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The 3.1% raise authorized by the defense policy bill applies to basic pay and drill pay and is the largest raise in a decade. Military retirees will receive a smaller 1.6% increase. (ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL)

## New NDAA includes 3.1% troop raise

Congressional negotiators have approved a \$738 billion defense policy bill that provides a 3.1% military raise and orders reforms in military housing, personal property shipments, child care and dependent education.

The final bill authorizes a Regular Army of 480,000 soldiers, with 336,000 soldiers in the Army National Guard and 189,500 in the Army Reserve.

It also takes the landmark step of beginning to phase out reductions in military survivor benefits paid by the Defense Department for someone also receiving dependency and indemnity compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The pay offset would be eliminated by Jan. 1, 2023, under the agreement reached by House and Senate negotiators.

The Association of the U.S. Army supports elimination of the survivor benefit offset, which is a holdover from post-Civil War policies preventing soldiers from being paid Army and veterans benefits at the same time.

The 3.1% raise, which applies to basic pay and drill pay, is the largest raise in a decade.

Military retirees will receive a smaller 1.6% increase, a difference that results from retiree increases being linked to inflation and military pay raises being linked to average salary increases in the private sector.

The housing, household goods, child care and dependent education improvements are part of a larger defense-wide family support initiative.

The aim is to reduce waiting lists and improve the quality of care at military-operated child development centers, increase oversight and ac-

countability of military housing including setting minimum livability standards, and establishing centralized control over household goods management.

The NDAA also prohibits the reduction of certain military medical personnel billets until the completion of required reviews to ensure any changes will not hurt military health care. AUSA also supports the extension of Tricare Reserve Select to reservists who are currently covered under a federal health benefits plan, and a comprehensive policy on providing mental health care to service members from all components.

The defense policy agreement was approved by the House on Wednesday; the Senate is expected to vote on it soon.

President Donald Trump has said he will sign the bill as soon as it is sent to the White House.

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# Scholarships benefit soldiers, family members and more

By Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston, U.S. Army Retired

**G**reetings from the Association of the U.S. Army, the professional organization for our soldiers and our Army.

This year, your association awarded almost \$300,000 in scholarships to soldiers from all three components of the Army, Army civilians, veterans and family members.

AUSA received more than 200 applications for the 45 scholarships, and the competition was extremely strong.

Trident University supported three scholarships this year, each valued at up to \$48,000, that were awarded to two family members and a sergeant from the Army National Guard.

The Sergeant Major of the Army Leon Van Autreve scholarships recognized eight very special individuals.

## NCO & Soldier Programs

Special thanks to USAA for its continued contribution of \$50,000 for 2019 in support of the Van Autreve scholarship fund.

The top award recipient, who was awarded a \$25,000 Van Autreve scholarship, is former Army Capt. Peter Kyriakoulis, who is pursuing his master's in business administration.

"I can't tell you how much I appreciate this scholarship and am honored beyond belief," Kyriakoulis said.

Capt. Garrison Haning from the Army Reserve received a \$5,000 Van Autreve scholarship.

"Over and over again, our association has been there for me. I am grateful beyond words," he said.

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Winzenried, USAA's program director for military affairs (Army), will present another \$50,000 check in support of the 2020 Van Autreve scholarship fund at the AUSA Annual Holiday Reception and Scholarship Fundraiser Thursday at AUSA headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.

This year's fundraiser will feature eight live auction items, gift cards and



In 2019, AUSA awarded almost \$300,000 in scholarships to soldiers from all three components of the Army, Army civilians, veterans and family members. (U.S. ARMY/AMANDA REICHERT)

books, and more than 60 baskets will be available for a silent auction.

All donations will support next year's scholastic awards.

Two scholarships, at \$10,000 each, were awarded in honor of Joseph and Helen Cribbins, who were longtime supporters of AUSA.

These scholarships are awarded to students completing degrees in science, technology, engineering or math.

