

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS



Mireya Cruz *Takes Charge* of NGAT



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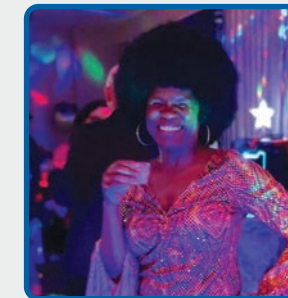
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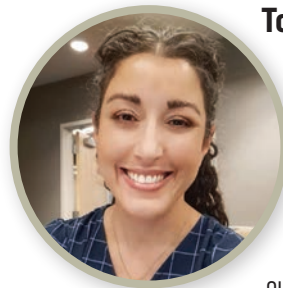
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ON THE COVER:

MAJ CHRISTOPHER MCKEAG (right) swears **SFC Mireya Cruz** in as the NGAT President during the 64th Annual NGAT Conference in Irving, Texas.

Follow us on  

FROM THE PRESIDENT



To Our Members,

Stepping into the office of President I am filled with immense gratitude and an equally immense drive to represent and lead our association in a manner that is successful and effective.

I would be remised if I didn't take a moment to thank our immediate past president, Chris McKeag. I am incredibly thankful for his years of mentorship, his leadership of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee, and his many years of dedication to our organization. There is no doubt in my mind that he will continue to be an active member of NGAT and I am looking forward to seeing all he will continue to do in that role.

I would also like to thank all of you that attended our 64th Annual Conference in Irving, TX in March. Participation is key to the success of our organization and pivotal to our corporate partners. Mark your calendars now for next year's conference at Kalahari Resorts & Convention Center March 21-24, 2024, in Round Rock, Texas. It is bound to be an amazing time filled with laughs, fellowship, and loads of business.

These next 2 years are going to require crowd participation. What does this mean? Your Board of Directors cannot possibly be as effective as they'd like to be, if we don't hear from YOU.

So, what do we need to know...

What is it that you'd like us to advocate for?

What benefits would you like to see for membership?

What information would you like to receive more of?

With your feedback we can race in the direction that you'd like for us to head towards. If you have more to offer the association, we are always looking for volunteers and ways to assist further, please reach out and let us know. We are truly STRONGER TOGETHER!

Advocacy, Membership, and Communication...these are all fields that we can improve on. With your input and your Board of Directors, I know that we can make the changes necessary to bring you value. I am excited to take the helm and ready for the charge in front of me. I am proud of our Association and its members and look forward to your participation.

Thankful for all your support!

Mireya Cruz
NGAT President



TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD WINS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AWARD

THE ARMY'S ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AWARD for an industrial installation was won by the Texas Army National Guard for their work at 24 Field Maintenance Shops, two combined support maintenance shops, six-unit training equipment sites, one maneuver area training equipment site, and five TXARNG-hosted Air Force Reserve Command locations. Over the past two years, the TXARNG has expanded their commitment to environmental quality, ramping up an Integrated Pest Management Program (IPMP) that has enhanced operations, reduced chemical use, slashed costs, and protected the TXARNG's critical equipment. The training, assessments, and actions conducted by the IPMP align with the Texas Military Department's Environmental Directive, and directly protect human health; reduce environmental impacts created with pesticide use and removal of invasive species; prevent pollution through education, mechanical and cultural practices; and meets state and federal regulatory requirements.

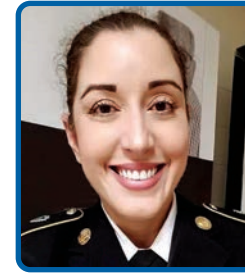


TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT COMMISSIONED 26 NEW OFFICERS

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATES of the Texas Army National Guard Officer Candidate School Class 66. Twenty six new officers were commissioned into various branches of the Texas Army National Guard at the Texas State Capitol, April 1, 2023, Austin, Texas. NGAT presented Distinguished Honor Graduate — **2LT Brandon W. Thomas** and Honor Graduate **2LT Nikolai Timbs** with Life Memberships in the National Guard Association of Texas for their accomplishments. *(Photo courtesy of the Texas Military Department)*



2023-24 NGAT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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SGM Gerald Lorange
Vice President



CPT Jolene Hinojosa
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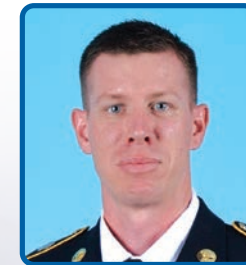
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Treasurer



LTC (Ret) Marvin Harris
Executive Director



THANK YOU TO OUR OUTGOING NGAT BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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36th Combat Aviation Brigade



