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Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Weimer of Army Special Operations Command speaks at a Dec. 6 ceremony. Weimer will succeed Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston this summer. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

## Green Beret selected as next SMA

**C**ommand Sgt. Maj. Michael Weimer, a Special Forces soldier with more than 20 years of experience in Army special operations, has been selected to become the 17th sergeant major of the Army.

Weimer will succeed Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston this summer. Grinston has served as the Army's senior enlisted leader since August 2019.

"When I joined the Army in 1993, I never would have thought I'd make it this far," Weimer said in a statement. "It's an absolute honor to be selected as the next sergeant major of the Army, and I'm looking forward to continuing to serve our incredible soldiers and their families."

Army Secretary Christine Wor-

muth said Dec. 8 on Twitter that Grinston "is an incredible leader who will leave big shoes to fill." She said Weimer "is up to the challenge."

Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville also praised Weimer. "We have the greatest Army in the world because we have the greatest NCO corps," McConville said. "I'm proud to select Command Sgt. Maj. Weimer to lead that corps."

The post of sergeant major of the Army was created in 1966, modeled after a similar post created in the Marine Corps in 1957.

The length of service as the senior enlisted member of the Army has varied over the years. The first sergeant major of the Army, William Wooldridge, served for more than

two years. The longest-serving was Kenneth Preston, who spent more than seven years in the assignment. Preston then became the Association of the U.S. Army's first vice president for NCO and Soldier Programs.

Weimer enlisted in 1993 and earned his Green Beret in 1996, serving tours in the 7th Special Forces Group and 19 years within Army Special Operations Command. He became the senior enlisted leader for the command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in August 2021.

Married with two children, Weimer served several tours in the Central Command and Southern Command theaters and was command sergeant major of the special operations joint task force in Afghanistan.



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## Logistics forces need speed, precision for future fight

**O**n a future battlefield, where soldiers will be more dispersed and operating in smaller units, Army logistics must be more predictive and precise, a senior leader said.

“Those units are going to be out there, not alone and afraid, there’s going to be lots of sensors and lots of things going on, but they can only carry what they can carry,” Lt. Gen. Charles Hamilton, deputy Army chief of staff for logistics, G-4, said Dec. 8 at a breakfast hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army as part of its Coffee Series.

As a result of the scenario envisioned by Hamilton, soldiers in these smaller units will have to be precise in knowing “exactly when they’re going to need to be resupplied,” he said.

He pointed out that the traditional battlefield model of having resupply arrive in a predictable convoy along the way may not exist in the future. Instead, he said, dispersed operational units may have to use grid coordinates and sensors to locate supplies dropped by a sustainment unit that then has to quickly move on to avoid detection or attack.

“That’s what the new battlefield’s going to look like, so data, prediction and precision, are must-dos for our Army today,” Hamilton said.



Lt. Gen. Charles Hamilton, right, deputy Army chief of staff for logistics, G-4, speaks with a defense industry representative Dec. 8 at a breakfast hosted by AUSA. (AUSA PHOTO)

Unlike during World War II, where there were huge supply depots and long buildups, a joint strategic support area will play “a huge role” in facilitating logistics in the future, while the big supply buildups will have to be the purview of the defense and organic industrial bases.

The Army is also reworking its sustainment doctrine and training soldiers in combat support and combat service support jobs to be “more

datacentric” in preparation for large-scale combat, Hamilton said.

“When you think of that, all these systems and sensors, ... it has to be connected,” he said. “It’s going to be a large-scale fight, which means it’s going to be across all domains. We are reworking our doctrine a little bit to be more datacentric.”

When asked about the role industry will play in the future of battlefield logistics, Hamilton urged the industry partners in the audience to “beat down our doors, get on our calendars and show up at events like these” to discuss the modernization and technology that will be needed to address the challenges ahead.

“When I’m sitting with the secretary of [the] Army and the [Army] chief [of staff], I don’t care where we start, the conversation comes back to sustainment,” Hamilton said of his regular meetings with the Army’s top leaders. “Everyone understands it is the center of gravity and how important it is, and that gives us momentum, and momentum leads to resources, and that leads to [industry] playing a huge role in what we do.”

### Meet the AUSA headquarters staff

#### Teshaka Stanley

*Community Partner Membership Administrator*

Teshaka Stanley has been with AUSA for 22 years. She values spending quality time and traveling with her husband, Altemus, who is a fellow native New Yorker. Together they have three grown sons and one teenage grandson. In addition to spending time with family, Teshaka enjoys monthly gatherings with her “Happy Hour” ladies.



