



IN THIS ISSUE

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 26
OCTOBER 31, 2019

Congress eyes Guard, Reserve benefits

3

Book Program

Authors gather at AUSA 2019

4



Chapter Highlights

St. Louis Gateway
Eagle Chapters

7



President Donald Trump presents the Medal of Honor to Master Sgt. Matthew Williams during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House. (THE WHITE HOUSE/AMY ROSSETTI)

Green Beret receives Medal of Honor

Master Sgt. Matthew Williams was awarded the Medal of Honor Wednesday for his heroic efforts to save his fellow soldiers' lives while under fierce enemy fire deep in Afghanistan's treacherous and unforgiving mountains.

Williams, a Green Beret with the 3rd Special Forces Group, was previously awarded the Silver Star for his actions.

It was upgraded to the nation's highest award for valor for his actions on April 6, 2008—the same battle that resulted in a Medal of Honor for his teammate, former Staff Sgt. Ronald Shurer.

Shurer, the team medic who also had his Silver Star upgraded as part of a Defense Department review, received the Medal of Honor last October.

"Matt, we salute your unyield-

ing service, your unbreakable resolve and your untiring devotion to our great nation," President Donald Trump said during the White House ceremony.

Williams "stands among the ranks of our nation's greatest heroes," Trump said.

On April 6, 2008, Williams was a weapons sergeant deployed to Afghanistan as a member of Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha 3336.

The team was on a mission targeting high-value targets of the Hezbe Islami al Gulbadin in Shok Valley in Afghanistan's Nuristan Province.

As the assault team, consisting of American Green Berets and Afghan commandos, approached the target, they immediately came under intense enemy machine-gun, sniper

and rocket-propelled grenade fire.

More than 200 enemy fighters "savagely attacked" the American and Afghan troops, Trump said, filling "the valley with a hail of bullets and explosions."

The lead element immediately was pinned down, with several troops wounded, and was in danger of being overrun.

Williams quickly gathered the Afghan commandos and led them on a counterattack across a 100-meter-long valley of ice-covered boulders and a fast-moving, ice-cold, waist-deep river.

The men fought their way up a terraced mountainside to the besieged lead element, and Williams set up a base of fire the enemy was unable to overcome.

See **Medal of Honor**, Page 3

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House panel examines benefits parity for Guard, Reserve

A House panel is taking a fresh look at the pay and benefits of National Guard and Reserve members, considering their increased use in domestic and federal missions.

“Parity efforts are an important part of overall readiness and morale,” Maj. Gen. Michael O’Guinn, Army Reserve deputy chief, told a House Veterans’ Affairs Committee panel.

He said efforts are underway to streamline duty status designations when Reservists are mobilized, a move that would “align most benefits reserve component members receive when they are conducting the same mission.”

The transformation of the reserve component from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve has dramatically increased demands on service members, their families and employers, said Rep. Mike Levin of California, the freshman chairman of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee’s subcommittee on economic opportunity.

“This means they are no longer a ‘Break Glass in Case of War’ force but are now continuously utilized here at home and around the globe. With this shift, it is time that we re-examine our policies and benefits for reserve component members,” Levin said, noting benefits disparity is an issue raised with his committee by National Guard leaders.

Levin said Congress is aware of



New York National Guard soldiers conduct medical evacuation training in Queensbury, New York, in preparation for a 2020 deployment to Iraq. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. MATTHEW GUNTHER)

many instances where service members from different components are doing the same or similar jobs but receiving different pay and benefits, something he labeled as “clearly not fair.”

“The National Guard of today is not the National Guard of yesterday,” Air Force Maj. Gen. Dawne Deskins, National Guard Bureau director for manpower and personnel, told the panel. “The Department of Defense cannot meet the objectives outlined in the National Defense Strategy without a robust National Guard and Reserve.”

Compensation is important, Deskins said. “The benefits and entitlements

provided to them as a result of their service are critical to retaining this all-volunteer fighting force,” she said.

In the Army National Guard, one-third of the force—about 150,000 soldiers—is serving more than 50 days a year in uniform, Deskins said.

O’Guinn did not provide similar numbers for the Army Reserve but acknowledged new requirements mean many soldiers serve more than the traditional monthly drills and two-week annual training.

Efforts are being made to spread the burden of extended training so the same unit doesn’t have high demands every year, he said.