MSGT Lonnie G. Dunkin III
HQ, Air National Guard



LTC Christopher McKeag
NGAT President



SFC (Ret) Talia McKinnis
Family Readiness Rep



Capt Nate Norton
136th Airlift Wing



CSM Marius Pusar
72nd IBCT



COL (Ret) Guy Schultz
Regional Retired Rep



SMSgt Bryan Shreve
149th Fighter Wing



SFC Ruben Wilson
71st EMIB



WELCOME TO OUR INCOMING NGAT BOARD OF DIRECTORS



CSM (Ret) Donna Balderston
Regional Retired Rep



Maria Daniels
Family Readiness Rep



SGM Salvador Flores
36th Infantry Division



MSG (Ret) Brandon Horta
Regional Retired Rep



SMSgt Angela Jenkins
HQ, Air National Guard



MSgt Angela Matthews
147th Attack Wing



MAJ Craig Neeley
36th Combat Aviation Brigade



SSG Julie Perez
71st EMIB



MSgt Graydon Phillips
136th Airlift Wing



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KEY LEADERSHIP Update

Governor Abbott Appoints Camacho as Deputy Adjutant General for Air

Governor Greg Abbott appointed Brigadier General **Andrew J. Camacho** to serve as the Deputy Adjutant General for Air for a term to expire at the pleasure of the Governor effective February 1, 2023. The Deputy Adjutant General for Air assists the Adjutant General in exercising and executing command responsibilities and is the principal adviser on all Air National Guard matters. Additionally, the deputy adjutant general for air works with the chief of the joint staff to prepare the state for federal or state emergencies, including man-made or natural disasters and federal military mobilizations.

Brigadier General Andrew J. Camacho received his commission through the Air National Guard-Academy of Military Science after graduating from the University of Wisconsin in 1998. He completed specialized undergraduate pilot training at Laughlin Air Force Base in Del Rio, Texas, and was assigned to the 128th Air Refueling Wing at General Mitchell Field in Milwaukee, Wisconsin as a KC-135R pilot. In 2005, he was selected by the Texas Air National Guard to serve as initial cadre to the 147th Reconnaissance Wing's unit conversion to MQ-1B Predator operations.

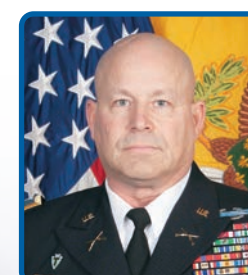
As initial cadre, General Camacho was stationed at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada between 2005 and 2008, where he served as an instructor pilot for both the 11th and 15th Reconnaissance Squadrons. He returned to Ellington Field in 2008 to facilitate unit conversion. General Camacho has served in various positions including chief of scheduling, chief of weapons and tactics, flight commander for the 11th Reconnaissance Squadron, chief of standards and evaluation for the 147th Operations Group, inspector general for the 147th Attack Wing, RC-26 program manager for the 147th Operations Group, and vice commander for the 147th Attack Wing. In addition, General Camacho is a command pilot and has deployed in support of Operations Allied Force, Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Freedom Sentinel, Resolute Support, Inherent Resolve and Guardian Support. Prior to his current position, General Camacho served as the wing commander for the 147th Attack Wing, Texas Air National Guard, and Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base. ★



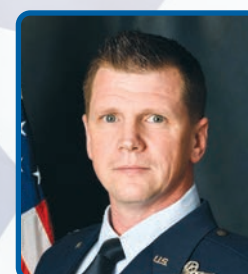
Brig Gen Andrew J. Camacho
Deputy Adjutant General – Air
Texas Military Department



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J6 and Chief, Joint Staff (AGR)
Joint Forces HQ



COL Andrew D. Wenzel
Commander
136th Regional Training Institute



Col Bif B. French
Vice Commander
147th Attack Wing



CSM Marius V. Puser
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64TH ANNUAL NGAT CONFERENCE RECAP

The 64th Annual NGAT Conference was held in Irving, Texas, March 23-26, 2023 after it was originally scheduled to be held in Irving back in 2020. But due to the spread of COVID-19 it had to be cancelled. Attendees were very impressed with the location and all that the adjacent Toyota Music Factory had to offer.

Our conference kicked off on Thursday, March 23, with a well-attended **Defense Symposium** with our Corporate Partners. Friday, March 24, brought an early morning storm that caused our **Fun Run** to be canceled. However, after a short rain delay our **NGAT Educational Foundation Golf Tournament** was able to get started. Those that attended our **wine tasting at Mercy Wine Bar** enjoyed some great wine along with lots of door prizes.

