



Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, left, visits with soldiers who had just returned from a deployment to Europe during a visit Tuesday to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. CHRISTOPHER GREEN)

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Defense strategy urges urgent action

“Business as usual at the Department is not acceptable,” Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin writes in his introduction to the 2022 National Defense Strategy. “We live in turbulent times.”

The document, prepared every four years, calls for urgent action to strengthen deterrence against China, Russia and other threats. China “remains our most consequential strategic competitor for the coming decades,” the secretary writes, taking issue with its “increasingly coercive actions to reshape the Indo-Pacific region” and because of the “rapid expansion and modernization of its military.”

Austin cites President Joe Biden,

who has noted China is “the only country with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, military and technological power to do so.”

Russia is another major concern, Austin writes, pointing to its “unprovoked, unjust and reckless invasion of Ukraine” as an example of its “irresponsible behavior.” The response by the U.S., its allies and partners shows the strength of NATO and having a unified response, he writes.

The strategy refers to Russia as an “acute threat.”

Integrated deterrence, working in close collaboration with others, is the “centerpiece” of the 2022 National Defense Strategy, Austin writes.

“America has never been afraid of

competition, and we do not shy away from tough challenges, especially when it comes to securing our national interests and defending our national values,” he writes.

Many potential threats are cited in the strategy, including North Korea, Iran and violent extremist groups.

The armed forces will “campaign day-to-day to gain and sustain military advantages,” Austin writes.

There is no surprise in the bottom line. The top priority of the strategy is defending the homeland, followed by deterring strategic attacks against the U.S., its allies and partners, and being prepared to prevail in conflict if that becomes necessary.

The strategy can be downloaded here.



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Indo-Pacific training center helps generate ready forces

A new combat training center in the Indo-Pacific, the first established by the Army in 50 years, will provide more realistic training and place troops forward and ready to operate in that theater, leaders said.

With campuses in Hawaii and Alaska and an “exportable” capability that can bring joint training exercises to partners and allies in the region, the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center further cements DoD’s commitment to the Indo-Pacific, where China has been named the U.S.’ pacing challenge.

“This allows us to keep trained and ready forces available forward in the region ... and it gives us another opportunity to train with our allies and partners and the land power network that is so vital to protecting national sovereignty across this region,” Gen. Charles Flynn, commander of U.S. Army Pacific, said Oct. 27 in a call with media from Fort Shafter, Hawaii, where the new combat training center has its headquarters.

The Joint Pacific Multinational



Soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, exit a C-130 aircraft Oct. 28 for a rotation at the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center at Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. RACHEL CHRISTENSEN)

Readiness Center, he added, “allows us to generate readiness in the environments and in conditions that we’re most likely to operate in. ... It also gives us an opportunity to experiment here in Hawaii and Alaska in environments and conditions that are very different from training centers in the continental United States.”

Three rotations are planned annually at the center—one in Hawaii, another in Alaska at a campus established between the Donnelly and Yukon training areas, and one in a partner or allied country in the Indo-Pacific.

An exercise across three Hawaiian islands involving some 6,000 joint personnel, including special operations forces and troops from Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, began Oct. 26 and was slated to last 12 days.

With an opposing force from the 196th Infantry Brigade, the exercise is based on a large-scale combat operations scenario designed as an immersive training event for the 25th Infantry Division’s 2nd Brigade Combat Team. The goal is to replicate “the most realistic training

environment short of combat,” said Brig. Gen. Jeffrey VanAntwerp, the 25th Infantry Division’s deputy commander for operations.

Providing stress on the brigade’s sustainment operations and command and control, he said, the exercise will challenge communications and involve watercraft, a common operational digital picture with joint assets and experimentation with new organizations in the region, such as the multidomain task force.

Unlike the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana, where units assigned to the Indo-Pacific theater have trained, the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center in Hawaii and Alaska better replicates the region where soldiers may operate or fight. The terrain on the Hawaiian Islands and the landscape in Alaska, Flynn noted, “look a lot like the region.” Having a training center in the region also will save millions in transportation costs.

Flynn pointed out that, in addition to training in realistic conditions, the Army is “surrounded by joint assets and multinational partners” that will help increase interoperability across the Indo-Pacific network.

ARMY magazine November issue



A selection of articles from the November issue of *ARMY* magazine is now available to AUSA Basic Members. To read the articles, click here.

Soldier wins world rifle championship



Spc. Alison Weisz earned her spot on Team USA by competing in various USA Shooting Selection Matches. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. 1ST CLASS JAJUAN BROADNAX)

When Spc. Alison Weisz won the women’s 10-meter air rifle event at the 2022 International Shooting Sport Federation World Championship in Cairo, she became the first American woman to win the title in a rifle event since 1979.

Weisz’s win also earned her a spot to represent the U.S. in the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris.

