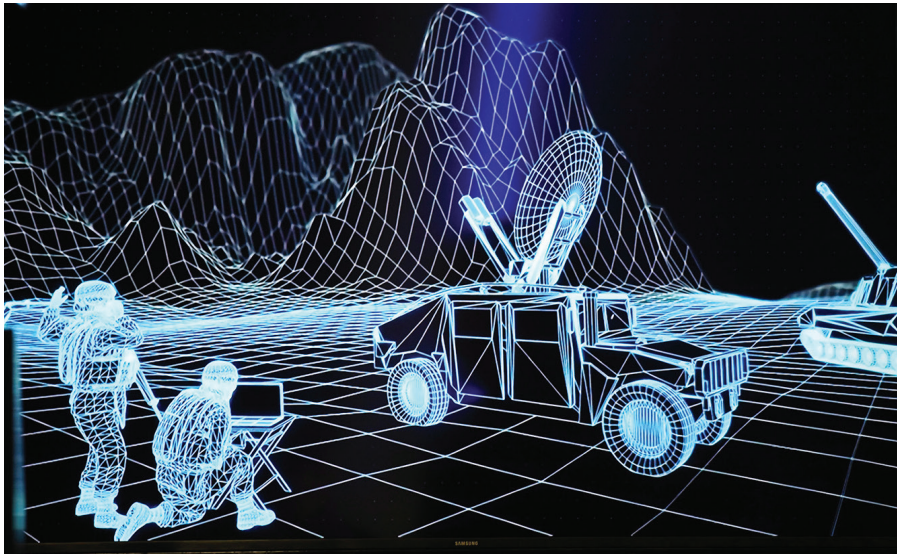
"We've been expanding our partnerships and team beyond where you might think we're narrowly focused," said Brig. Gen. John Rafferty, director of the Long-Range Precision Fires Cross-Functional Team.

He added, "We're equally as focused on an end-to-end approach to this. We know that we've got to see as far as we can shoot, and we've got to find targets in an enormous amount of data. And so far, we believe that our targeting methodology of decide, detect, deliver and assess has been the perfect approach for us as a big team across multiple [program executive offices], multiple [cross-functional teams], and engagement with the user community."

During the presentation, titled "Seeing Over the Horizon: Intel/Electronic Warfare for Deep Sensing/Integrated Fires Experimentation/ADA," Rafferty was joined by Mark Kitz, program executive officer for intelligence, electronic warfare and sensors.

"We are at a unique relationship in terms of Army modernization," he said. "I'm not delivering directly on the next-generation combat vehicle. I'm not delivering directly on the Future Vertical Lift portfolio. But the sensors and capabilities that we are investing across our portfolio are enabling Future Vertical Lift and other efforts to operate and survive by seeing deep."

Willie Nelson, director of the Assured Positioning, Navigation and Timing/Space Cross-Functional Team, also talked about the Army's efforts to support these cooperative processes.



A screen portrays a digitized battlefield environment during a Warriors Corner presentation on intelligence and electronic warfare. (AUSA PHOTO)

"About two years ago, we said that we had all this new kit and all these new capabilities in artificial intelligence and elsewhere, so we need to sit down with warfighters, both in Europe and the Pacific, to figure out their needs, problems and how can we integrate these new systems, so we brought representatives of those communities," he said.

On the future battlefield, the Army



Brig. Gen. John Rafferty, director of the Army's Long-Range Precision Fires Cross-Functional Team, speaks at the Warriors Corner during the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

must be able to rapidly decrease its "decision time and executing time," Nelson said.

As the Army continues its experimentation and training, new tactics, techniques and procedures and products were developed, and "we go back to the field and actually set up the experimentation, bringing data down from sensors and integrating that through the platforms."

Maj. Gen. Brian Gibson, director of the Air and Missile Defense Cross-Functional Team, characterized the panel members as "a good fundamental representation of the teamwork that it takes to do something fundamentally different."



