



2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs





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Gov. Bill Walker
Commander in Chief



Brig. Gen. Leon (Mike) Bridges
Acting Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard
& Acting Commissioner of the DMVA



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DMVA 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Simulated Search and Rescue. From left: Staff Sgt. Johndavid Ahlberg, Staff Sgt. Stan Montgomery, Master Sgt. George Smith and Staff Sgt. Megan Stone, maintainers from the 176th Wing, check out the view from the open ramp of a C-17 during Lava Rescue 2014, a search and rescue exercise in Hawaii in February 2014. Exercise participants had just completed a simulated long-range search and rescue mission. The 249th Airlift Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, is the only C-17 unit in the Air Force and Air National Guard that executes C-17 rescue airdrops. Photo: Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead, DMVA Public Affairs

Cari-bouy. A small group of caribou casually float past Eagle during break-up season 2014. With ice-free rivers, residents can travel by boat to nearby communities and fish camps. Photo: Claude Denver, DHS&EM

Black Hawk. Alaska Army National Guardsmen from 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, prepare an Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter for takeoff after refueling near Big Lake in August 2014. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

Our Future. Cadet Jennifer Ohlund, of Trail, Oregon, recipient of the ChalleNGe award, stands at attention during the graduation ceremony of Class 2014-01 of the Alaska Military Youth Academy's ChalleNGe program in February 2014. Photo: Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



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Ready to Serve
This document was printed at no cost to the State of Alaska.



For the People

Gov. Bill Walker
Commander in Chief



Dear Fellow Alaskans,

Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott joins me and our entire administration to thank you for your service to our state and our country. As past and present members of our armed services, you have sacrificed so much to protect the foundations of our society and ensure our nation's safety.

As you may know, Alaska's history is deeply rooted in the presence of our military, which, for many families, was the

beginning of generations of adventure in the Last Frontier. Since our state's earliest years, the armed services have played a quintessential role in helping build our communities and protect our citizens in the face of disaster. From the construction of the Alcan Highway to rebuilding efforts after the 1964 Great Alaskan Earthquake, as well as the establishment of bases across Alaska, our state wouldn't be nearly as developed as it is today without the contributions of the U.S. military.

My own family was led to Alaska — before World War II — because of the armed services. During World War II, my father served in the Alaska Scouts, helping to protect our nation and our state from foreign threats on Alaska land in the Aleutians. Around the same time, national defense funding helped construct the Alcan Highway, sending my mother north to help work on the project. Even as a child, my first years of school were spent in a Quonset hut classroom at Fort Greely near Delta Junction. These experiences helped build my deep admiration for the contributions made in Alaska by military personnel, both for my family and our entire state.

Today, the opportunities for Alaska's service men and women are greater than ever. Every year new recruits eagerly join our Alaska National Guard, hoping to make a positive contribution to the world. In addition to protecting our nation abroad and acting as global goodwill ambassadors, these brave individuals make up Alaska's first line of defense in the face of disaster or emergency.

Recent years have been challenging for our Guard members, but I am determined that the actions of a few will not tarnish the hard-earned reputation of the many men and women who serve us with honor and integrity.

One of my top priorities as governor is to return our state's attention to the incredible contributions Guard members are making in their communities each and every day. It is my strongest belief that we will overcome these struggles and come together as a stronger, more united Alaska National Guard.

Again, thank you so much for your service to Alaska. I look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Gov. Bill Walker

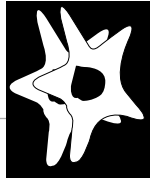


Always Ready, Always There. A Soldier with 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, waits in a field during UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter hoist training in August on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Photo: Tech. Sgt. Frank Oliver, 445th Airlift Wing



The Acting Adjutant General



Brig. Gen. Leon (Mike) Bridges
Acting Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard &
Acting Commissioner of the DMVA

The Department of Military & Veterans Affairs is dedicated to the mission of “Securing the State, Defending the Nation.” More than 4,300 professionals within the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Homeland Security & Emergency Management, Alaska Military Youth Academy, Veterans Affairs, Administrative Services, Alaska Aerospace Corporation, Alaska State Defense Force and Alaska Naval Militia work diligently to ensure the safety, security and future success of Alaska and its people.

The Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management is a national leader in disaster preparedness, response and recovery. In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the magnitude 9.2 earthquake that struck the state on March 27, 1964, DHS&EM partnered with other agencies to conduct the largest, most complex exercise in the history of the state in 2014. The exercise tested participants in their response to a simulated large-scale disaster similar to the 1964 earthquake.

The Office of Veterans Affairs continues to make strides in reaching out to all Alaskan veterans to ensure our former military members are receiving the benefits they earned. In 2014, we provided support to 230,000 eligible Alaskans. The Office of Veterans Affairs will persist in its efforts to recognize all Alaska Territorial Guard veterans with their official discharge paper work and will maintain its focus on outreach and education into the new year.

After nearly 20 years of operation, the Alaska Military Youth Academy has graduated 4,387 cadets from its ChalleNGe program. The Alaska Military Youth Academy continues to help intervene in and reclaim the lives of youth and produce program graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults.

Members of the Alaska State Defense Force were recognized nationally in 2014, proving that Alaska has some of the best state defense force Soldiers in the United States. The Alaska State Defense Force continues to augment the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs with its communications capabilities and support roles.

“The Alaska National Guard is a premier force driven by core values; empowered by trust, dignity and respect; ready and relevant for service to our state and nation.” This is my vision for our organization, and I believe it to be true now.

The Alaska National Guard has been investigated and assessed, and we’ve had National Guard Bureau experts come alongside us to help identify concerns, build the way forward and to measure the progress we’ve made thus far. We have had a challenging year, to be sure. But we have faced our challenges and made significant improvements in a very short period of time.

Our process for improvement has included accountability metrics, specific desired-end states, goals and objectives, required milestones for achievement, methods to measure change and identification of other actions required to ensure completion.

In the five main areas of concern we have been working to address since September 2014, we have made measured progress in all areas. The five areas are command climate, military justice,

law enforcement, sexual assault and equal opportunity. Three of the areas were assessed in December 2014 by the NGB team to have strong or very strong progress, while two have had slower progress and will take a longer time to see a long-term positive outcome. Some of these will require longer-term resourcing and additional training across our force for sustainment.

We have taken constructive steps forward. For example, we have a new open door policy, a new provost marshal — which is part of a new program for Alaska — and significantly refined equal opportunity measures, among many other accomplishments. Working together, we will improve our professional culture while strengthening our operational missions.

I think it’s important for everyone to know that while we’ve had major issues, the vast majority of our 4,000 Guardsmen have continued to do their jobs with integrity, professionalism and competence.

We are undergoing a major change at the Alaska National Guard. Our Soldiers and Airmen deserve it, and our citizens deserve to know we are committed to transforming our culture and restoring trust. I am proud to see how our team has come together to work hard toward reconciliation and restoration within the organization, and I am very pleased with how far we have come in a very short time.

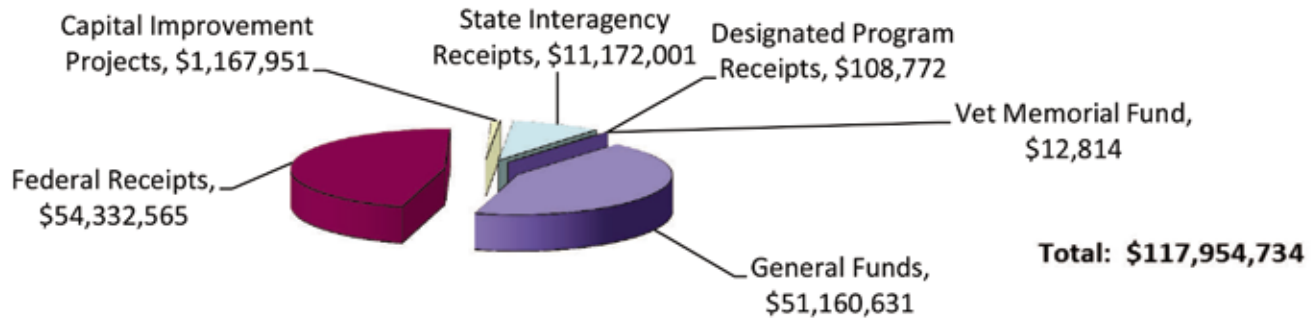
Thank you all for all that you do to make the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs a meaningful and positive place to serve our communities, state and nation.