Our exhibit hall opened Friday afternoon with over 70 exhibitors. Singer **Jack Mason** entertained attendees visiting the exhibitors and bidders reviewing the **Silent Auction** items. The **NGAT Welcome Party** theme was wear your favorite sports team attire and that they did. The tailgate themed party included their

favorite tailgate food like hamburgers and hot dogs with all the fixings. There were plenty of games to play and music was provided by **SGM (Ret) Sharla Carter** with **Dark-n-Lovely Entertainment**. Our newly added **Cigar Bar** was a huge hit with attendees, and we plan to have it again next year in Round Rock.

There was no Hospitality Room competition this year because we only had two hospitality rooms due to the lack of participation from the major commands. We can't thank the **Audie L. Murphy Chapter of the U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association** enough for the fantastic hospitality room they hosted for two nights to the masses.

The **Saturday morning Business Session** included the swearing in of new members of the **NGAT Board of Directors** and an update on the **State of the Association**. During the Business Session the



membership elected **COL Paul Cerniauskas** as the new **NGAT President-Elect**.

NGAT Educational Foundation Scholarship winners were announced at the Saturday morning business session. See page 17 for a full list of the winners. The Adjutant General of Texas, **Maj Gen Thomas Suelzer** and the Texas Military Department Command Enlisted Leader, **CSM Frederick Heard**, also spoke during the General Session along with speakers from EANGUS and NGAUS. The session closed with a presentation from the Kalahari Resorts in Round Rock, Texas, that will serve as the **2024 location for the 65th Annual NGAT Conference**.

Breakout sessions had adequate attendance. However, judging by surveys we are still missing the mark of what our attendees want to see at these sessions. If you have a recommendation please contact a member of the NGAT Board of Directors or our Executive Director at mharris@ngat.org with your input.

At the **Awards Banquet**, NGAT honored our outgoing president, **MAJ Christopher McKeag** with the

President's Award for his past two years of hard work with the Association. NGAT also presented the **LTC James A. Spring Humanitarianism Award to COL (Ret) Les Davis** and the **2023 NGAT Minuteman Award to CSM (Ret) Jeffrey Merrill**. We closed out our conference on Sunday morning with a uplifting prayer breakfast by **Nathan Tucker** of the 136th Airlift Wing.

Over all it was a great conference. The only thing that was missing was many of you, our members. NGAT strived to provide you with meaningful sessions with up-to-date information on equipment and military benefits during the conference. We do everything we can to keep our costs as low as possible despite the rising cost in the hotel industry. **If there is something you would like to see at our conference, please let us know. Email the NGAT President at president@ngat.org.**

The Kalahari Resorts in Round Rock, Texas, was an extremely popular location when we hosted the conference there in 2022. Please look at the website and our Facebook page for updates and book your hotel rooms early because they fill up fast. **The Kalahari will not extend our room block deadline so if you want to stay at the hotel at the discounted rate you need to book your room before the deadline.**

Thank you to all who attended the 64th Annual NGAT Conference. **See you next year at the 65th Annual NGAT Conference in Round Rock, Texas.**



2023 NGAT Conference Survey Results

After reviewing conference survey results here is what we take away from the Conference.

	Rating 1-5
Registration Process	4.82%
NGAT Annual Meeting	4.43%
NGAT General Session	4.45%
Army Breakout	4.62%
Exhibit Hall	4.80%
Jack Mason - Entertainment	4.63%
Golf Tournament	4.83%
Wine Tasting	4.74%
Welcome Party	4.65%
Dark N Lovely Entertainment	4.57%
Lunch with the Exhibitors	4.68%
Awards Banquet	4.73%
Groove Trio Entertainment	4.22%
Silent Auction	4.77%
Westin Hotel	4.84%
Will attend NGAT 2024 (Yes)	97.0%
Should have speaker at dinner (No)	51.5%
Want to attend a military ball (Yes)	77.5%
Good value for your money (Yes)	87.6%

What You Liked

- Location/Food at Convention Center
- Welcome Party
- Networking
- Exhibitors

What You Did Not Like

- Lack of leadership at Conference
- Band at Awards Dinner
- Events not starting on time
- Limited Hospitality Rooms

What You Want NGAT to Do For You

- Advocate for benefits
- Get involved with the Legislative process
- Increase membership

Suggested Breakout Sessions

- Educational Benefits
- Mentoring Sessions
- Retiree benefits

The 2023 Texas National Guard Foundation Silent Auction raised \$4,614.00. Thank you to all who donated to the auction and all our happy bidders.