“I am so grateful to have been able to be named a World Champion and bring home our first [rifle] quota place for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games,” Weisz said in a USA Shooting news release. “I am incredibly honored and am looking forward to what the future has to bring.”

Weisz, who also competed in the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, beat China’s Yuting Huang “in a shot-for-shot final” to win the gold in Cairo, according to the release.

As a member of the elite Army Marksmanship Unit since 2020, Weisz competes as an expert marksman at the national and international levels. The unit selects “fewer than 100 soldiers, at the top of their marksmanship game,” according to a DoD webpage.

Though Weisz did not have much ex-

posure to the U.S. Army growing up, she fell in love with shooting through a gun safety and education program.

“Once I had the BB gun in my hands and started learning the fundamentals, I kind of just fell in love,” she said. “Squeezing the trigger, loading another round and hitting the target again and again—maybe it’s like they say, ‘When you know, you know.’”

Already competing at the most elite level of shooting, Weisz remains humble and is always looking to improve at her craft.

“Now that I am at this elite level, I’ve found more to love [about shooting] and occasionally be frustrated with! I love pushing my limits to see how far I can go and how much better I can make individual aspects of the process through my training,” Weisz said in a Civilian Marksmanship Program news release. “But ultimately, nothing has been able to take away from the deeply rooted love.”

In Egypt, Weisz also earned a silver medal in the women’s team air rifle event. The win was the first medal for the U.S. in women’s team air rifle at the world championships since 2010, according to a Team USA press release.

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Gen. Bob Brown, USA Ret.
President and CEO, AUSA

Lt. Gen. Leslie Smith, USA Ret.
Vice President, Leadership and Education,
AUSA

Luc Dunn
Editor

Desiree Hurlocker
Advertising Manager

Advertising Information Contact:

Fox Associates Inc.
116 W. Kinzie St. • Chicago, IL 60654
Phone: 800-440-0231
Email: adinfo.rmy@foxrep.com

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Report details challenges for veterans, military families

The past two years have been marked by both challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and positive progress for military families and veterans, a report from Purdue University's Military Family Research Institute found.

The report, "Measuring Our Communities: The State of Military and Veteran Families in the United States," analyzed the status of American military and veteran families across nine themes, including employment, housing, K-12 and post-secondary education and behavioral health.

Among the challenges facing military and veteran families were educational setbacks for military children, food insecurity, suicide and lack of access to mental health resources.

School-aged military children, of

which there were over 914,000 in 2020, experienced additional setbacks during remote learning.

"Due to the mobility of military children, school districts working to help students who have fallen behind because of remote learning may or may not have robust services in place to assist transitioning military children whose learning and socialization skills were affected by the isolation of the pandemic," the report found.

Persistent issues of food insecurity and suicide were especially challenging during the pandemic.

"Fourteen percent of junior enlisted and 12% of veteran respondents reported low or very low food security," according to a survey cited in the report.

For the 4.7 million veterans who live in rural communities, four-fifths of them are in areas that are consid-

ered medically underserved, and 93% of rural counties have no licensed psychologists, meaning that mental health care access is "extremely limited," according to the report.

Despite the challenges faced by military and veteran families, there have also been several improvements. Service members said they experienced an increased sense of belonging, and veterans saw better employment and health care access.

The number of active-duty respondents who said their sacrifices were being appreciated rose by 13 percentage points from 2019 to 2020, according to a survey cited in the report.

The Military Family Research Institute hopes that the report will give communities the data they need to respond to the needs of military and veteran families.

View the report here.

Your Service Inspires Ours

Everything we do is inspired by the military service and sacrifice of our members. We're grateful for our 1.8 million+ veteran members and their commitment to our country—and we're proud to support them with special offers, financial resources and award-winning service.

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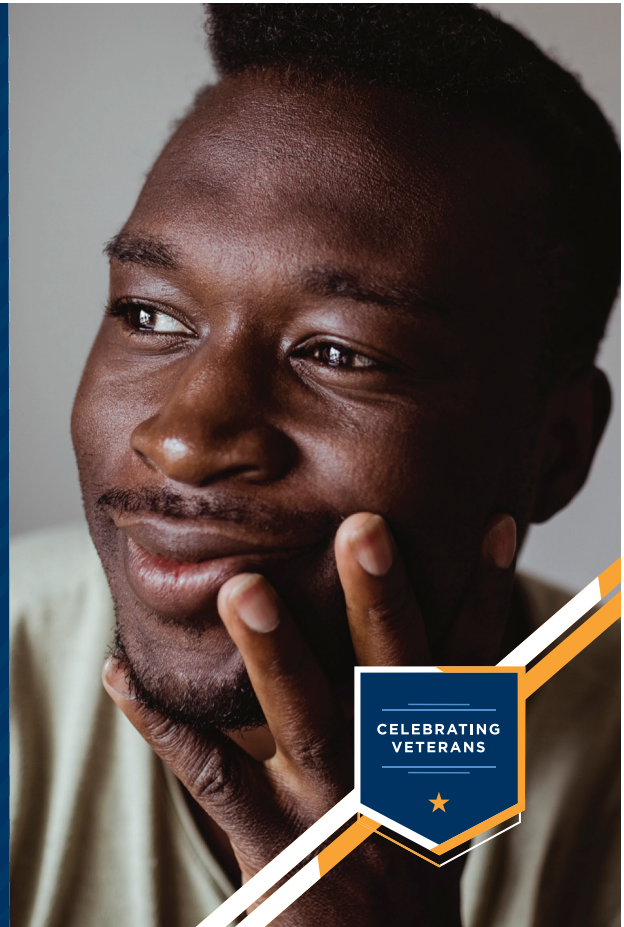
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Key 2023 defense funding, policy bills remain stalled