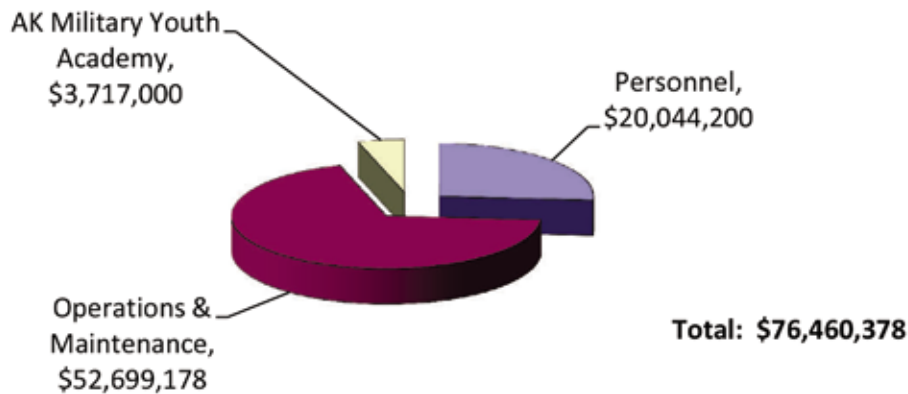
Honoring a Veteran. Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges, acting adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, presents the Alaska Territorial Guard patch to Andronik P. Kashevarof during an informal ceremony at Kashevarof’s house in Anchorage in December 2014. Kashevarof served in the Alaska Territorial Guard’s St. George Island unit during World War II until 1947, when the ATG was disbanded. It was not until 2000 that the ATG were officially recognized as members of the U.S. Army. Since then, the State of Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs has been working to locate approximately 6,400 people who served in the ATG to recognize them for their service and ensure that they receive Veterans Affairs coverage offered to all veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. Photo: Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

DMVA... By the Numbers

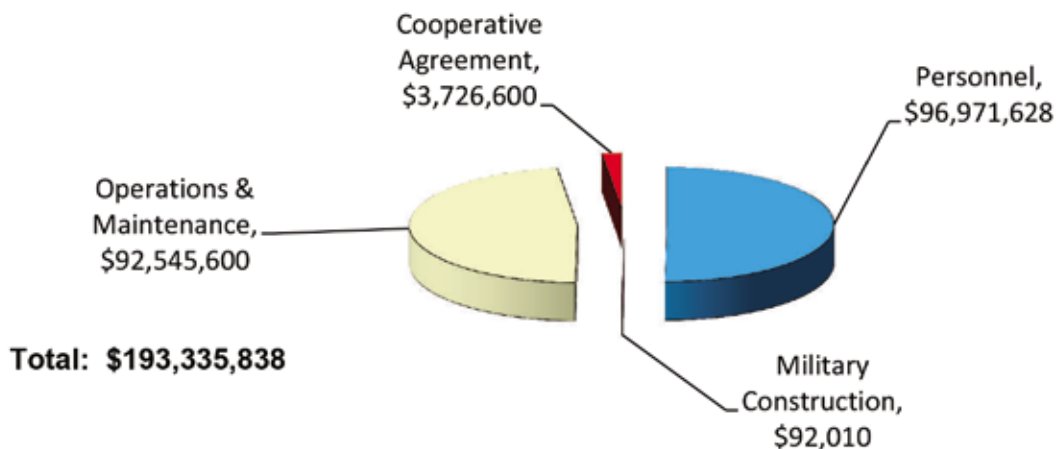
DMVA SFY2014 State Operating & Capital Actual Expenditures

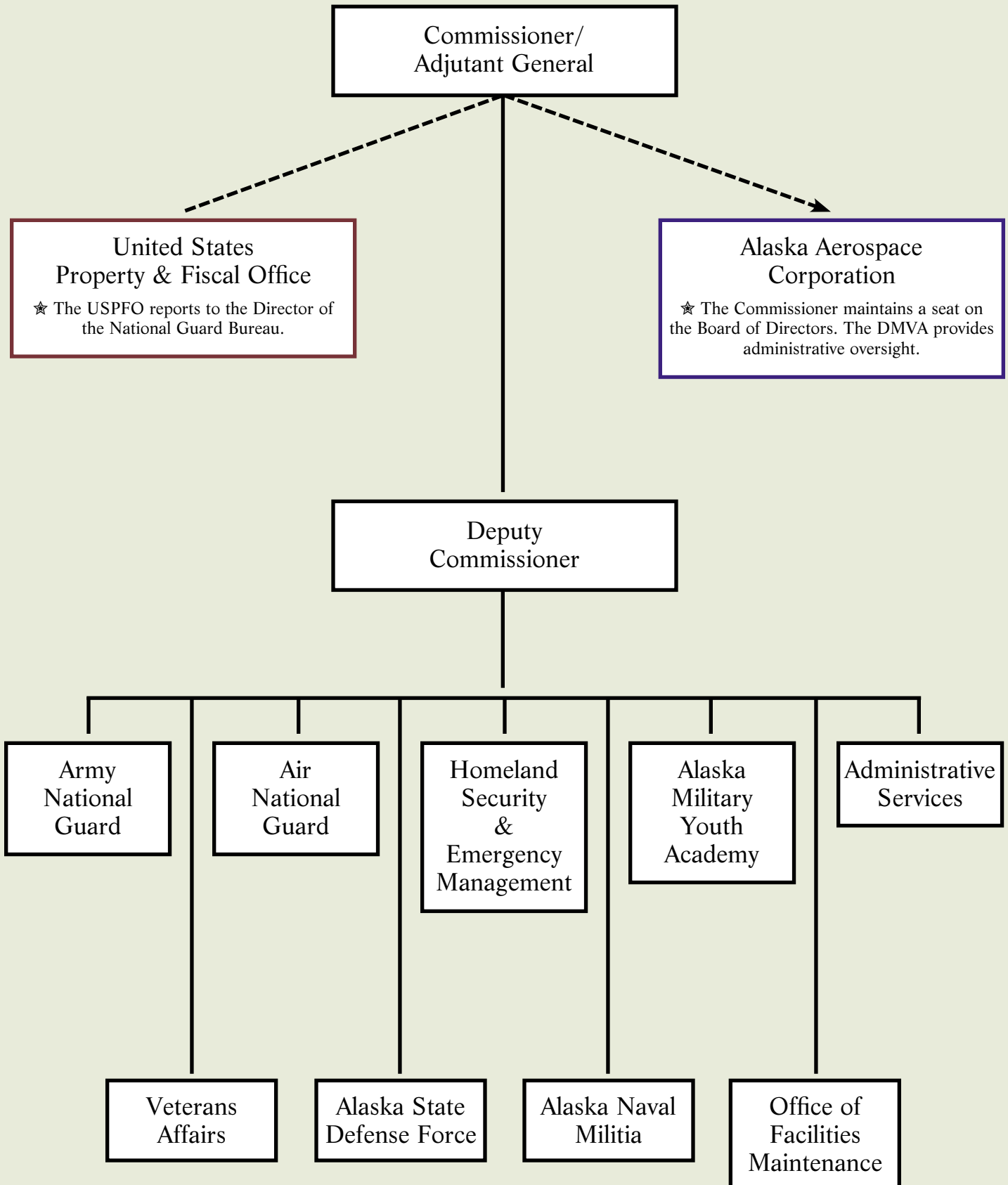


Army Guard Funding in Alaska - FFY14



Air Guard Funding in Alaska - FFY14







Veterans



What an exciting year the Office of Veterans Affairs had in 2014. We continued our efforts in awarding Alaska Territorial Guard veterans who served in World War II their honorable U.S. Army discharges, added Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans events to our outreach efforts, increased our travel efforts across Alaska, and continued to enhance our partnerships with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in the areas of medical care, disability/pensions compensations and rural outreach. We also exceeded all the 2014 goals while providing stellar support to 230,000 eligible Alaskans. We accomplished these feats while keeping our primary mission at the forefront to develop and sustain comprehensive state-wide veterans advocacy programs.

Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans

On March 29, 2013, then-Gov. Sean Parnell signed into law that this day forward would be recognized as Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans day. The Office of Veterans Affairs worked with the Department of Defense in 2013 to become a Vietnam commemorative partner to honor every Vietnam Veteran who lives in Alaska. Upon completion of the partnership, we minted a "Welcome Home" honor coin and planned our first events for March 29, 2014. On this day, we held two events: one in Fairbanks and one in Anchorage.

The welcome home events were so meaningful for our Vietnam veterans it was hard not see the significant healing through the tears and appreciation on each veteran's face. Every general officer and commander in Alaska participated in these events, and they were moved by the veterans as they welcomed each one home and presented the honor coin.