Medal of Honor

From Page 1

Again and again, Williams came under enemy fire as he helped move several casualties down the near-vertical mountainside and loaded casualties onto evacuation helicopters.

He helped save the lives of four critically wounded soldiers and prevented the lead element of the assault force from being overrun by the enemy.

Trump, who also recognized Williams’ teammates during the ceremony, lauded the Special Forces soldiers

for their courage during the battle.

“The Battle of Shok Valley is a testament to the overwhelming strength, lethal skill and unstoppable might of the Army Special Forces and all of our military,” Trump said.

Williams, of Boerne, Texas, joined the Army in September 2005.

He has deployed multiple times in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Juniper Shield, and he remains on active duty.

Williams, who said he was overwhelmed when he learned he would

receive the Medal of Honor, said he wants to remain in the Special Forces regiment.

“I hope I can wear the medal with honor and distinction and represent something that’s much bigger than myself, which is what it means to be on a team of brothers, and what it means to be an elite Special Forces soldier,” Williams said.

The medal represents “teamwork, never quitting, trusting in one another and doing what’s right and what needs to be done,” he added.

Authors present books at 2019 AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition



Authors and editors discussed their works Oct. 14 at an annual meeting forum. (AUSA PHOTO)

By Joseph Craig

Authors and editors for six new Association of the U.S. Army Book Program titles were available at the association's 2019 Annual Meeting and Exposition to greet attendees, answer questions and autograph copies of their books.

They also presented their works in detail at the Authors' Forum on Oct. 14. C-SPAN captured the proceedings, and American History TV will broadcast the panels later this year.

The first panel profiled controversial and unconventional Army leaders.

Jon Mikolashek kicked things off with *Blood, Guts, and Grease: George S. Patton in World War I*, which examines an often-overlooked period in the general's life and shows how Patton was instrumental in developing the tank corps and its doctrine.

Michael Lynch then offered a "nuanced examination" (per fellow author Rick Atkinson) of a controversial WWII and Korean War general in *Edward M. Almond and the U.S. Army: From the 92nd Infantry Division to the X Corps*.

Andrew Marble completed the panel with *Boy on the Bridge: The Story of John Shalikashvili's American Success*, a biography of the immigrant from war-torn Europe who became chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The forum's second panel examined challenges for the modern Army.

Don Vandergriff, a long-time champion for mission command, offered a

history of the concept and showed what still needs to be done with *Adopting Mission Command: Developing Leaders for a Superior Command Culture*.

Hal Friedman, editor of *War in the American Pacific and East Asia 1941–1972*, examined military concerns in the region from World War II through the depths of the Cold War.

John Bonin focused on contemporary challenges as detailed in *Landpower in the Long War: Projecting Force after 9/11*, and editor Jason Warren represented the book in the AUSA Pavilion for the remainder of the show.

Honor and service were recognized at the pavilion with the debut of the Medal of Honor graphic novel compendium. This printed collection features the first four titles in the series, which previously were only available digitally.

The book honors soldiers from different eras of Army history: Alvin York in World War I, Audie Murphy in World War II, Roy Benavidez in Vietnam, and Sal Giunta in Afghanistan.

Given the overwhelming response to the graphic novels, AUSA plans to produce four more titles for 2020 and print another compendium for next year's annual meeting.

We welcome suggestions for the next set of soldiers to profile—send your thoughts to medalofhonor@ausa.org.

To order copies of AUSA books, please visit www.ausa.org/books.

Joseph Craig is AUSA's Book Program Director.

AUSAExtra

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PERK OF THE WEEK

HP member discount—special sale

Time for new electronics? Hewlett Packard is having its anniversary sale now through Nov. 2. AUSA members already receive savings of up to 35% at HP, but during the anniversary sale, you can expect to see savings of up to 62% off consumer and commercial products, from notebooks and desktops to printers, accessories and more. HP also offers free shipping and easy returns, and expert sales agents are available to assist with your purchase. Visit www.ausa.org/hp.