Both the House of Representatives and the Senate remain in recess until after the Nov. 8 elections.

When they return for the “lame duck” session, which runs through the beginning of a new Congress in January, there is much work to be done, particularly with respect to appropriations and the National Defense Authorization Act.

The government is operating under a continuing resolution for funding through Dec. 16. Little visible progress has been made on full-year funding, and many outside factors may impact the timing and shape of funding legislation.

Lawmakers also must pass the National Defense Authorization Act to provide important policy and program direction to the armed forces.

The Senate plans to take up its version of the NDAA when it returns. Fortunately, the House has passed its version. The timing of any formal conference between the House and Senate versions of the bill will be tight if final legislation is to be completed and passed in time for the new calendar year.

The Association of the U.S. Army’s Government Affairs team continues



Much work remains to be done by Congress, particularly with respect to appropriations and the National Defense Authorization Act. (ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL PHOTO)

to advocate for full-year funding and inclusion of Army priorities in both must-pass bills as soon as possible.

You can help build momentum by contacting your representatives and senators and encouraging them to immediately pass the NDAA and full-year appropriations for defense, military construction and veterans affairs.

During the recent AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition, our team helped facilitate meetings between lawmakers and staffers and Army leaders. We also hosted the first-ever congressional reception, which was very well attended. These are key

components of the AUSA Government Affairs plan to educate, inform and connect, while building goodwill for AUSA and the Army.

The association continues to advocate for more resources for soldiers, veterans and Army families, in particular mental health and suicide prevention resources for veterans, which are top clinical priorities of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Click here for information on VA resources.

Additionally, the AUSA-supported Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act, also known as the PACT Act, is being implemented. The PACT Act became law in August, and it has many components that will benefit veterans and their families.

In particular, the law provides an expansion of VA health care eligibility for veterans if they meet certain criteria and increased eligibility for disability benefits. Click here for information about the law and how it may be helpful.

We will continue to monitor these and other developments closely as we advocate for the Total Army with Congress.



Army Secretary Christine Wormuth, left, speaks at a reception for lawmakers and staffers during the 2022 AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

Mark Haaland is AUSA’s Government Affairs director.

Members can save on prescriptions, parking and more

From prescription discount cards to affordable airport parking, the Association of the U.S. Army offers an array of benefits to its members.

First up is a free prescription discount card service. If you have insurance, you may be wondering why you might need this card.

Prescription coverage can be very confusing. Each insurance company has a formulary—a list of drugs that they will cover—and, in many cases, these lists are getting shorter.

If your drug is not on your insurance company's list, you may be responsible for the full cost or a much higher co-payment.

Personally, I recently was prescribed an expensive cream for eczema that is not in my health insurance company's formulary. It required special approval to cover, and they agreed for only a short, limited period.

I will be able to save substantially in the future using the prescription discount card instead.

I encourage you to print the AUSA prescription discount card from this page to see if you can save money. Pharmacy staff are used to comparing prescription discount cards and insurance benefits to see which works better for customers.

You can also sign up to use the app, which will show you the best pricing in your area for a particular prescription drug. You'll be surprised how much the cost differs between your local pharmacies.

Present the card to your pharmacist along with your prescription. Ask them to compare the contracted discount price with the pharmacy's retail price or your cost with insurance and take the lower rate.

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If you are making travel plans, be sure to check out your AUSA member discounts on airport parking and the Armed Forces Vacation Club. (U.S. ARMY/CAMERON PORTER)

Pharmacy discounts are not insurance and are not intended as a substitute for insurance. The discount is only available at participating pharmacies. Administrator: New Benefits, Dallas, TX. For questions call New Benefits Member Support at 800-800-7616.

Airport parking

AUSA members pay a \$6.95 daily rate at the 16 Fast Park and Relax locations across the country.

Enroll for your Fast Park rewards here. You'll land on the Indianapolis site and receive the discount at all locations. You do not need an AUSA

email address as the page requests.