ATG Medal. Cpl. John Nerby, an Alaska Territorial Guard veteran, stands with his wife, Alice, in their Bethel home in August. He was presented his ATG medal, which he is wearing, and received his official U.S. Army honorable discharge certificate. Photo: Sam Hudson, Alaska Veterans Affairs Healthcare System



Honoring Ancestors Who Served. People gather around the Wall of Honor at the Alaska Territorial Guard Memorial Park in Bethel in August. Photo: Sam Hudson, Alaska Veterans Affairs Healthcare System

After these events, we received hundreds of requests to offer a similar program in other communities. We have since provided this program in other locations and have reached an additional 1,300 Vietnam veterans. Our plan is to continue this effort until every Vietnam veteran in Alaska is welcomed home and honored for their service.

Alaska Territorial Guard

In FY 2014, the endeavors developed in FY 2013 were continued. We increased efforts to ensure that every ATG veteran who served had a discharge document on file in the National Archives reflecting their honorable service. The exciting part about this research and effort is that living ATG members are still being found. It was an honor to present Cpl. John Nerby of Bethel his U.S. Army honorable discharge.

Mercedes Angerman, ATG Task Force chief, is still working hard to ensure all receive this honor. She continues to hone the authoritative ATG list through her research efforts. This list allows the U.S. Army the ability to expedite the submitted discharge requests. In FY 2014, there were 172 discharges received after submission of 172 requests. Angerman reviewed 354 additional records but was unable to find enough information to request a discharge application.

The ultimate goal is to have all the ATG honorable discharges on file before the family requests the honorable discharge. We are still a long way from 100 percent completion but researching 70-year-old paper records is very difficult; one day we will hit our goal of having all ATG members officially honorably discharged. While the

goal is lofty, it will ensure a focus on correcting this previous oversight so that future generations will have access to their ancestors' service records.

In other notable ATG news, the oldest living ATG member, Pvt. Henry Neligan of Ketchikan, accomplished an almost-insurmountable task for a veteran of his age this year. He flew to Washington, D.C., to visit the World War II memorial as part of the Honor Flight program. What made this trip so significant for Neligan was that he turned 102 the day he flew out of Anchorage.

Veterans Served

This year, the Office of Veterans Affairs was successful in assisting veterans by returning more than \$54 million in past payments owed to the veterans/dependents. Simultaneously, staff assisted more than 47,000 with claims processing and benefits questions, and traveled to more than 200 communities around the state.

The continued success of this program is also measured through state veterans receiving annual compensation and pension payments. This year the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs sent more than \$211 million for disability compensation and pension payments to veterans and their families in Alaska.

Also, we assisted veterans in receiving needed medical care at five VA clinics and 122 local health care facilities in Alaska. There are more than 32,000 veterans enrolled in VA medical programs, and of that 32,000, the VA treats 17,304 patients annually, with a managed care cost of more than \$217 million. There is still a long way to go to have all eligible veterans treated and paid for by the federal VA, but what has occurred so far for our veterans is outstanding.

Education is our next area of concentration. Alaska has more than 6,100 students attending an Alaska university receiving VA education benefits. The total funds paid to in-state Alaska institutions and to the eligible members for FY 2014 is more than \$61 million. Working with all Alaskans who are eligible for these benefits ensures the future is brighter not only for them and their families but for the state as well.

As part of a joint outreach, the Office of Veterans Affairs partnered with the VA and sponsored several rural outreach trips in Alaska. These outreach efforts assisted veterans greatly by providing services in

their home communities. Participating in these teams are veterans service officers, VA benefits counselors, National Guard benefits counselors, Alaska Veterans Advisory Council members and staff from the Office of Veterans Affairs.

This year we traveled to the following communities: Anchor Point, Anchorage, Barrow, Anderson, Akiak, Bethel, Chickaloon, Clear, Cold Bay, Cordova, Craig, Delta Junction, Dillingham, Dutch Harbor, Eagle, Eielson Air Force Base, Fairbanks, Fort Greely, Fort Wainwright, Fort Yukon, Galena, Glennallen, Gokona, Haines, Homer, Hoonah, Huslia, Healy, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Juneau, Kenai, Ketchikan, Klawock, Kodiak, Kotzebue, Kwethluk, Mentasta, Metlakatla, Nenana, Matanuska-Susitna Valley, Nome, North Pole, Northway, Petersburg, Prince of Wales Island, Ruby, Seldovia, Seward, Sitka, Soldotna, Stevens Village, Tok, Toksook Bay, Tununak, Valdez, Wasilla, White Mountain and Wrangell. Some of these communities had several follow-up visits after receiving requests by the community. While visiting these communities, teams provided services in the area of claims processing, education information, medical needs, vocational rehabilitation and direct federal and state programs that increase the quality of life of our veterans and their dependents.

Veteran Service Officer Grant Management

In order for veterans to receive the best service, there are 17 veterans service officers across the state. They provide services to veterans free. Some states deliver these services through entry-level state employees who are in offices that do not perform outreach efforts. But in Alaska, Alaskan veterans are served through a grant with the following veterans service organizations: Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Disabled American Veterans and Vietnam Veterans of America. All service officers are nationally certified and are tested annually to keep these certifications current. This program is the envy of numerous states, and Alaska has been contacted about how to implement this program in other states.

Memorial Grant Management

The new ATG Memorial Park at the Bethel Veterans Cemetery is almost complete after a groundbreaking in July 2013. It is a good example of what a community of volunteers can do with limited resources and a big heart to honor our veterans. If you find yourself in Bethel, stop by and take a look. You will be amazed at the quality.

Be sure to ask one of the ATG committee members just how they got all those rocks and stand by for a fun answer.

This project was so impressive that each member of the committee received an Office of Veterans Affairs Distinguished Honor Coin. ATG Committee members are Fritz Grenfell, Dave Trantham, Stanley "Tundy" Rodgers, Louie Crew, Buck Bukowski, Heather Pike, Tim Oosterman and Shorty Salzbrun.

The other project we worked on this year was the new memorial in Soldotna in the new Riverside Park. Nick Nelson of the Military Order of the Purple Heart had the monument made with donated funds, and we were able to provide funds to have it shipped to Soldotna and installed at the park. The monument reflects the honor of those who received wounds in the defense of our nation.

Statewide Stand Down

Stand Down is an annual program to provide veterans in need with a hand up through various types of direct assistance including, but not limited to, medical and dental screening, housing assistance, employment assistance and financial assistance.

Because of the successes of this event in Barrow, Juneau and Dillingham, another community off-the-road system was selected to receive assistance in 2014. This year Bethel was selected. This community proved to be a very challenging location, but in the end another home run was hit.

Adding the veterans served in Anchorage and Fairbanks to the Bethel veterans served, more than 2,000 veterans participated in these programs. We are able to provide a hand up to our veterans through services provided by 60 community service agencies including programs from the federal, state, local governments and faith-based programs. These events are critical because they bring key staff together who have the ability to move fast to assist veterans in need. This is another great way the community comes together to honor our veterans who served.

Other Significant Accomplishments

A continued partnership with the VA to train tribal veterans representatives is critical to our success in reaching every veteran in Alaska. This year we graduated another 50 volunteer TVRs through a class in Anchorage. This was a challenge at first because of federal budget constraints, but after all the trainers and the TVRs came together, it proved to be a huge success. Now there are 220 TVRs trained and providing basic veterans services in each of their respective communities.



Reflections and Respect. Jim Grant, past commander of American Legion Jack Henry Post 1, places a wreath before taking a moment of reflection during the Remembrance Day ceremony at the Fort Richardson National Cemetery on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, on Veterans Day. Grant served as an air traffic controller before retiring from the U.S. Army at the rank of sergeant major.

Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

This is the largest veterans volunteer corps in the nation under this program model. This model is now being shared with Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, California and Nevada. Since the program's inception in 2011, we have placed boots on the ground in numerous communities across Alaska.

TVRs ensure we are able to reach those veterans who would never venture out of the home for assistance. They know the veterans in their community and what benefits they have earned. Because of their strength and knowledge, our goal is to one day have a TVR in every community.

We hit a major milestone this year in caring for our homeless veteran population. Each year, on Jan. 29, a homeless point-in-time count is accomplished. This is the first year in the history of this count we had no homeless veterans counted on this day. In reality, this does not mean we have no homeless veterans in the state, but it signifies we have finally delivered enough shelters to meet the needs of our veterans.

We partnered with the VA Office of Home Loans, Native Loan program. We signed the first Alaskan Native Home Loan program for the community of Metlakatla. This loan offers a VA Direct Loan on tribal trust lands at 4 percent annually. This ensures our Alaska Native veterans who served have the opportunity to use their home loan benefit. This loan still requires the standard qualification but allows for homes specifically built in Alaska villages and communities where the Native veteran does not own the land.