## After 7-year tenure, Davies steps down as AUSA's Membership director



Retired Col. John Davies, left, will step down in January as retired Command Sgt. Maj. Troy Welch, right, becomes AUSA's director of Membership. (AUSA PHOTOS)

**J**ohn Davies, the longtime director of Membership for the Association of the U.S. Army, will retire and assume the new role of senior adviser Jan. 1.

AUSA's new Membership director will be retired Command Sgt. Maj. Troy Welch, who currently serves as the association's director of NCO and Soldier Programs.

Davies, a retired Army colonel, joined AUSA in May 2003 as the director of Regional Activities, which at the time supported the association's chapter support and Community Partners—then called Corporate Members—programs and provided oversight for the Soldier for Life, ROTC and reserve components programs. He became director of Membership in 2015.

"When I first started at AUSA, the Army was heavily engaged with combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the chapters were very involved in supporting soldiers throughout their deployments," Davies said. "Then, as now, I've always been impressed with the energy our volunteers place into supporting our soldiers, family members and all those who strengthen our Army."

AUSA has seen many changes over the years, Davies said, from chapters inactivating while new ones stand up, from supporting deployed units

to the current focus on supporting recruiting efforts, and several changes in AUSA's association management systems. Through it all, he said, his heroes are the chapter members "who keep at it every day" to advance AUSA's mission.

"I'm also proud of the team we have here in the Membership directorate and how responsive they are to our members and our chapters. They look for ways to make things better for the volunteers and to add value to the member's experience," Davies said.

Davies also praised AUSA's Association Partner program, saying it has helped the association "remain a strong and relevant voice for the Army."

In his new role, Davies will work on projects to assist AUSA's chapters, such as a comprehensive training program for volunteers.

Welch, who joined AUSA in January 2017, said he's looking forward to his transition to the Membership team.

"I appreciate the confidence retired Brig. Gen. Jack Haley, vice president of Membership and Meetings, and retired Gen. Bob Brown, AUSA president and CEO, have in me to do the job," Welch said. "John Davies built a tremendous team, and I know I have two big shoes to fill. I can't wait to get started."

# AUSA Extra

Voice for the Army –  
Support For the Soldier

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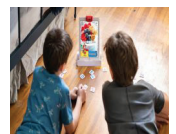
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## Community, National Partner directories now available

**D**irectories of the Association of the U.S. Army's Community and National Partners are now available online.

"These new directories provide a great opportunity to learn more about AUSA's Community and National Partners," said Lynette Nichols, AUSA's deputy director of Industry Development.

AUSA's Community Partner program provides local organizations with the opportunity to demonstrate their support for soldiers and families while strengthening their own organizational and business objectives.

These businesses, corporations, civic groups, veterans' organizations, societies and community groups are affiliated with their local AUSA chapter.

National Partners are large and

small businesses, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions and professional organizations interested in personalized engagement with the Army at the local and national levels.

Participation in this program allows organizations to interact on a personal level with Army and congressional leaders at briefings, symposia and networking events conducted by AUSA and guarantees priority exhibit space at the association's domestic symposiums, among other benefits.

"These directories are a tremendous resource to view like-minded companies who are members, and for AUSA to show appreciation to organizations who support our mission," Nichols said.

Click here to view the Community Partner directory and here for the National Partner directory.



Joining AUSA as a Community or National Partner provides opportunities to support soldiers and connect with Army leaders. (AUSA PHOTO)





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## AUSA supports Army families through forums, outreach

In 2022, the Association of the U.S. Army's Family Readiness directorate supported the association's mission to educate, inform and connect to our Army through a variety of venues and initiatives, and I would like to share a few of them with you.

We attended some of the AUSA region meetings to enhance chapter leadership and help chapters implement programs and projects that support soldiers, civilians and families. We were able to share best practices, learn what our chapters are doing to make a difference in their communities and collaborate to make us all stronger.

Thea Green, deputy director of Family Readiness, and I also supported several in-person chapter events, including the Dix chapter in Roselle, New Jersey, and more recently the Pikes Peak chapter at Fort Carson, Colorado.

In another effort to assist and improve chapter coordination, we implemented the Family Programs Vice Presidents' Chapter Collaboration, an opportunity for sharing best practices, camaraderie and hearing from subject-matter experts on relevant programs. We have held three meetings so far, with more planned in 2023.

A shared Microsoft Teams channel also was created for chapters to share with each other and with us at AUSA national headquarters.

At this year's AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C., we hosted three military family forums in a new location with a new framework. All three forums were maxed out in physical attendance, and there also was a healthy online audience.

