



PRESS RELEASE

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Alaska National Guard's Counter Drug Support program shown the ropes

FORT GREELY, Alaska —Maj. Gen. Gerald Ketchum, the director of the National Guard Bureau Joint Staff, visited Soldiers, with the Ground Based Mid-Course Defense Complex, on May 20.

During Ketchum's visit with the Guardsmen, Lt. Col Timothy Brower, the commander of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion at Fort Greely, explained their current mission and challenges of his unit.

Quote from LTC Brower

The missile defense program

The course focuses on the core measures of communication, planning, teamwork, problem solving, decision-making, individual sense-of-self, perception of harm and summary of learning. There are several high and low elements of the course that act as tools to increase these skills.

For example, the power pole portion of the high-ropes course requires participants to rely on their team to secure their safety ropes as they jump from the pole, three stories above ground.

"We are very excited about having this available to the community," explained Sgt. Austin Makowski, a team leader with C Company, Long Range Surveillance Squadron and the assistant course manager for the training. "It's a great resource to build cohesion among teams in community groups, and to help the Alaska National Guard become closer to the community we serve."

Brought in to instruct the course were Colin Koach and Kevin Trump of Team Synergo, an adventure education company based in Tigard, Oregon.

Koach was surprised to learn that the Counter-Drug Support Program facilitates the E3 course free-of-charge to the community.

"Not many organizations are able to participate in a program like this because normally it's very expensive to enlist in this kind of training," Koach said. "If you're hesitant about participating, it's a unique opportunity to see yourself and your team in ways you wouldn't otherwise be able to."

The E3 Challenge Course, which is funded by National Guard Bureau, is available to organizations in the community as a leadership training tool. Groups who previously participated include Family Programs with the Alaska National Guard, the Alaska Military Youth Academy and the Anchorage School District.

The E3 Challenge Course will begin booking two- and three-day customized camps for community organizations and groups starting July 5th. Interested parties should contact the assistant course manager, Sgt. Austin Makowski, at 428-6656.

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PHOTOS

1. **Attached pdf** includes story and a small selection of low-resolution photos for viewing on screen.
2. **Flickr link** includes an event album with the complete selection of full-resolution, free downloadable images. (Flickr is not generally accessible from .mil computers.)
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard/albums/72157670659801046>
3. **DVIDS link** includes story and selected full-resolution photos. (Primarily for media, DVIDS is accessible from .mil computers.)
<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/203324/alaska-national-guards-counter-drug-support-program-shown-ropes>