Throughout the past five years, Alaska has moved into a new era in regards to veteran services. We have seen the development of a new VA medical facility, been given the choice of local care over health care out of state, experienced the explosion in the delivery of education funds, welcomed home all our veterans and put access to assistance in the forefront of all we do. We went from last in the nation on disability claims processing to first in 2014. We are the VA's model for delivery of care in the most remote location. We will continue "Serving Alaska, One Veteran at a Time."

Alaska Army National Guard



The Alaska Army National Guard continues to support the state and the nation with Soldiers who are trained, equipped and prepared to answer the call to duty. In 2014, Soldiers from the AKARNG remained deployed to perform their federal mission — military police Soldiers served at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and liaison teams deployed to Afghanistan with the Mongolian Armed Forces. At home in Alaska, Soldiers worked to improve and safeguard the lives of citizens in the state by helping fight the massive Funny River Fire, and served remote villages near Kodiak during Arctic Care 2014.

297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade

During federal fiscal year 2014, the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade participated in four major training exercises. As part of the exercises, the brigade's Soldiers conducted training in Alaska, Washington, and overseas in Japan, Mongolia and Turkey. Throughout the training, the brigade focused on creating realistic scenarios in joint/combined environments, ensuring that its Soldiers are prepared to support the state of Alaska and to perform its federal mission.

YAMA SAKURA COMMAND POST EXERCISE

In November 2013, Soldiers from the 297th BfSB deployed to Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington, and Hokkaido,



Best Warrior. Sgt. Timothy Matthew, an infantryman with the Long Range Surveillance Company, 1-297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron, Alaska Army National Guard, fires the M9 handgun while Sgt. Stephen Behrens, from the 207th Multi-Functional Training Regiment, evaluates his performance during the 2015 Best Warrior Competition on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, in August 2014. The Best Warrior Competition was designed to test Soldiers in a series of mentally and physically challenging events over the course of 72 hours to determine who the best junior enlisted and noncommissioned officers are in the Alaska Army National Guard. Photo: Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

Japan, to participate in Yama Sakura. In the high-intensity scenario that drove the exercise, northern Japan had been invaded. BfSB Soldiers worked side by side with corps and divisional assets and Air Force fixed-wing assets to counter the offensive threat and restore Japan's sovereignty. The

Long Range Surveillance Company, 1-297th Cavalry Squadron was employed extensively as a corps-level surveillance asset, allowing them to practice the LRSC's capabilities. Yama Sakura provided a great opportunity to expose the brigade level staff to operations at the division and corps level.

VIGILANT GUARD 2014

In March 2014, the 297th BfSB and other AKARNG Soldiers participated in Exercise Vigilant Guard Alaska 2014, a joint emergency response exercise consisting of a tabletop exercise, command post exercise and field training exercise, as well as multiple readiness training events in seven Alaska communities. Commemorating the 1964 Great Alaskan Earthquake, the Alaska National Guard implemented a dual-status command joint task force and demonstrated proficiency in the State of Alaska mission — essential tasks while operating in a National Incident Management System environment.

Exercise Vigilant Guard Alaska 2014 exercised more than 2,200 Title 32 Soldiers and Airmen from 13 states, culminating with a total of 4,600 exercise participants from seven interagency linked evaluations and exercises. Participants from Hawaii, Utah and Nebraska arrived to train side



Vigilant Guard. Alaska National Guardsmen from the 207th Engineer Support Platoon and the 297th Military Police Company help load patients onto AmbuBus transport vehicles from Anchorage-based hospitals to a simulated Disaster Aeromedical Staging Facility during Exercise Vigilant Guard Alaska 2014, a joint exercise with federal, state and local agencies to train for earthquakes or other natural disasters. Photo: Sgt. Michelle Brown, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

by side with brigade Soldiers and local authorities on skills such as debris removal, patient evacuation, distribution-point setup and law enforcement support.

The communities of Cordova and Valdez were extremely receptive and incorporated BfSB Soldiers into their response scenarios. Deployed Soldiers had the opportunity to liaison with city emergency management staff. The culmination of this collaborative event was a mass casualty exercise hosted by Valdez in which patients were triaged and evacuated to Fairbanks. The 1-297th Cavalry Squadron's command team provided command and control overseeing the exercise in Valdez, while brigade Soldiers in Fairbanks worked with the Fairbanks Fire Department to receive the patients at Fairbanks International Airport and transport them to Fairbanks Memorial Hospital.

KHAAN QUEST 2014

In June 2014, the 297th BfSB was the exercise lead of all U.S. forces in Khaan Quest 2014, a peacekeeping exercise in Mongolia. The exercise is part of the United States' continuing effort to strengthen ties and cooperation among nations throughout the Pacific region as part of the Theater Security Cooperation Program. Khaan Quest is a joint/multinational training event focused on peacekeeping operations. Khaan Quest 2014 was conducted with our state partners — the men and women of the Mongolian Armed Forces — as well as 12 other participating nations (Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, South Korea, Tajikistan, Great Britain, Nepal and Vietnam). KQ14 highlights included a command post exercise, field training exercise, an engineer-subject-matter-expert exchange and a medical outreach to the civilian population of Ulaanbaatar.

COOPERATIVE RESOLVE 2014

In September 2014, members of the 297th BfSB's staff participated in Cooperative Resolve 2014 in Turkey. Cooperative Resolve 14 was a command post exercise based on a peacekeeping operations scenario. Soldiers from the Turkish armed forces and U.S. Army Europe also participated in the training. The exercise allowed the BfSB to improve its ability to operate in a joint and multinational environment.

38th Troop Command

In 2014, the 38th Troop Command was called to serve both the state and nation in domestic response operations and in combat deployments.

Alaska National Guardsmen from the 38th Troop Command responded to flooding and forest fires on the Kenai Peninsula.



Khaan Quest. Mongolian role-players posing as an angry mob push the shields of a riot control team made up of U.S. and Mongolian Armed Forces service members in a training event during Khaan Quest 2014 at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia, in June. KQ14 is a regularly scheduled, multinational exercise co-sponsored by U.S. Army Pacific, and hosted annually by Mongolian Armed Forces. KQ14 is the latest in a continuing series of exercises designed to promote regional peace and security. Photo: Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters conducted 334 bucket drops, carrying 210,420 gallons of water in three days to help fight the massive Funny River Fire. Soldiers also provided shelter to displaced families.

The 38th TC redeployed 60 Soldiers from the 1-207th Aviation Regiment who served on a one-year deployment to Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Additionally, 83 Soldiers from the 761st Military Police Battalion and 297th Military Police Company conducted security operations at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Finally, four Soldiers deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, where they served as security advisors to the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Force providing airfield security at Shindand Air Base, Afghanistan.

The 38th TC welcomed two new units to the brigade — a construction

management team and an engineer platoon. These units enhance the AKARNG's ability to support the state of Alaska in case of a natural disaster.

Directorate of Information Management

The Directorate of Information Management concentrated heavily on improving emergency communications capabilities by participating in two emergency preparedness training exercises. First, the department participated in Exercise Vigilant Guard Alaska 2014, the premier national exercise for emergency response operations. During this exercise, multiple emergency satellite communications capabilities, Iridium satellite phones, video tele-conference systems, VOIP, high frequency radio systems, and Alaska Land Mobile



Welcome Home. Spc. Caleb Schneck, a military policeman with the 297th Military Police Company, Alaska Army National Guard, hugs his sister, Abby Schneck, after arriving at Ted Stevens International Airport in August 2014 after an 11-month deployment to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. His unit deployed September 2013 to Guantanamo Bay in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as part of Joint Task Force-GTMO Joint Detention Group. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs



Weapons of Mass Destruction. Alaska National Guardsmen from the 103rd Civil Support Team – Weapons of Mass Destruction, as well as Guardsmen from Idaho, Washington, Montana and Utah, take part in a field training exercise on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, in February 2014. The exercise was conducted to evaluate the 103rd for its ability to respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats. The unit received perfect scores in all 12 categories of its evaluation, demonstrating that the Guardsmen stand ready to deploy in any CBRN threat to the nation.

Photo: Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

Radios were successfully deployed to Guard units and external agencies.

In June, the Directorate of Information Management participated in a second exercise in cooperation with the Alaska State Defense Force and Alaska Command. The department deployed two remote communications kits to the Kenai Peninsula armory and conducted extensive bandwidth/speed testing of knowledge management systems.

University of Alaska Anchorage Army ROTC

The Alaska Army National Guard provides two full-time Soldiers to serve as instructors and program directors for UAA's Army ROTC program, whose mission is to select, educate, train and commission student-cadets to serve as officers and leaders of character in the U.S. Army.