For the first time, both online and in-person feedback on the forums was collected using a QR code, and at each forum, a free copy of *The Army Spouse Handbook* was provided to



Thea Green, left, deputy director of Family Readiness, and Family Readiness director Holly Dailey pose for a photo Dec. 5 at AUSA national in Arlington, Virginia. (AUSA PHOTO)

attendees by our sponsor, Veterans United Home Loans.

Family Readiness also supported a mentorship program and the IGNITE entrepreneurial training event for veterans, service members and military spouses at the Annual Meeting. We had 23 exhibitors in our Military Family Readiness Pavilion, several of whom were new Community Partners.

We were thrilled to participate in AUSA's LANPAC symposium and the first-ever Warfighter Summit and Exposition with a forum titled "Community Grit: Building Family Support Readiness."

The panel focused on programs, resources and connections available for service members and families to build and enhance resiliency and grit.

Experts highlighted the importance of working together to strengthen quality-of-life programs across the Army, which in turn increases the health and well-being of our soldiers and families so our warfighters can focus on the mission. No matter where they are located, building strong relationships and a support system is imperative for our families to thrive.

Also for the first time, two Army spouses were inducted into the AUSA

Senior Fellows Program—Karen Halverson and Tina Wright.

Throughout 2022, we hosted podcasts as part of AUSA's Army Matters series, including several with Maria McConville, spouse of the chief of staff of the Army, and Alexandra Grinston, spouse of the sergeant major of the Army. We also doubled our social media traffic over the course of the year.

To educate and increase awareness on military spouses finding meaningful employment and careers, the Family Readiness directorate participated in the Military Spouse Employment Partnership's annual conference, the quarterly Defense Department Spouse Ambassador Network meeting and the virtual DoD Military Spouse Symposium.

In a more personal effort to support spouse employment, we offered an internship to Amanda Tomasura, spouse of the AUSA Volunteer Family of the Year.

This is just a fraction of how your Family Readiness team works on behalf of soldiers and families. We wish you all a safe and happy holiday season and look forward to continuing the mission in the new year.

**Holly Dailey** is AUSA's Family Readiness director.

## Volunteer leader honored for service to soldiers, veterans

**R**etired Lt. Col. W. Larry Dandridge, a volunteer leader with the Association of the U.S. Army, has been awarded the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina's highest civilian honor.

Dandridge, who is vice president of veteran affairs for AUSA's Coastal South Carolina chapter, was recognized during a Nov. 15 ceremony at the Bees Ferry Public Library in Charleston, South Carolina, for a lifetime of extraordinary achievement, service and contributions on the national and state levels. Approximately 60 people, including many state dignitaries, attended the event.

Coastal South  
Carolina

The award, signed by Gov. Henry McMaster, was presented to Dandridge by State Rep. Mark Smith and retired Brig. Gen. Ernie Brockman, president of the Charleston chapter of the Military Officers Association of America.

"I am very honored to receive the Order of the Palmetto. My military service was very significant in my life, and I take great pride in still serving veterans and their families in my community today," Dandridge said.

Dandridge has served as an AUSA chapter officer for the past two decades, including three terms as chapter president. During his tenure as president, the chapter was selected as Best Chapter in its category and as Best Small Chapter in AUSA's Third Region multiple times.

Under Dandridge's leadership, the chapter adopted and campaigned in support of the local Ralph H. Johnson Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the Fisher House Charleston and the Veterans Victory House nursing care facility.

He works diligently to support the chapter's efforts to help soldiers, veterans and family members understand and apply for veterans' benefits. As a tireless and selfless volunteer,



Retired Lt. Col. W. Larry Dandridge, center, is awarded the Order of the Palmetto by retired Brig. Gen. Ernie Brockman, left, and State Rep. Mark Smith. (COURTESY PHOTO)

Dandridge is known throughout the state as a champion of service members, veterans, their families and AUSA.

In addition to AUSA, Dandridge is a Good Will Ambassador for Fisher House Charleston and the Friends of Fisher House Charleston, a volunteer adviser and Patient and Family Centered Care Instructor at the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center, a member of the center's CEO's Stakeholder Advisory Council, its

Patient and Family Advisory Council and Customer Service Council.

He previously served as a Veterans Service Officer and hospice volunteer.

Dandridge is a Vietnam-era wounded warrior and 100% disabled veteran who has devoted his life to helping others. He currently works as a columnist writing informative articles about veterans' benefits for the *Beaufort Island News* and other publications.



Retired Lt. Col. W. Larry Dandridge gives a TV interview following the Order of the Palmetto award ceremony. (COURTESY PHOTO)



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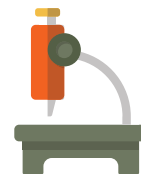
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