Overall, the Conference comments were very positive with a few areas that need improvement. Hospitality rooms were limited due to lack of unit participation. Are you interested in helping improve the NGAT Conference? If so, contact the NGAT Executive Director, LTC (Ret) Marvin Harris (mharris@ngat.org) or NGAT President, SFC Mireya Cruz (president@ngat.org) to join the Conference Committee.



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CSM (Ret) Jeffrey T. Merrill Named 2023 NGAT Minuteman Recipient

Command Sergeant Major (Retired) Jeffrey T. Merrill was recognized as the 2023 National Guard Association of Texas Minuteman recipient at the 64th Annual NGAT Conference in recognition of his outstanding service to the National Guard Association of Texas and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) and the Texas Army National Guard.

Command Sergeant Merrill entered the Army in May of 1984. He has served in many enlisted leadership positions from Squad Leader, Tank Commander, Platoon Sergeant, First Sergeant, and Armor Battalion Command Sergeant Major, and Infantry Command Sergeant Major for Task Force Alamo (HQ 1-141st Inf) KFOR 7 Kosovo. His last active-duty assignment was to the Joint Forces Headquarters of Texas where he served as the Texas Army National Guard G3 Sergeant Major until his retirement.

Command Sergeant Major Merrill served on the NGAT Board of Directors from March 2004 to March 2007. He then served as NGAT's first two-year President from March 2007 to March 2009. He is also the first and currently only NGAT President who has served as a active service member and as a military retiree. As the first two years NGAT President, NGAT kept Command Sergeant Major Merrill very busy with helping develop a plan of action to host the 2010 NGAUS



Annual Conference in Austin, Texas. He was also active in the preparation for NGAT's 50th Annual Conference celebration held in Austin Texas in 2009.

During his time on the NGAT Board of Directors he served on the membership committee and bylaws committee. He was instrumental in increasing participation at the National level in EANGUS and NGAUS activities. Command Sergeant Major Merrill also served on the boards that have selected NGAT's last two Executive Director. He has served on the NGAT Awards committee in the past and remains an active participant in NGAT functions.

The mentorship he provided to our junior enlisted personnel help foster individual like then SGT Mireya Cruz who will now serve as the NGAT President. His encouragement to get involved with NGAT on a larger

scale has had long term effect for those who support the National Guard Association of Texas over the year.

It is because of his relentless support, exceptional service and desire to make NGAT a successful organization over the years made him a excellent choice for the NGAT Minuteman Award. ★

The LTC James A. Spring Humanitarianism Award Presented to COL (Ret) Les Davis

The LTC James A. Spring Humanitarianism Award recognizes an act of heroism and/or extreme humanitarianism involving the saving or attempt to save a life. LTC James A. Spring was a distinguished 49th Armored Division Medical Battalion Commander in the mid-1970s.

On February 2, 2023, Colonel (Retired) Les Davis was on his way home, when he came up behind a vehicle on an overpass crossing I-35 in north Round Rock, Texas. The driver had his flashers on, so he thought maybe the individual had car trouble or a medical situation. He asked the driver if he needed help and realized immediately that he was there to jump off the overpass. He parked his car and got out and began talking with the individual and did everything he could to get him back in his car and off the bridge. His wife Laura called 9-11 and provided support from the truck. The man was a veteran and clearly, the world was caving in on him. After several tense minutes, he agreed not to jump, got back in his car and left the overpass. Law enforcement arrived but the driver left without

incident. It is not known where the individual went or what happened after that, but a life was spared that night.

Don't hesitate to help those in need. Look after one another and show some love and compassion to those in need. COL Davis could have driven by and merely read about a man jumping to his death, but instead, he stopped, and the individual didn't die. COL Davis admitted he was scared and so was the troubled individual. He told COL Davis he'd take him with him if he stayed, but COL Davis stayed anyway.

Life has much to celebrate. Live it to its fullest and be there when someone needs help. That was a very hard day, but someone lived another day and Col Davis was there for a fellow veteran when he needed a brother to help lift him out of certain death. Be that somebody!

The quick response and professional skills displayed by COL Les Davis saved a veteran's life and is befitting of recognition by the LTC James A. Spring Humanitarianism Award. ★



NGAT PRESIDENT SFC MIREYA CRUZ (right) presents COL (Ret) Les Davis the LTC James A. Spring Humanitarianism Award. (Photo by Chris Evans)



2023-24 NGAT CORPORATE Partners

Thank you to our Corporate Partners who helped make the 64th Annual NGAT Conference a success. They continue to show that we are "Stronger Together."

