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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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By Sgt. Marisa Lindsay

The Alaska Army National Guard introduces its new commander

The Alaska Army National Guard welcomed a new commander during a change of command ceremony at the Alaska National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson March 22.

Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard and commissioner of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, presided over the ceremony where Col. Joseph Streff took command of the Alaska Army National Guard.

"I'm really looking forward to working with Colonel Streff toward making sure that the Army component is ready and relevant," Hummel said. "To me, Joe Streff personifies teamwork, and teamwork is one of the core values that I hold most dear."

Streff, a career National Guardsman, has served more than 27 years in the Alaska National Guard. He has served in a number of command and staff assignments, recently serving as the State Army Aviation officer, Aviation Battalion commander and Deputy United States Property and Fiscal officer. Streff also deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom where he served in the Multi-National Corps as the lead planner for the Corps Air Operations section during "The Surge," in 2006.

The change of command ceremony is a formal event that is rich with tradition and heritage. The key to the change of command is the passing of the colors from the outgoing commander to the incoming commander, which represent the organization's history and the loyalty of its Soldiers. The colors are the commander's symbol of authority and also represent commitment and responsibility to the unit.

"Ceremonies like these are bittersweet and exciting all at the same time," Hummel said. "It's difficult to say goodbye to someone who has committed the preponderance of his adult life to wearing our nation's cloth, but General Bridges is leaving the Army component of the Guard better than he found it and has done right by the Soldiers in the Guard."

Brig. Gen. Leon M. "Mike" Bridges, who had commanded the Alaska Army National Guard since January 2012, will retire May 1.

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Cutline:

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During the Alaska Army National Guard's change of command ceremony, Brig. Gen. Leon "Mike" Bridges, Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, and Col. Joseph Streff conduct a rite of passage when assuming command, the pass and review, at the Alaska National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson March 22. Hummel presided over the ceremony where Streff took command of the Alaska Army National Guard. The outgoing commander, Bridges, had commanded the Alaska Army National Guard since January 2012 and will retire May 1.

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The Alaska Army National Guard welcomed new commander, Col. Joseph Streff, during a change of command ceremony at the Alaska National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson March 22. The key to the ceremony is the passing of the colors, the unit flag, which represents the commander's authority and commitment to his Soldiers, and is passed from the outgoing to the incoming commander.

For additional photos of the event please visit:

<http://dvidshub.net/r/ktqs9c>

For video b-roll of the event please visit:

<http://dvidshub.net/r/2lvwbb>

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