In fall 2014, UAA Army ROTC reached several milestones including the largest corps of cadets, now more than 40 cadets strong, in the program's history. The cadets also placed first at the 8th Brigade Ranger Challenge regional competition. The team included cadets from UAA Army ROTC and its host program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Three cadets on the team are also Soldiers serving in the AKARNG. The team will vie at the brigade level in February 2015 for a chance to compete at the national competition at West Point.

103rd Civil Support Team – Weapons of Mass Destruction

In 2014, the 103rd Civil Support Team – Weapons of Mass Destruction deployed teams throughout the United States, as well as locally, and participated in exercises that included Alaska's statewide event, Exercise Vigilant Guard Alaska 2014. During Vigilant Guard, the 103rd validated procedures for an earthquake response and interagency coordination with multiple state and federal organizations including civil support teams from other states.

The 103rd responds to both natural and man-made disasters to aid emergency managers in potentially hazardous material releases of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear nature. CSTs routinely provide support for high-profile events throughout the country, including sporting events. One of Alaska's high profile events was the state's and Canada's biennial international sporting event, the Arctic Winter Games. This year the games were held in Fairbanks, so a strike team was sent to provide surveillance and perimeter monitoring in coordination with Fairbanks first responders.

In May, a strike team participated in Guam's annual exercise — Konfitma,

which was based in the Northern Mariana Islands, Saipan. Konfitma involved all CST teams from the Pacific — Guam, Hawaii, Alaska and all first responders and government agencies responsible for disaster mitigation in Saipan. Throughout the course of a week, the 103rd participated in numerous chemical-, biological- and radiological-based scenarios, which were prosecuted with integrated CST teams from the Pacific and police and firemen of the Northern Mariana Islands.

In June, the 103rd went to Dugway Proving Grounds, Utah, for two weeks to recertify a chemical and biological agent team, as well as individual competencies, and to participate in a multicomponent team exercise. The exercise paired Alaska with the Idaho CST to execute multiple chemical- and biological-based scenarios during a three-day period.

In August, the 103rd deployed to Unalaska and conducted an exercise with the Unalaska Department of Public Safety, Division of Fire & Emergency Services and members of the UniSea hazmat team.

The 103rd provides 24-hour coverage locally in Alaska for all hazmat, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear releases. In addition to response missions, the CST trains with local and municipal hazmat teams around the state to build interoperability so that teams are not seeing each other for the first time during an actual response mission.

Logistics

The Directorate of Logistics excelled during Exercise Vigilant Guard Alaska 2014 by establishing a Joint Logistics Coordination Center. Logisticians from multiple interagencies converged on the DOL office to respond to a catastrophic earthquake scenario, and their coordinated efforts set new standards for a National Exercise Program event.

Surface Maintenance continues to work closely with Red River Army Depot to develop the Small Unit Support Vehicle rebuild program with the goal of awarding depot rebuild authority to the AKARNG Combined Support Maintenance Shop to sustain the SUSV fleet of vehicles nationally.

The AKARNG continues to meet both state and federal mission demands, develop logistics professionals, ensure regulatory compliance and maintain accountability standards for Army equipment.

49th Missile Defense Battalion

The 49th Missile Defense Battalion celebrated its 10-year anniversary of continuous operations against incoming ballistic missile threats and critical site security at the Missile Defense Complex

at Fort Greely, Alaska. Beginning Sept. 30, 2004, to the present day, the 49th vigilantly shields the U.S. homeland against a limited intercontinental ballistic missile attack.

The 49th continues to support its various mission partners by participating in a robust Research Development Test & Evaluation program, validating both advanced U.S. security technology and continued enhancements to the missile defense systems.

In June, a ground-based interceptor carrying a second-generation Capability Enhancement-II Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle successfully engaged and destroyed a mock long-range ballistic missile, representative of a North Korean ballistic missile launched against North America. The successful Flight Test (FTG-06B) was the first intercept of the Capability Enhancement-II Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle, demonstrating the robust U.S. missile defense.

Facilities

Throughout the past year, the AKARNG has made adjustments to its facilities program to meet state and federal government requirements including expanding Alaska's economy through responsible development of efficient facilities. Most of the AKARNG's existing facilities are not energy efficient, and their ongoing operational costs are a strain on state and federal budgets. The AKARNG continues to work closely with the National Guard Bureau to increase the facilities budget to allow for replacement, modernization, and divestiture of inefficient and ineffective facilities. A new energy

manager was hired within the Facilities Directorate to manage the many initiatives in this vital area.

The AKARNG is implementing a Facility Reinvestment Strategy, which will transfer ownership of 58 readiness centers across 52 communities to the State of Alaska and local communities where they can best meet the needs of each community and realize a cost savings of \$7.2 million annually.

In an effort to continue to protect Alaska's natural resources, the environmental section remediated five Defense Environmental Restoration Program sites throughout the Bethel region. Additionally, \$4.1 million was awarded in federal contracts to remediate eight contaminated sites in the Bethel and Nome regions.

The AKARNG invested \$17.5 million in sustainment, modernization and military construction projects in FY 2014. The AKARNG continues to implement its way forward using the capital investment strategy. This includes a proven track record of executing federal funds and maintaining the ability to capture those funds not used by other states at the end of the year. In FY 2014, this resulted in an additional \$2.5 million.

The AKARNG's programmed operations and maintenance budget continued to increase in FY 2014, but national projections show a significant decrease beginning in 2015 as budgets decline. The AKARNG will continue to build on its past successes while maximizing energy efficiency and adjusting to meet the needs of Alaska's Citizen Soldiers in every facility.



Go Anywhere. Alaska National Guardsmen and mechanics from the Red River Army Depot near Texarkana, Texas, test drive two M973 Small Unit Support Vehicles on and around Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, in November 2014. SUSVs are fully-tracked, all-terrain, amphibious vehicles designed to support platoon-sized units in arctic and mountainous conditions. The Alaska Guard received the two SUSVs from the Red River Army Depot in November as part of an initiative to maintain its arctic vehicle capability. Photo: 1st Sgt. Charles Hooper, Alaska Army National Guard

Alaska Air National Guard



Mighty Hercules. A C-130 Hercules aircraft from the 144th Airlift Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, practices assault landings at Bryant Army Airfield on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in December.

Photo: Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

176th Wing

The 176th Wing's "Midnight Sun Guardians" maintained a grueling tempo in deployment, training and homeland security operations in 2014, resulting in many significant accomplishments and support to the citizens of our state and nation.



Ready to Take Flight. Tech. Sgt. Rob Albaugh, 168th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, conducts a flight control check with 168th Air Refueling Wing pilots before a flight in September from Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base, Germany.

Photo: Senior Airman Francine St. Laurent, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

Supporting missions overseas, nearly 50 Alaska Air National Guard members from the 176th Wing deployed this summer to the Horn of Africa on behalf of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The deployers, primarily from the 176th Wing's 212th Rescue Squadron and 176th Operations Group, provided personnel recovery to support the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa mission. Supporting partner nation military operations in East Africa, our 176th Wing members helped defeat extremist organizations and conduct focused military-to-military engagement to strengthen East African partner nation militaries. Many of the deployers remained in Africa on a 60-day rotation and returned to Alaska at the end of September.

Also in May, 34 men and women primarily from the 176th Civil Engineering Squadron travelled to H.E. Holt Naval Communication Station, Australia, to work on a space radar installation as part of a 15-day Deployment for Training.

For two weeks, the Guard members prepared the facility to receive and install more than 75 tons of space-surveillance radar equipment that was being relocated to Holt from the Caribbean island of Antigua. The relocation will allow the U.S. Air Force's Space Command to better track space debris and satellites in the Southern Hemisphere.

Initial estimates placed the total costs of the operation at \$70 million. However, by replacing contractors with rotating teams of Air National Guard members, Space Command estimates the savings at \$30 million.

With approximately 150 Alaska Air National Guardsmen assigned to the 176th Air Defense Squadron, members continued

performing a daily air sovereignty mission in support of the Alaskan Regional Air Operations Center on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Created to defend against potential bomber attacks from now-former Cold War foes, today the Air Defense Squadron keeps tabs not only on continued probing by the Russians but also identifies and directs response to incursions of other unknown aircraft into Alaska airspace. In 2014, the squadron maintained watch throughout northern sovereignty missions as it directed intercepts of Russian military aircraft approaching Alaska's borders.

In June, Pacific Air Forces inspectors visited the 176th Wing to conduct its first Unit Effectiveness Inspection, a new approach to gauging wing readiness: They were to assess the wing's inspection program, talk to the wing's Airmen and look into specific issues highlighted by Airmen and/or wing leadership.