"You might ask, 'Why there is air defense on this panel? I've heard about long-range fires. I've heard about intelligence. I've heard about the need for space,'" Gibson said. "But there is an inextricable link between space, intelligence and the conduct of air and missile defense, whether that's inside of service lines or whether that's in support of our joint force. The tighter that we make the coupling of those three domains and those capabilities, the better the options we provide for our warfighters."



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AUSA president focused on mission of supporting soldiers

Despite the many challenges facing the Army and the country, the Association of the U.S. Army remains strong and focused on its mission of being a voice for soldiers and the service, retired Gen. Bob Brown told a gathering of the association's volunteer leaders on Monday.

There has never been a time like the present, Brown said, citing the onset of new warfighting domains such as cyber and space; the COVID-19 pandemic; and aggressive adversaries such as China, Russia, Iran and North Korea.

"These are challenging times for the Army—active, Guard and Reserve," he said.

Now more than ever, "we need a strong, agile, ready and modern Army ... to deter those who would do us harm," Brown said. "That's the heart of our mission here."

Brown, who became AUSA's president and CEO on Oct. 1, spoke at the



Retired Gen. Bob Brown, AUSA president and CEO, addresses chapter leaders. (AUSA PHOTO)

Chapter President's Dinner one day before the 2021 AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C.

"Soldiers aren't in the Army, they are the Army," Brown said, echoing the People First priorities expressed by senior leaders.

Educating, informing and connecting soldiers and their families, Army

civilians, retirees, veterans and representatives of the defense industry is AUSA's purpose as the "one voice for the Total Army," he said, praising the efforts of the association's region, state and chapter leaders.

"Thanks for your service. Volunteers are the lifeblood of this organization, and nothing can happen without you," Brown said.

Army civilians must transform alongside uniformed force

As the Army continues to modernize, it's more important than ever that the service's civilian employees keep pace with the right skills to support a force capable of multidomain operations.

"If you're an Army civilian, what I'll tell you is readiness is not all about Army units that are trained, equipped and manned to fight battles," said Christopher Lowman, senior official performing the duties of Army undersecretary. "Army readiness applies to you and I just as much, because you play a critical role in developing the Army and making sure that they'll be successful."

Speaking Wednesday during a professional forum at the Association of the U.S. Army's 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition, Lowman said there are close to 300,000 Army civilians.

He also emphasized that while hiring the right people is critical, retain-

ing the best talent is key to a civilian corps that can move toward multidomain operations at the same pace as the Total Army.

The uniformed Army is "spending a whole lot of time thinking through what an MDO-capable Army needs to look like, how it needs to be equipped and how it needs to be trained," Lowman said. "Guess what the civilian corps is going to need to be? Fast, lethal and mobile. We're going to have to be able to respond with the skill sets that we own, that only the civilians can bring to the table, to support the warfighter."

Nested in the Army People Strategy is the new Civilian Implementation Plan, which seeks to sharpen the Army's ability to place the right civilian in the right job to support the uniformed Army.

"We must have talented and dedicated Army civilians to maximize the

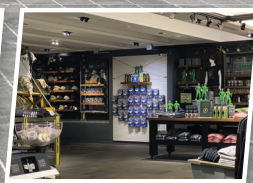


Christopher Lowman, senior official performing the duties of Army undersecretary, addresses a forum for Army civilians at the AUSA Annual Meeting. (AUSA PHOTO)

readiness capability, capacity and lethality of our Army," said Mark Lewis, senior official performing the duties of the assistant Army secretary for manpower and reserve affairs.

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Military-industry partnerships key to acquisition success

When it comes to delivering next-generation capabilities to soldiers, Army leaders on Wednesday emphasized the importance of teamwork between the service and industry.

“It’s a team sport,” said Karen Saunders, senior official performing the duties of the assistant Army secretary for acquisition, logistics and technology.

Gen. Mike Murray, commanding general of Army Futures Command, agreed, citing the Army’s 31 plus 4 priority modernization efforts.