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- Southern New Hampshire University
- Texas State Guard
- Texas Veterans Network/Combined arms
- Waldorf University



CONFERENCE Highlights

1st Place Golfers



R&R Tactical (Pictured L-R): Mike Thomas, Ken Turner, Russ Rankin, CSM (Ret) John Hoxie, and Tournament Coordinator MSG (Ret) Tate Paul in the background.

2nd Place Golfers



Three Putters (Pictured L-R): Col (Ret) Kurt Leslie, Lauren Leslie, Piper Gleadhill, Sue Gleadhill, and Tournament Coordinator in background MSG (Ret) Tate Paul.

3rd Place Golfers



Sultans of Swings (Pictured L-R): CSM (Ret) Mark Weedon, Matthew Crane, Todd Halmann, Daniel Sciantarelli, SSG Julie Perez, member of the NGAT Board of Directors; and Tournament Coordinator MSG (Ret) Tate Paul in the background.

Longest Drive



SSG Julie Perez, a member of the NGAT Board of Directors, presents Russ Rankin with a plaque for Longest Drive.

Closest to the Pin



SSG Julie Perez, a member of the NGAT Board of Directors, presents Mike Thomas with a plaque for Closest to the Pin.

President's Award



Incoming President (right) SFC Mireya Cruz presents the NGAT President's Award to the outgoing president, MAJ Christopher McKeag at the NGAT Awards Banquet. (Photo by Chris Evans)

Welcome Party A&M



There were plenty of Texas A&M fans at the NGAT Welcome Party proudly showing off their school pride at the NGAT Tailgate Welcome Party in Irving, Texas.

Visit <https://ngat.org/ngat-conference/> to view the NGAT Conference Brochure that includes information about our Corporate Partners.

Wine Tasting



Cheers to a great afternoon of wine tasting during the NGAT Conference at the Mercy Wine Bar & Lounge in Irving, Texas.

Welcome Party Games



Attendees enjoyed games during the NGAT Conference Welcome Party.

Chapel Services



Chaplain Nathan Tucket from the 136th Airlift Wing provided spiritual uplifting during the NGAT Conference Prayer breakfast.

Dark n Lovely



SGM (Ret) Sharla Carter of Dark-n-Lovely Productions cranked up the jams at the NGAT Welcome Party.

Hospitality Night



The Audie L. Murphy Chapter of the U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association hosted a Disco theme hospitality room during the NGAT Conference.

PLAN TO ATTEND THE 65TH ANNUAL NGAT CONFERENCE

March 21-24, 2024

**Kalahari Resorts & Convention Center
Round Rock, Texas**

In 2024, NGAT will celebrate the Association's 65th Anniversary at the Kalahari Resort & Convention Center.

We hope that you will make plans to attend! Make sure to reserve your room as soon as they become available. Watch the NGAT website for updates. In 2022 we ran out of rooms at the discounted rate. All rooms include 4 free wristbands to their indoor waterpark that is currently being expanded and will open this summer. Be sure to list all guests when booking your room to ensure that you receive the

free wristbands. Kalahari has so much to offer which includes an indoor waterpark, adult only pool areas, music, food, entertainment, games, bowling, bars, spa, fitness center, shopping, free WiFi and parking to name a few. There is so much to do and see at the Kalahari. Watch the NGAT website and Facebook page for details. Come celebrate 65 Years of NGAT! ★



**Kalahari Resort Conference Rate
\$189**

That is a Deal!

(Kalahari's average rate is over \$240 or more per night!)
All rooms include 4 wristbands to the Indoor Water Park.



Texas Best Warrior Competition Winners Announced

(Original Story by SrA Hannah Kirschman)

BASTROP, Texas — The Texas Military Department's (TMD) Best Warrior Competition (BWC) brought together the Texas Army and Air National Guard and Chilean and Czech Armed Forces to challenge their tactical and technical abilities and share knowledge, skills and cultures.

The friendly competition at Camp Swift in Bastrop March 27-April 1 tested participants on basic military skills such as marksmanship, land navigation and fitness.

The TMD invited its partners in the Department of Defense National Guard Bureau State Partnership Program, which pairs the National Guard in every state, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories with partner nations to increase regional security and advance U.S. interests.

SFC Robert Martinez, International Affairs Division, Texas Military Department, accompanied Chilean and Czech service members competing in the BWC to help them integrate with Texas Army and Air National Guard participants.