In addition, to demonstrate its capabilities for the inspectors, the wing participated in the joint exercise Polar Guardian 14-02. During its course, the 176th Wing flew more than 135 missions, including air drops of U.S. Army and Alaska Army National Guard troops, cargo/personnel movements and simulated rescues. The exercise also included a simulated plane crash with responses by wing firefighters, security forces and medical personnel.

At the conclusion of the inspection, none of the wing's graded areas was rated less than "Effective," and one of the most important — "Executing the Mission" — was considered "Highly Effective."

Deployment for Training. Airman 1st Class Phillip J. Gifford, center, Senior Airman Aaron Brehm, top, and Senior Master Sgt. Anthony Liberty, all of the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, level a drainage ditch at Holt Naval Communication Station, Australia, during a Deployment for Training. Photo: Capt. John Callahan, 176th Wing Public Affairs



Overseas Deployment Farewell. Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Ling, 168th Security Forces manager, and members of the 168th Security Forces Squadron stand at parade rest during a deployment ceremony at Eielson Air Force Base given in their honor before their deployment to the Central Command area of operations last fall.

Photo: Master Sgt. Cornelius Mingo, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs



Silver Star. Master Sgt. Roger Sparks, a pararescuer with the 212th Rescue Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, receives a congratulatory handshake after he was awarded the Silver Star, the nation's third-highest award for valor, in a ceremony on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in July. He received the award for his role in a firefight with insurgents during Operation Bulldog Bite in Afghanistan's Watapur Valley on Nov. 14, 2010. His actions during the combat operation resulted in four American lives being saved and four casualties being returned to their families with honor and dignity.

Photo: Sgt. Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

The inspectors also praised the cooperation between the 176th Wing, active-duty and reserve counterparts, saying the "176th Wing's 'Midnight Sun Guardians' stand ready to execute their state and federal missions."

Search and rescue missions, which are coordinated by Alaska Air National Guardsmen in the 11th Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, were also in full swing in 2014. The Rescue Coordination Center on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson completed its 5,230th mission and 2,153rd save since July 1, 1994, with 88 lives saved in 2014.

The Alaska Rescue Coordination Center has been operating in Alaska since 1961, but beginning July 1, 1994, the center became manned solely by Alaska Air National Guardsmen under the operational active-duty commander of the 11th Air Force. Since that time, the men and women of the Alaska Air National Guard have been keeping watch 24 hours a day, seven days a week, coordinating an average of more than five missions a week for nearly 19 years.

To conduct these rescues, the Rescue Coordination Center often calls on the 176th Wing's 210th, 211th and 212th Rescue Squadrons and their expertise in flying HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and HC-130 King aircraft specially equipped for aerial refueling and search-and-rescue missions. The center also can invoke the expertise of the famed "Guardian Angels," elite rescuers trained in combat medicine, marksmanship, special tactics, mountaineering, scuba diving and wilderness survival skills.

Finally, the Wing saw many changes in leadership this year with Col. Blake Gettys assuming command of the 176th Wing in November, as well as other leadership changes of command in the 176th Operations Group, 176th Civil Engineering Squadron, 249th Airlift Squadron and 210th Rescue Squadron.

Awards and Recognition

The Silver Star Medal was awarded to a pararescuer with the Alaska Air National Guard's 212th Rescue Squadron in a ceremony on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson this past July.

Master Sgt. Roger Sparks was awarded the honor for his actions during a fierce firefight with insurgents in Afghanistan's Watapur Valley Nov. 14, 2010. Responding to a call to retrieve combat casualties in support of Operation Bulldog Bite, Sparks and a 212th combat rescue officer, Capt. Koaalii Bailey, descended from their helicopter via hoist under enemy fire. Upon touchdown they were both blown off their feet by a rocket-propelled grenade, and Sparks instructed the flight crew via radio not to lower any more personnel because of the high volume of fire.



Maintenance Mission. Staff Sgt. James "JT" Hughes and Staff Sgt. Ernest Linton, both from the 176th Maintenance Squadron, work on a 210th Rescue Squadron HH-60 Pave Hawk in Hawaii in February 2014. Hughes and Linton provided maintenance support during the 11-day flying training, search and rescue exercise, Lava Rescue 2014.

Photo: Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead, DMVA Public Affairs

Under fire from three directions, the pair began communicating with nearby Coalition aircraft to direct air strikes against insurgent positions. Making contact with forces on the ground, they then began to consolidate the wounded and provide treatment.

Through his extraordinary heroism, superb airmanship and resolve in the face of the enemy, Sparks was awarded the nation's third-highest award for valor. Under constant enemy fire for nearly five hours, Master Sgt. Sparks saved four American lives and returned four casualties to their families with honor and dignity.

168th Air Refueling Wing

The 168th Air Refueling Wing, home to the KC-135 Stratotanker and based in Interior Alaska at Eielson Air Force Base, maintains one of the highest operations tempos of any KC-135 aerial refueling wing.

More than 150 168th ARW Airmen deployed in support of federal and wartime missions during the year, maintaining a constant presence in the Central Command area of responsibility. The Guardians of the Last Frontier flew 1,906 mishap-free hours and delivered more than 8.25 million pounds of fuel to 616 receivers while providing global reach and vigilance to support state and national objectives. Wing members received numerous accolades throughout the year, including the Air Force Logistics Unit Readiness Award, the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award and the Governor's Distinguished Unit Citation.

The 168th Medical Group volunteered at a veterans' Stand Down event, providing medical services, food and clothing to more than 700 local veterans. Total donations were valued at more than \$10,800. The MDG was also actively involved in the Mission of Mercy event in Anchorage, treating more than 1,500 patients and providing more than \$200,000 in medical care at no cost to patients.

The 168th Communications Flight facility completed major upgrades with a \$3.5-million renovation project that remodeled the building's interior and added 3,650 square feet of much-needed storage and office space. Col. Mark Hedlund, 168th Air Refueling Wing commander, hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony in January 2014.

A \$2.8-million renovation project for the Aircraft Composite Maintenance Hangar began in April 2014 and was scheduled for completion in December 2014. The project provides refurbished and improved aircraft maintenance shops and work areas.

The Alaska Air National Guard's 213th Space Warning Squadron, a remote, geographically separated unit of the 168th ARW, continues to stand watch at Clear Air Force Station near Anderson. The unit achieved a 99 percent mission-capable rate while tracking 555,000 space objects and recording more than 1.8 million metric observations. The 213th SWS and 13th SWS contributed more than 600 hours of volunteer service to the local community, including support for school and sporting events, drug and alcohol abuse awareness, the Choose Respect campaign, science fairs and food drives.

The 213th SWS members also earned numerous accolades, including the Air Force Association Air National Guard Outstanding Unit Award, and the Alaska Air National Guard Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance Company Grade Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Defender of the Year awards. The 213th SWS Marksmanship Team also placed first in the adjutant general's annual marksmanship competition.

The 168th ARW maintenance and operations personnel supported humanitarian causes with their participation in Operation Pacific Angel, a coordinated effort offering medical and engineering services to underprivileged communities in Bangladesh. The efforts of the 168th ARW contributed to the deployment of 68 volunteers who provided health exams, women's health care, and optometry and dental services. The volunteers also renovated two local schools and one clinic.



All Smiles. Staff Sgt. Vanessa Campbell and Senior Airman Kayla Kerstetter, 168th Air Refueling Wing Medical Group dental technicians, stand outside the 168th MDG main entrance on Eielson Air Force Base. They both volunteered at Alaska Mission of Mercy 2014 held in Anchorage in April. Photo: Master Sgt. Cornelius Mingo, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs



Dental Exam. Col. Thomas Bird, 168th Medical Group commander, performs a dental exam during a training mission at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in October.

Photo: Senior Airman Francine St. Laurent, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs



50th Anniversary of the 1964 Great Alaskan Earthquake

2014 marked the 50th anniversary of one of the most devastating moments in our state's history. The magnitude 9.2 earthquake that struck on March 27, 1964, transformed our people, altered our landscape, and set a new standard of response and recovery efforts across the nation.

This significant occasion deserved a proper remembrance. While communities across the state held events in honor of the anniversary, the Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management and the Anchorage Museum hosted a commemorative event that attracted more than 750 earthquake survivors, family members, local and state government officials and friends. In addition, DHS&EM saw more than 104,000 Alaskans participate in the March 27th Great Alaska Shakeout drill, which was designed to reinforce the earthquake safety principles of Drop, Cover, Hold On.