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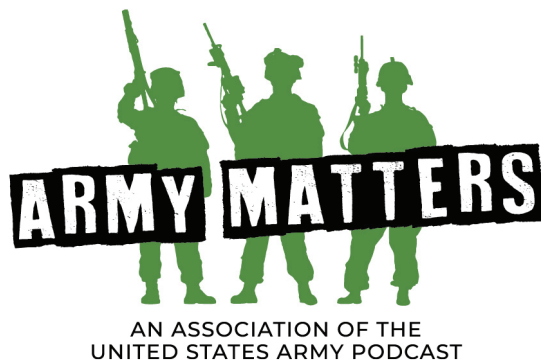
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Chapter sponsors training exercise for JROTC cadets

The Association of the U.S. Army's St. Louis Gateway chapter recently sponsored a team-building exercise for local JROTC cadets at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

The Sept. 28 event included five St. Louis-area JROTC departments, from McCluer, Vashon, Sumner, Jennings and Cahokia. They partnered with the Washington University in St. Louis ROTC department.

The exercise was comprised of 10 physical and mental competitions, with the cadets being placed in mixed squads so they could meet and work with people from different schools while being mentored by the older university cadets.

The top three squads were presented with medals by retired Brig.



McCluer JROTC cadets at the team-building exercise. (U.S. ARMY/RETIRED LT. COL. DARRELL GRAY)

Gen. Edmund Beckett, a former deputy commander of the Missouri State Area Command, Missouri Army National Guard.

Maj. Gen. Stephen Farmen, commander of the U.S. Army Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, also met with the cadets.

The cadets concluded the day with visits to static displays from Army medicine, psychological operations and recruiting, and discussions with members of the AUSA chapter and the local chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, which co-sponsored the event.

Eagle Chapters

The following chapters attained Eagle status for September by showing positive membership growth. The number of consecutive months of growth since July 1 is shown in parentheses.

A.P. Hill Rappahannock (3)
 Arizona Territorial (2)
 Arkansas (3)
 Arsenal of Democracy (3)
 Braxton Bragg (2)
 Capital District of New York (3)
 Carlisle Barracks-Cumberland Valley (1)
 Central Virginia (2)
 Charleston (3)
 Col Edward Cross (1)
 Connecticut (3)
 Corporal Bill McMillan-Bluegrass (2)
 Cowboy (2)
 CSM James M. MacDonald-Keystone (2)
 Denver Centennial (1)
 Dix (3)
 Emerald Coast (3)
 Ethan Allen (1)
 Fairfax-Lee (2)
 Fires (1)
 First In Battle (1)
 First Militia (3)
 Florida Gulf Stream (2)
 Fort Campbell (3)
 Fort Jackson-Palmetto State (2)
 Fort Rucker-Wiregrass (3)
 Fort Sheridan-Chicago (3)
 Francis Scott Key (2)
 GA Omar N. Bradley (1)

GEN Creighton W. Abrams (1)
 GEN John J. "Black Jack" Pershing (2)
 GEN John W. Vessey, Jr (2)
 George Washington (2)
 Greater Atlanta (2)
 Greater Augusta-Fort Gordon (3)
 Greater Los Angeles (3)
 Greater New York-Statue of Liberty (2)
 Greater Philadelphia (Penn & Franklin) (1)
 Henry Leavenworth (2)
 Indiana (2)
 Isthmian (1)
 Japan (1)
 Joshua Chamberlain (3)
 Korea (3)
 Las Vegas-John C. Fremont (3)
 Last Frontier (1)
 Leonidas Polk (2)
 Magnolia (3)
 Major Samuel Woodfill (3)
 Marne (1)
 Massachusetts Bay (2)
 Mediterranean (2)
 MG Harry Greene, Aberdeen (1)
 Mid-Palatinat (1)
 Minutemen (1)
 National Training Center-High Desert (1)
 Newton D. Baker (2)
 North Texas (2)

Northern New Jersey (3)
 Northern New York-Fort Drum (2)
 Picatinny Arsenal-Middle Forge (3)
 Puerto Rico (2)
 Redstone-Huntsville (3)
 Rhode Island (2)
 Robert E. Lee (2)
 Rock Island Arsenal (3)
 San Diego (2)
 San Francisco (2)
 SGM Jon R. Cavaiani (3)
 Space Coast (2)
 St. Louis Gateway (2)
 Stuttgart (2)
 Suncoast (1)
 Sunshine (1)
 Texas Capital Area (3)
 Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson (3)
 Thunderbird (2)
 Topeka (2)
 Tri-State (3)
 Tucson-Goyette (3)
 UAE (1)
 Utah (3)
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 West Point Area (3)
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