Six scholarships, awarded in honor of Nicholas Chabraja, are valued at \$5,000 each and funded by a generous donation from General Dynamics.

These scholarships also are awarded to students completing degrees in science, technology, engineering and math.

Chabraja is honored for his longstanding service as a former chairman of AUSA's Council of Trustees.

Two \$5,000 scholarships were awarded in honor of retired Gen. Jack Merritt, a former AUSA president.

Four professional development scholarships were awarded to pay for certifications after completion of coursework, valued at \$3,000 each.

Three college debt reduction scholarships valued at \$2,000 each were awarded to help pay off college debt.

Delta Dental supported ten \$2,000 scholarships this year.

Rounding out the last six of the 45 scholarships were the ROTC scholarships provided earlier in the year, valued at \$4,000 each, and the Sergeants Major Kilpatrick and Strickland scholarships, also valued at \$4,000 each.

All of us look forward to the announcement, application submissions, selection and presentation of our 2020 scholarship program.

Look for updates and announcements at [www.ausa.org](http://www.ausa.org) and in all of our professional development and educational materials beginning early next year.

Application submissions for next year's 2020 scholarship awards will be available online shortly after the announcement for AUSA members.

**Retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston** is AUSA's Vice President for NCO and Soldier Programs and was the 13th sergeant major of the Army.

## AUSA supports Congressional Gold Medal for Merrill's Marauders



The Marauders became famous for their deep-penetration missions behind Japanese lines, often engaging Japanese forces superior in number. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

**B**ipartisan legislation bestowing the Congressional Gold Medal on Merrill's Marauders, a World War II Army unit that succeeded in a hazardous mission to cross 1,000 miles of dense Burmese jungle to disrupt Japanese forces, has support from the Association of the U.S. Army.

The Senate on Dec. 5 passed a version of the bill by unanimous consent, but the House of Representatives has not yet acted.

The Senate had 76 co-sponsors for the measure. The House version has 35 co-sponsors.

In a Dec. 6 letter to the co-chairmen of the House Army Caucus, retired Gen. Carter Ham, AUSA's president and CEO, notes the 75th anniversary is being celebrated this year of the extraordinary mission undertaken by the soldiers who were part of what was officially known as the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), a group of about 3,000 soldiers who volunteered for a secret mission under the command of Brig. Gen. Frank Merrill.

"After months of training in the Himalayan Mountains, Merrill's Ma-

rauders began combat operations in February 1944, and in just over five months, marched more than 1,000 miles, participated in five major battles and fought the Japanese army 32 times," Ham wrote in the letter.

"At the time the unit was relieved from duty, there were only 130 original members left who were fit to fight and only two had not been seriously injured or grievously ill throughout the campaign."

Every member of Merrill's Marauders was awarded a Bronze Star, and the unit received a Presidential Unit Citation, but some lawmakers are trying to do more.

The practice of providing a Congressional Gold Medal for military service began during the American Revolution and over the years has widened to include nonmilitary groups and individuals.

The first recipient was George Washington, who was approved for the award in 1776.

This November, a Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to the women who were involved in aeronautics and space programs from the 1930s to 1970s.

# AUSAExtra

*Voice for the Army –  
Support For the Soldier*

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## PERK OF THE WEEK

### Car rental discounts

AUSA members save up to 25% at Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz and National car rental companies. Visit us online at [www.ausa.org/savings](http://www.ausa.org/savings) to start your reservation. Your member discount will automatically be applied, and Avis, Budget and Hertz show additional coupons that can be combined with your AUSA member discount. The companies update these offers regularly, and it's often a free day, an upgrade or an additional discount.



## Companies seek to employ military talent at AUSA job fair

**F**orty-six military-friendly employers met with job seekers at a job fair Wednesday at the Association of the U.S. Army's headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.