Also in commemoration, DHS&EM kicked off the largest, most complex exercise in the history of the state — Alaska Shield 2014. In honor of the 1964 events, Alaska Shield 2014 used the same seismic characteristics but placed the quake in today's environment, population density, technology and supply lines. More than 500 state, federal, local and private agencies participated

within the state and across the nation. During eight days of exercise play, representatives tested plans, reviewed standard operating procedures, and worked through difficult issues they might face during response to and recovery from a disaster.

16-Month Response and Recovery Completed

The completion of the recovery effort from the 2013 Spring Floods, which devastated communities along the Yukon River, most notably Galena, occurred in 2014.

Local jurisdictions, DHS&EM, other state agencies and FEMA worked with nongovernmental agencies to restore communities and mitigate the damage of future flooding. DHS&EM staff co-located with FEMA at a joint field office to coordinate the complex 16-month response and recovery. Volunteers from Samaritan's Purse, United Methodist Volunteers in Mission, Disciples of Christ, Mennonite Disaster Services and others assembled construction crews, most from the Lower 48, to rebuild in each of the disaster-stricken communities.

In Galena, DHS&EM established a responder camp to provide food and shelter to the volunteers and others working to restore the community. The operations staff supported the responder camp



Remembering the Good Friday Earthquake. A 50th anniversary commemoration event is held at the Anchorage Museum in partnership with the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management to remember and memorialize the catastrophic events of Good Friday, March 27, 1964. That 1964 earthquake—a 9.2 on the moment magnitude scale—was the second-largest ever recorded. Photo: Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM

throughout the winter, enabling state, federal and nongovernment agencies to continue work. The camp supported approximately 40 people in the winter and expanded to a 106-bed camp during the spring to accommodate additional volunteers. Through a coordinated effort, homes were rebuilt, people were repatriated and communities restored.

Providing Critical Services to Alaskans

In addition to the 50th Anniversary and the completed Spring 2013 flood recovery, DHS&EM was busy in every section.

OPERATIONS

The State Emergency Operations Center was activated in response to the 2013 November storms, 2013 October Kenai Peninsula Borough floods and to track River Watch during the 2014 breakup season.

DHS&EM Operations continues to support the Alaska State Troopers, Division of Forestry and local jurisdictions with response equipment. The Mobile Emergency Operations Center was again utilized as the AST command post at Arctic Man. The Division of Forestry called upon the DHS&EM's Rapid Communications trailers, sling-loaded the communications system to a wildfire near Tyonek and transported it overland to support those battling the 2014 Funny River Fire in Kenai.

DHS&EM Operations worked with the Department of Public Safety and the Alaska Association of Broadcasters to implement the Alaska Silver Alert system, a voluntary partnership among law enforcement agencies, state and local governments, and Alaska's media and broadcasters to alert the public when a vulnerable adult is missing and believed to be in serious danger.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

DHS&EM made it possible for individuals and homeowners to register for state assistance by telephone and in person following the 2013 November storms and the 2013 October Kenai Peninsula Borough floods that damaged 19 Western Alaska and Interior communities. The series of storms battered the coast and brought freezing rain and power outages to the Interior. These events resulted in state and federal disaster declarations for Individual and Public Assistance, and state funding for Individual Assistance.

Disaster Assistance continues to manage Public Assistance Infrastructure grants for the November storms and Kenai disasters, as well as older disasters where recovery work is ongoing. Currently, 10 federally declared and nine state-declared disasters have approximately 700 active Public Assistance projects worth more than \$205 million.

The state Individual Assistance program processed 431 applications for disaster assistance, resulting in \$2 million in awards. Ninety-six Temporary Housing applications were also processed, with \$560,000 awarded to help displaced Alaskans.

Plans

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Community Planning completed 34 customized Small Community Emergency Response Plans. DHS&EM assists in SCERP development, then prints and delivers the completed documents. DHS&EM also developed a Local Emergency Planning Committee quarterly newsletter to highlight communities' LEPC progress.

SECURITY VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

The Security Vulnerability Assessment team worked with six communities to identify specific security countermeasures designed to protect a community's continuity of operations, critical assets, population and visitors. Within each community, multiple sites were evaluated by the SVA team; in Anchorage, 44 sites were evaluated.



Rebuilding Galena. More than 200 volunteers traveled to Galena and contributed more than 30,000 hours of labor to the rebuilding effort. In addition to Samaritan's Purse and United Methodist Volunteers in Mission in Galena, Disciples of Christ and Mennonite Disaster Services contributed in other communities. Photo: Adam DuBrowa, FEMA

MITIGATION

In conjunction with the 2013 Spring Flood recovery effort, Mitigation worked to elevate 41 structures and ensure that they would be above the high-water mark of 2013's Yukon River flood. An additional 17 structures were elevated in Sleetmute and Kotlik. Mitigation improved tsunami warning infrastructure and planning, with Cordova becoming a Tsunami Ready community and Kodiak hosting a regional Tsunami Operations Workshop.

Grants

The Division manages a number of grants that help local communities better prepare for disasters. DHS&EM managed more than \$3.1 million in Emergency Management Performance Grant dollars to sustain and enhance state and local emergency management capabilities across the state.

In addition, DHS&EM administers State Homeland Security Grant funding, which provided more than \$2.9 million to state and local jurisdictions to address planning, organization, equipment, training and exercise needs in case of acts of terrorism or other catastrophic events.

In 2014, DHS&EM provided more than \$300,000 to 31 community-based Local Emergency Planning Committees to fund activities. LEPCs use these funds to track hazardous materials within their communities and initiate community-based emergency preparedness activities.

Preparedness

EXERCISES

In addition to Alaska Shield 2014, which was the largest full-scale exercise the state has ever organized and executed, 11 other regional exercises took place during the year, ranging from continuity of operations and evacuation drills to airport disaster drills.

TRAINING

DHS&EM staff partnered with local jurisdictions and other state agencies to deliver more than 44 training events. The training staff approved 150 individuals to attend training offered by our national training partners. The courses offered focused on the Incident Command System, Disaster Management for Electric Power Systems and Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools.

OUTREACH

The Earthquake Simulator made numerous appearances and community presentations around Southcentral Alaska, including the Kodiak Crab Festival, Governor's Anchorage and Mat-Su Picnics, Valdez Gold Rush Days and the Alaska State Fair. Outreach also planned two preparedness conferences for emergency managers from around the state to conclude Alaska Shield 2014 and to prepare for Alaska Shield 2016.

Alaska Military Youth Academy



The National Guard Youth Challenge Program was established in 1993 and is subject to the oversight of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs within the Department of Defense. The program is administered by the National Guard Bureau Office of Athletics and Youth Division and the adjutant general under the leadership of the Alaska Military Youth Academy Challenge Program Director. The program leads, trains and mentors 16- to 18-year-old high school dropouts so they become productive citizens.

The Alaska Military Youth Academy, one of the original 10 pilot programs, formally opened its doors in January 1994 and has grown along with the national program. There are 35 active sites nationally in 29 states, the District of Columbia and the territory of Puerto Rico. The first AMYA class graduated 43 cadets in 1994, and the most recent class, 2014-2, graduated 137 cadets.

The proven Youth Challenge Program model uses a quasi-military, full-time, tuition-free residential environment to strengthen the academic and social skills of program participants in the Eight Core Components of the program while encouraging emotional growth. The 17½-month program includes a 5½-month residential phase followed by a 12-month post-residential phase. This approach recognizes that opportunities for development are the outgrowth of positive changes in the physical, emotional and situational elements of the young adult's life. AMYA runs two residential classes per year, one beginning in April and the other in October.

The residential phase of the program is a 22-week experiential model conducted in Alaska National Guard facilities under licensure between the Secretary of the Army and the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs. There are separate sleeping



Happy and Confident. Class of 2015-1 cadet Nyamal Deng of Anchorage smiles as she goes over the edge on the rappel wall. The Alaska Military Youth Academy uses training opportunities such as the rappel wall and the jump tower to build the cadets' confidence in their instructors and in themselves. Photo: Roman Schara, AMYA

quarters for male and female cadets. The residential phase begins with a two-week acclimation period, which is an extension of the screening process. During this period, the teens are referred to as "candidates" and are assessed for their ability to handle stress and program structure, propensity for gang activity and/or bullying activity, either as a victim or an inflictor, and desire to succeed and complete the program.

During the acclimation period, candidates experience a caring, disciplined, tough-love environment that tests their physical, mental and emotional commitment to the program. Focus is on group and individual discipline, structure and goal setting, while the staff provides medical service, support, meals, counseling and instruction. The candidates who successfully complete this period earn the distinction of becoming an AMYA "cadet."

During the remaining 20 weeks of the residential phase, daily activities and experiences such as academics, cooperative work experience, vocational technical education, outdoor adventure training and service to the community adds value to the transfor-

mation process and builds the cadet's education level and employment skills while contributing to a growing sense of community involvement and commitment.