"I think it's all about learning about the cultures and exchanging ideas," said Martinez. "It's important that they're here talking to other Airmen, Soldiers and NCOs, and that they get that general understanding of what we do and our culture as a military."

This exchange was a valuable learning experience for all involved, enabling competitors to build on each other's strengths and adapt their capabilities accordingly. Chilean and Czech forces have competed in the Texas BWC for several years, strengthening the partnership with Texas Guard members. ★

Thank you to Our Best Warrior Sponsors

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- The Nitsche Group
- USAA
- Waterstone Development

2023 TMD Best Warrior Competition Winners

Best Warrior Winners



THE BEST OVERALL COMPETITORS FOR THIS YEAR'S BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

(L-R) SrA Jake Schlang, Czech Armed Forces; SSG Maxim Mojzis; and Chilean Marine — CPL Juan Barria. *(Photo by Malcolm McClendon)*

Army and Air Component Winners



(L-R) SSgt Johnathon Nichols, 147th Air Support Operation Squadron — Air Non-Commissioned Officer Winner; SrA Jake Schlang, 147th Air Support Operation Squadron — Air Enlisted Winner; SFC Ben Theiring, 136th Military Police Battalion — Army Non-Commissioned Officer Category; SPC Dylan Waite, 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment — Army Enlisted Winner. *(Photo by Malcolm McClendon)*

SPC Dylan Waite, SFC Ben Theiring, and SrA Jake Schlang will move on to represent Texas at the National Guard Region V BWC. Congratulations to all our winners.



MEMBERS FROM THE TEXAS ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARDS and representatives from their state partners, Chile and Czech Republic, showed off their readiness skills in the Texas Military Department's 2023 Best Warrior Competition at Camp Swift near Bastrop, Texas. *(Photo by TSgt Stacy M. Cooper)*

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Texas House backs death benefits for state troops in Operation Lone Star

The SPC Bishop E. Evans Border Security Act bill would benefit families of Texas National Guard troops who die on duty during Operation Lone Star. Beneficiaries would receive a \$500,000 death benefit if a bill is approved by the Texas House and becomes law.

At the end of March NGAT Executive Director, LTC (Ret) Marvin Harris testified at the Texas State capital in support of the bills passage. During his testimony he emphasis that if Department of Public Safety troopers or Texas Parks and Wildlife Department game wardens die on duty during Operation Lone Star, their beneficiaries are guaranteed a lump sum of \$500,000 in death benefits. But National Guard troops, who stand shoulder to shoulder with those law enforcement officers on the mission, are not guaranteed the same benefits. That's because they have been activated on state orders, which — unlike federal orders — are paid by the state and do not include benefits such as free health care, G.I. bill benefits and help for survivors in case of on-duty deaths.

The legislation is named after Bishop Evans, a Texas Army National Guard soldier who died last April while rescuing migrants from the Rio Grande during his Operation Lone Star deployment. He was posthumously promoted to sergeant and awarded the Lone Star Medal of Valor at his funeral.

On April 12, 2023, the House gave the bill final approval 146-0. The bill now heads to the Senate. There, it has the support of Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick and

Sen. Joan Huffman, R-Houston, the upper chamber's chief budget writer, who is shepherding the bill in the Senate.

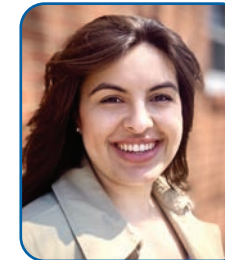
Importantly, House lawmakers changed the bill to make it retroactive for all eligible families who had service members die during Operation Lone Star by adopting an amendment from Rep. Andrew Murr, R-Junction. That means Evans' family will qualify for the death benefits if the bill becomes law. Under a previous version of the bill, Evans' family and those of others who died while deployed to Operation Lone Star would not have qualified for death benefits. ★



STATE REP. JARED PATTERSON, R-Frisco, speaks during a memorial resolution to remember the life of Bishop Evans on the House floor on April 12, 2023. (Photo by Evan L'Roy/The Texas Tribune)

2023 NGAT EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS WINNERS

Congratulations to all our winners!