Some of them are programs of record, while others are still efforts, Murray said. Without strong cooperation between the Army and industry, support from Congress, and teamwork between organizations such as Futures Command and Army Materiel Command, all the Army’s efforts will “forever be efforts and not programs,” he said.

“The output of our efforts is what this is all about, getting better capa-



Karen Saunders, senior official performing the duties of assistant Army secretary for acquisition, logistics and technology, speaks at a forum during the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

bilities in the hands of our soldiers now and for the future,” Murray said.

Strong partnerships are needed from the very beginning, Murray said. “It needs to be from the very inception of a program, the very inception of an experiment,” he said. “That’s the underemphasized, underemphasized power of

what the Army did.”

The Army also has benefitted from new authorities from Congress, such as middle-tier acquisition authority, which allows the service to determine if a program of record can be put on a more flexible acquisition path to meet emerging needs.

“Whether it’s rapid prototypes or rapid fielding, [it] puts a time limit on things,” Saunders said.

This ability to continually test a capability allows the Army to move more quickly—and determine if something isn’t going to work, she said.

One example is how quickly the Army has developed the Integrated Visual Augmentation System, a leap-ahead heads-up display.

Without middle-tier acquisition authority, “something like IVAS would take 10, 15 years,” Saunders said.

“We’re working with industry to push the boundaries,” she said. “We’re working with Army Futures Command and with actual units to push the boundaries.”

US security threatened by impacts of climate change

Climate change poses a “very serious” threat to U.S. national security, but the Army’s mission remains the same, said J.E. “Jack” Surash, senior official performing the duties of assistant Army secretary for installations, energy and environment.

“Climate change does not alter the Army’s overall mission, which is to deploy, fight and win,” he said Wednesday during a forum at the Association of the U.S. Army’s Annual Meeting and Exposition.

To combat the effects of climate change, the Army is making strides in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

“From a [fiscal 2008] baseline, we believe our greenhouse gas emissions are down about 20% ... at our installations,” Surash said.

The Army also has focused on mini-

mizing its environmental impact and adapting its installations.

Climate change is not just a threat to the environment, said Lt. Gen. Laura Potter, deputy Army chief of staff for intelligence.

“The inescapable fact is that climate change leads to political instability,” Potter said. “Through cascading cause-and-effect dynamics, the effects of global warming can compound, causing pressure on vulnerable governments.”

Climate change also will impact Army training, as the number of black flag days—when temperatures reach 90 degrees or higher—across basic training installations is set to rise, said John Conger, director emeritus of the Center for Climate and Security.

At Fort Benning, Georgia, for example, the temperature rises above



J.E. ‘Jack’ Surash, senior official performing the duties of assistant Army secretary for installations, energy & environment, speaks at a forum on climate change during the AUSA Annual Meeting. (AUSA PHOTO)

90 degrees 81 days a year. By 2050, it will be 120, Conger said.

“You’re going to have to figure out how to train your folks when you can’t train them,” he said.

Scenes from AUSA 2021



Meeting attendees pass under the AUSA seal in the main entrance hall of the Walter E. Washington Convention Center on Monday. (AUSA PHOTO)



Soldiers attending the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition examine a map of the exhibit floor. (AUSA PHOTO)



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston, left, looks on as a soldier from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 7th Special Forces Group, does push-ups on stage during the Sergeant Major of the Army Forum and Awards Ceremony. (AUSA PHOTO)



Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville remembers retired Gen. Ray Odierno, the former Army chief of staff, who died Oct. 8 from cancer. (AUSA PHOTO)



Attendees watch a demonstration of an exhibitor's body armor system on the show floor during the AUSA Annual Meeting. (AUSA PHOTO)



Military K-9 Ghost and his handler stop at a booth in the AUSA Annual Meeting exhibit hall. (AUSA PHOTO)



Soldiers, AUSA members, defense industry representatives and more tour the exhibit halls during the AUSA Annual Meeting. (AUSA PHOTO)



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