During the winter and spring of 2014, AMYA initiated the transformation to the GED Online Testing platform and certification as a Pearson VUE Testing Center. The AMYA Academics Section's team of dedicated professionals remains committed to increasing the educational attainment of every cadet, and in the most recent class raised the average math level of the corps of cadets by 1.57 grade levels during the intense 17 weeks of instruction and assessment.

Cadets can earn up to 7.5 credits toward their secondary education, which brings them closer to the 21 credits required for graduation in the state of Alaska. This typically puts students returning to high school back on track toward graduation with their peers. As an accredited secondary education institution, AMYA can award an AMYA high school diploma to those cadets who attain the 21 credits required and complete the Armed Services Aptitude Battery, American College Test, Scholastic Aptitude Test or Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development WorkKeys Assessment. AMYA also provides preparation and testing for the General Educational Development test for those students who prefer this high school equivalency credential or in addition to their diploma.

The Academy offers both cooperative work experience and vocational technical education programs that include small engine repair, carpentry and culinary arts. The courses introduce cadets to available entry-level career pathways, teach workplace safety, increase technical knowledge and instill the confidence for them to transition into the work force. The culinary arts



Road March. Team leaders guide the corps of cadets from Class 2015-1 through their first road march during the first week of the acclimation phase of the Alaska Military Youth Academy. The Acclimation phase is the first two weeks of the AMYA program, where the candidates learn military basics such as marching, physical fitness and life within a barracks. Photo: Roman Schara, AMYA



Representing the Academy. Cadets Jamie Kassoock and Diana Tuiloma, both of Anchorage, pace the Alaska Military Youth Academy's 1st Platoon Eagles of Class 2014-2 during the 2014 Alaska Run for Women. The Alaska Military Youth Academy is a yearly participant in the five-mile run in support of breast cancer awareness.

Photo: Roman Schara, AMYA

program, taught by Mario Martinez and certified through the University of Alaska Anchorage Community and Technical College Tech Prep Program, consistently demonstrates success with preparing the students to work in the food service industry.

Participants in our more recent classes experienced a 70 percent to 100 percent pass rate on the nationally recognized ServSafe® regulatory certifications and were awarded two college credits toward a degree. On weekends, cadets are afforded the opportunity to support the community with service projects and to engage in Alaska-themed outdoor events such as rappelling, jump tower, seasonal activities, commemorative events, ceremonies and parade participation.

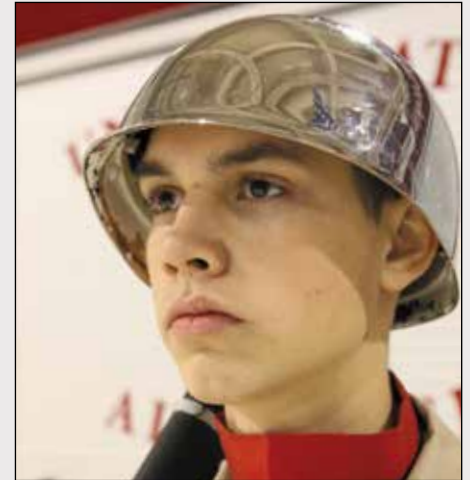
Cadets develop a Post-Residential Action Plan beginning in Week 3 as a goal-setting process with the guidance of staff and support from their mentors to provide a point of reference, discussion and focus when they return to their communities during the 12-month post-residential phase. The goals include completion of secondary and post-secondary education, entering the workplace or joining the military. Through the collaborative efforts of AMYA staff, parents and mentors, 100 percent of the graduates of 2014-2 were placed in one of these categories.

The goal of the post-residential phase is for graduates to apply the strategies and learning in transition to serve as productive

members of society. Additionally, graduates recognize the need to refine their method of goal attainment while building upon the mentoring relationship. Mentors are the key component to cadet success and may initially be the only positive or healthy adult relationship in the earliest stages of the post-residential phase. AMYA graduates have enjoyed the benefits of dedicated adult community volunteers from every walk of life, who share their quest for long-term success.

The Academy's staff remains on the cutting edge of youth service and is considered among the best in the nation among all ChalleNGe programs. Mr. Bob Roses, a longtime educator with the Anchorage School District, was appointed by Gov. Sean Parnell as director of AMYA in January 2014.

After almost 20 years of operation, AMYA has graduated 4,387 cadets and awarded 3,033 high school diplomas and/or GED certificates to deserving graduates who are demonstrating tremendous success in communities not just in Alaska but across the nation. The academy's proven track



Focus. Cadet Derrel Jones of Anchorage and a member of Class 2015-1 stands at attention as part of the Alaska Military Youth Academy Honor Guard during the 2014 Veterans Day event at the Alaska National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Students of the AMYA support numerous military and community events throughout Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley as part of their eight core components. Photo: Roman Schara, AMYA

record of success is a testament to its sustained impact of assisting the youth and families of Alaska.



Graduation. Cadets of Class 2014-2 celebrate final dismissal at the Alaska Military Youth Academy's graduation ceremony at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage. One hundred forty-four cadets graduated as part of the Class of 2014-2.

Photo: Roman Schara, AMYA



Alaska State Defense Force

Military Exercises

In 2014, the Alaska State Defense Force exercised its military and response capabilities during Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska as well as communications exercises. In the Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska scenario, a 9.2 magnitude earthquake called for a vast array of response and support roles to be filled. By training and force development in critical mission capabilities, the ASDF is able to augment the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs.

During the Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska exercise, the ASDF provided physicians, medical personnel, chaplaincy, public affairs, communications and traffic control in support of the Alaska Medical Station setup at the state fairgrounds in Palmer.

The ASDF was also able to contribute to planning and served in the Joint Operations Center. ASDF liaisons communicated conditions and needs throughout the state from Juneau to Valdez and from Kenai to Fairbanks. Other areas of service included shelter management for first responders, food handling, snow machine repair, engineering services for earthquake damage assessment, legal advice, communications and assisting in integrating out-of-state National Guard members to the point of need through Joint Reception, Staging and Onward Integration.

Members Recognized Nationally

Members of the Alaska State Defense Force were honored this year with national awards from the State Guard Association of the United States.



Medical Team. Surgeon General (Col.) Louis Mayer, left, and Capt. Norman Means, physician, provide medical support to the Alaska State Defense Force. They are shown here at the Alaska State Defense Force Headquarters in the Office of the Surgeon General at the Alcantra Armory in June. Photo: Capt. Melissa Holl, Alaska State Defense Force



Communications Capabilities. From the left, 1st Sgt. James York, Staff Sgt. Jeremy Flippen and Capt. Timothy Stephan, all of 4th Signals Battalion, Alaska State Defense Force, stand alongside Lt. Col. Doyle Holmes, information officer of the Alaska State Defense Force, during a field communications exercise in June at the Alcantra Armory in Wasilla. Photo: Capt. Melissa Holl, Alaska State Defense Force

Cpl. Taylor Cosper, a graduate of the Alaska Military Youth Academy and current ASDF member of 2nd Battalion in Wasilla, was named Soldier of the Year.

Sgt. 1st Class Helga Polsey, of 3rd Battalion in Fairbanks, received the SGAUS Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year award.

Each year, the SGAUS selects one Soldier and one noncommissioned officer out of all state defense forces in the United States and its territories. To receive these honors, the applicant must be one who consistently displays exceptional dedication, professionalism, performance, military bearing and appearance. The Alaska State Defense Force is honored to have two of its members receive recognition as the best State Defense Force Soldiers in the United States.

30th Anniversary

On the 30th Anniversary of its own formation, the Alaska State Defense Force also hosted the 30th Annual State Guard Association of the United States Conference in Anchorage in 2014. State Defense Force members came from throughout the United

States and Puerto Rico. This conference enabled the sharing of best practices that State Defense Forces and State Guards use to best serve their states. The State Guard Association of the United States is providing professional training to State Defense Forces through chaplain schools, staff judge advocate schools, incident command training, medical services and an engineering academy.

At the conclusion of the conference, Lt. Col. John James of the Alaska State Defense Force was installed as secretary and executive board member of SGAUS. Brig. Gen. Roger E. Holl, commander, Alaska State Defense Force, was installed as the president of the State Guard Association of the United States.

Community Events

The ASDF provides community services to the Wounded Warriors Program, Special Olympics and Operation Stand Down for veterans, as well as a color guard when requested. The Alaska State Defense Force gives Alaska a modern, professional and organized state military reserve through the use of citizen soldiers.



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TAKES COURAGE.**

**RETURNING TO THE WORKFORCE
TAKES HELP.**



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