NGAT EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP — \$5,000
HANNAH HAMONTREE

Daughter of LTC (Ret) George Hamontree III



LEN AND JEAN TALLAS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP — \$5,000
KALEB LORANCE

Son of SGM Gerald Lorange



NGAT EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP — \$4,550

In honor of former NGATEF Trustees
(BG (Ret) Mike Boyd, COL (Ret) Richard Harrison, COL (Ret) Ed Komandosky, COL (Ret) Rodney McNelley)
SPC QUINTERIKA JEFFERSON
136th Expeditionary Signal Battalion



MG (RET) WILLIAM A. "BILL" HALL & FAMILY LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,500

1LT TRUMAN PETTY
I Troop, 3-278th Armored Cavalry Regiment



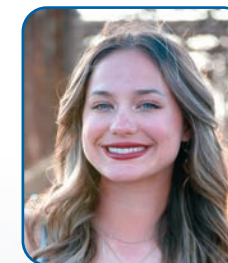
GLORIA JENELL AND MARLIN E. MOTE ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,250

KATRINA ALVARADO
Daughter of TSgt Salvador Alvarado III



NGAT PAST PRESIDENT'S SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,000
BRADEN GRANTHAM

Son of CSM Richard Grantham



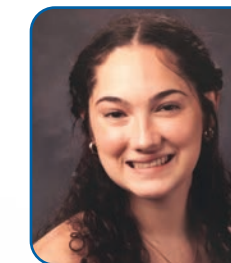
LEWIS O. KING MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,000
MADELINE SMITH

Daughter of SMSgt Kevin Smith



TXNG RETIREES ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,000
BRENNA MORAN

Daughter of MAJ Brian Moran



USAA SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,000
KEZIAH HANNA

Daughter of LTC Christopher Hanna



MG (RET) JAMES K. "RED" BROWN LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,000
SPC LAUREN CHRISTOPHER

136th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade



MG (RET) PATRICK HAMILTON LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,000
JATHAN LEWIS

Son of Col Josh Lewis



MG (RET) CHARLES K. ARIS LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,000
CPT AIDAN DIETZ

3-141st Infantry Regiment



MG (RET) WILLIAM WILSON HONORARY SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,000
SPC HANNAH CHUKWU

HHC, 172nd Brigade Engineer Battalion



COL (RET) STANLEY A. AND SHERRY MURRELL LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP — \$1,000
CDT MIA WALKER

449th Aviation Support Battalion/
Daughter of MAJ Donna Tewell

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TEXAS GUARD *Spotlight*



THE RC-26 CREW MEMBERS pose in front of the 147th Attack Wing's Condor February 10, 2023, at Ellington Field JRB, Texas. The first 147th RC-26 aircraft was delivered to the Texas Air National Guard at Ellington Field in 1991. The RC-26 flew at Ellington for over 30 years and has been a critical workhorse in various missions around the world. The RC-26 program is coming to a close and the 147th RC-26 will be flown to a museum in Maryland to be retired. *(Photo by Sean Cowher)*



THE TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD JOINT COUNTERDRUG TASK FORCE'S LEADERSHIP TEAM, regional leadership and Drug Demand Reduction Outreach leaders attended the 2023 One Pill Kills Summit on fentanyl, hosted by **Texas Governor Greg Abbott**, April 6, in Austin, Texas.

More than 75 state agencies, law enforcement agencies, and non-profit organizations gathered for a series of panels to discuss varying perspectives on the struggles surrounding the ongoing fentanyl crisis in Texas and U.S. communities. The Texas Counterdrug program, a U.S. Congressionally created program overseen by the Texas Governor, provided support to families, spoke with law enforcement leadership and demonstrated the Texas Military Departments commitment to "Texans serving Texas." *(Photo courtesy of the Texas Military Department)*



COL (RET) EDWARD DEXTRAZE recently spent an 8-day trek to reach the base of Mt Everest on March 9, 2023. Congratulations on this amazing accomplishment!



SOLDIERS FROM THE 176TH ENGINEER BRIGADE, set up a R12 Trimble TSC7 Data Collector to survey the land at Training Area 2, Camp Swift, near Bastrop, Texas, March 26, 2023. The survey took place in preparation for planning and construction of a running track for the Army Combat Fitness Test, which will be the first track and lanes of its kind in Texas specifically set up for the ACFT. *(Photo by SPC Dakota Bradford)*



TEXAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARDSMEN from the 1st Battalion of the 143rd Airborne Infantry Regiment with their parent unit, the 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the 36th Infantry Division, participated in a colors casing ceremony April 27, 2023, in Fort Worth, Texas. Surrounded by family, friends and a supportive Fort Worth community, more than 250 Soldiers bid farewell as they boarded buses to head out to mobilization processing before heading overseas. As part of U.S. military tradition based in history, units mobilizing and deploying in support and defense of the nation hold a colors casing ceremony where the unit's flags are wrapped in preparation to travel with the unit as they head overseas. *(Photo by SGT Christina Clardy)*