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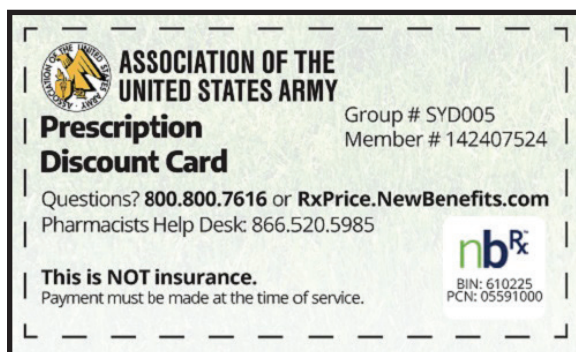
Armed Forces Vacation Club

All members, regardless of veteran status, are eligible for the Armed Forces Vacation Club, which provides access to unused timeshare resorts around the world at just \$409 per week.

These accommodations may be one-bedroom hotels or three-bedroom condos; the price remains the same. Check out the locations and availability for amazing savings and be sure to read the reviews of each resort.

Visit www.afvclub.com and check "AUSA Member" under "eligibility" even if you are eligible in another way. This allows for a payment to be made to support AUSA programs.

Susan Rubel is AUSA's Association and Affinity Partnerships director.



Chapter officer named sheriff's department deputy chief

Maria Yturria, a former Army sergeant and the current treasurer of the Association of the U.S. Army's Fort Jackson-Palmetto State chapter, recently was promoted to deputy chief of the Richland County Sheriff's Department in Columbia, South Carolina.

"I think it's obvious to all that Chief Yturria's love of family and commitment to her own family is something that has transcended the ranks of RCSD," said Sheriff Leon Lott, who serves as president of the Fort Jackson-Palmetto State chapter.

Fort Jackson-Palmetto State

commitment to her own family is something that has transcended the ranks of RCSD," said Sheriff Leon Lott, who serves as president of the Fort Jackson-Palmetto State chapter.

Yturria is the first Hispanic officer to achieve this rank in the department's 235-year history. As the new chief of the department's office of professional development, Yturria oversees hiring, retention, recruiting, training, public information, crisis intervention and more.

Lott described Yturria as someone



Sheriff Leon Lott, left, president of AUSA's Fort Jackson-Palmetto State chapter, promotes Maria Yturria, right, to deputy chief of the Richland County Sheriff's Department, in South Carolina. Yturria is the AUSA chapter's treasurer. (AUSA/W. THOMAS SMITH JR.)

who best exemplifies all that is noble and virtuous in an RCSD senior leader. She has served as the AUSA chapter treasurer for nearly seven years and has been a deputy sheriff for almost 20 years.

"It's reflected in her own unique brand of leadership—born of shared

hardships—where she sincerely feels a sense of familial love for those under her command, those above her and those she serves," Lott said.

W. Thomas Smith Jr. is a member of AUSA's Fort Jackson-Palmetto State chapter.

AUSA members support soldiers during badge testing

The Association of the U.S. Army's Korea chapter recently supported more than 500 soldiers testing for the Expert Infantryman Badge, Expert Field Medical Badge and Expert Soldier Badge at Camp Casey, South Korea.

Known as E3B, the Army recently developed an aligned event so soldiers can train for and work to earn the badges simultaneously. Aligning the three skills tests helps the Army save time, resources and the personnel needed to conduct the testing.

Korea

the badges simultaneously. Aligning the three skills

tests helps the Army save time, resources and the personnel needed to conduct the testing. The Expert Infantryman Badge recognizes infantry soldiers who demonstrate a mastery of critical tasks, while the Expert Field Medical Badge does the same for medics.

The newest badge, the Expert Sol-

dier Badge, is for soldiers in all other occupational specialties.

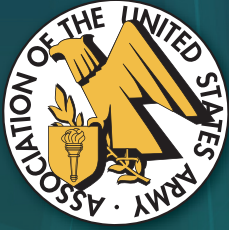
This recent E3B test was the first competition of its kind on the Korean Peninsula. More than 500 soldiers from the U.S. Army and the Republic

of Korea received sandwiches and refreshments thanks to the chapter's efforts.

"Good luck to the men and women in uniform," the chapter said in a Facebook post.



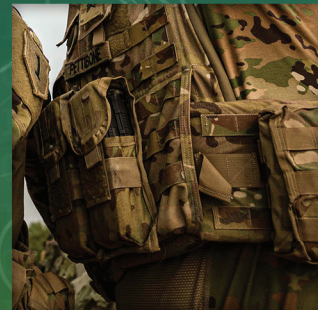
Soldiers from the U.S. and the Republic of Korea enjoy refreshments provided by AUSA's Korea chapter at Camp Casey, South Korea. (AUSA PHOTO)



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