"We continue to see the interest of civilian employers seeking to grow their teams by adding service members, civilians, retired soldiers, veterans and family members," said retired 1st Sgt. Stephen Canonico, the association's assistant director of Retired Soldiers, Veterans and Department of the Army Civilian Affairs. "These companies love both what military employees bring to the team talent-wise and their soft skills."

This free event, the fifth job fair hosted by the association, was open to transitioning and former service members, their families, Army civilians and AUSA members.

Canonico said 261 job seekers pre-



Job fairs help implement AUSA's mission to be a 'support for the soldier.' (AUSA PHOTO)

registered for the job fair, and more than 180 had some type of security clearance, "which was another positive boost for the 46 employers seeking their talents."

One day prior to the job fair, AUSA hosted a LinkedIn personal marketing class with retired Command Sgt. Maj.

Michael Quinn, a 2018 LinkedIn Top Voice in Management & Workplace.

"I believe both the employers and job seekers benefit each other—one gets a talented employee, and the other starts their new career," Canonico said.

The next AUSA job fair is scheduled for June 3.

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## Dailey visits with soldiers, discusses AUSA's mission



Retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel Dailey spoke with soldiers from Fort Carson, Colorado, and gave a talk about AUSA's mission during the Pikes Peak chapter's general membership meeting. (AUSA PHOTOS)

**R**etired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel Dailey, the Association of the U.S. Army's new vice president for NCO and Soldier Programs, recently visited the association's Pikes Peak chapter for its general membership meeting.

"He was a huge hit," said retired Sgt. Maj. Chuck Moneypenny, the chapter treasurer. "We had well over 100 soldiers from Fort Carson and the 4th Infantry Division in attendance,

and I think he shook every one of their hands and took a picture with most."

Dailey, who joined AUSA Dec. 2, is no stranger to Fort Carson, Colorado, and its surrounding communities.

### Pikes Peak

He served multiple assignments there, including as the senior enlisted soldier for the 4th Infantry Division.

As the guest speaker for the event, Dailey talked about AUSA's mission



of supporting soldiers and their families and being a voice for the Army on Capitol Hill.

"His talk on AUSA was simply superb. He made inroads with those present that we could never dreamed of having accomplished," Moneypenny said. "I think every single soldier took a [membership] application with them when they left."

To learn more about the Pikes Peak chapter, visit [www.ausappc.org](http://www.ausappc.org).

## AUSA member named Service Member of the Year

**C**hief Warrant Officer 5 Russell Smith, a member of the Association of the U.S. Army's Fort Rucker-Wiregrass chapter, was named the 2019 Active Duty Service Member of the Year by the Veterans Parade Committee of Enterprise, Alabama.

Smith was honored at the city's Veterans Day parade on Nov. 7 alongside the Veteran of the Year, retired Maj. Conrad Stempel.

### Fort Rucker-Wiregrass

Smith has served in the military since 1977. He is currently on active duty and stationed at Fort Rucker, Alabama, but he has also served in the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard.

His duty positions include serving as the sixth command chief warrant officer of the Army Reserve, as well as the



CW5 Russell Smith. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Army Reserve deputy commandant at the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Career College at Fort Rucker.

Smith has also served as part of the Army Staff at the Pentagon.

His awards include the Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War of Terrorism Service Medal, Army Achievement

Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Superior Unit Award, National Intelligence Meritorious Unit Citation and Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.

In the local community, Smith has led efforts to raise money for the Wreaths Across America program and helped build houses through Habitat for Humanity.

"All of the nominees for this year's awards were distinguished gentlemen of outstanding military service," said VFW Post 6683 Commander Otis Smith. "We are extremely proud of Mr. Conrad Stempel and Mr. Russell Smith. Their record of service speaks for itself as does their commitment and love for the military, their community and their country. We are proud to have them both in our community."



A close-up photograph of a man in a military uniform, smiling and hugging a young child with curly hair. The man's eyes are closed in a joyful expression. The child is wearing a black and white striped shirt. The background is blurred, showing other people and what appears to be an airport or public gathering.

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