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- Front and back stab plate inserts are compliant with NIJ Stab Resistance of Body Armor Standard 0115.00 for Edged and Spike Class Blades Level 3



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Tactical Carrier Features:

- Exterior carrier fabric constructed of 330 Denier Cordura® with flame resistance and infrared resistance
- Side-Closure System offers convenient adjustability
- Multi-functional Pockets includes large and small utility pockets, flashlight pocket, magazine pocket and radio pocket
- Bottom loading, front and back plate pockets with webbing retention
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- Permanent shoulder straps with hook/loop closure
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ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA HOSTS 52ND EANGUS CONFERENCE



Registration is now open to attend the 52nd EANGUS Conference, August 13-16, 2023, in Rochester, Minnesota.

Travel days are August 12 and 17. Texas will be staying at the Kahler Grand Hotel in downtown Rochester. Hotel reservation may be made on the NGAT or EANGUS website starting in late May.

EANGUS will host a Golf Scramble on Friday, August 11, 2023, and a 5K Fun Run/Walk on Saturday, August 12, 2023, so come early if you plan to participate. The conference registration fee of \$175 will increase to \$200 on July 2, 2023, so register now to save money. Full conference registration includes all meetings and breakouts, conference expo, welcome night, Jr. Enlisted night, all area hospitality night and the awards banquet. It also provides a very unique opportunity to network with other National Guard Soldiers and Airmen as well as Senior Enlisted personnel from across the United States. The business sessions include senior leadership from the National Guard Bureau as keynote speakers.

For up-to-date information on the EANGUS Conference and Texas delegation activities visit our website at <https://ngat.org/eangus-conference/>. ★

We hope to see you there!

2023 NATIONAL GUARD COMMUNITY VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR

MAY 11 2023 11AM-3PM EASTERN

FREE TO REGISTER

THE ENLISTED ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES (EANGUS) IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WALMART INVITES YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2023 SPRING NATIONAL GUARD COMMUNITY VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR THAT WILL TAKE PLACE ON 11 MAY 2023.

THE CAREER FAIR IS OPEN TO ALL NATIONAL GUARD SERVICEMEMBERS, VETERANS, AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO ARE SEEKING GREAT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND THERE ARE JOB OPENINGS TO CONSIDER WITHIN YOUR STATE OR NATION WIDE. THIS YEAR, EANGUS IS VERY EXCITED TO HAVE MANY GREAT EMPLOYERS TAKING PART IN THIS EVENT SUCH AS WALMART, AMAZON, AND USIC, TO NAME A FEW.

THIS CAREER FAIR IS FREE TO REGISTER FOR ANY EMPLOYMENT SEEKER, AND WE KNOW THAT THIS VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH OUTSTANDING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES!

HOSTED BY: Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the US (EANGUS)
1 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 880
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NGAUS CONFERENCE PREVIEW

Original story by Richard Arnold

NGAUS is heading back to the Silver State. This summer, the association's conference returns to Nevada for the second time in 24 months. The destination is Reno, which will host the 145th General Conference and Exhibition from August 18 to 21.

The Nevada National Guard Association has been planning the event for nearly five years. It had only about three months to prepare and fundraise for the 2021 gathering after volunteering to host the conference when an alternate site became necessary due to the pandemic.

For those who have never attended the NGAUS conference, the event is the association's annual meeting. NGAUS members nationwide gather to conduct association business, hear from Pentagon leaders, and see the latest offerings from the defense industry.

Social events and group activities are also a big part of the program, and there are ample opportunities to network. Many attendees also take time out to experience what the host city has to offer.

Most attendees will arrive via Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RNO), located just five miles from downtown. Free ground transportation will be available between the airport and official hotels. Texas delegates will stay downtown at the Silver Legacy. Room rates are \$188 per night. This includes taxes. The hotels will honor the special rate three days before and three days after the conference for attendees to experience more of Reno.

Conference events begin August 17, with the Sponsors Golf Tournament at the Toiyabe Golf Club. The NGAUS tournament will be held the next day at Lakeridge Golf Club, which features an island green on Lake Stanley on the par-3 15th hole. Both courses are a short bus trip from Reno and offer scenic views of the surrounding valley.

Perhaps the signature event of the conference is also set for August 18—a hike on nearby Mt. Rose, which overlooks Lake Tahoe. For those who would prefer seeing the area on two wheels, a motorcycle ride is also planned. Organizers call it NGAUS Vibrations.

Social events start that evening. The Adjutants General Reception returns to the Nevada Automobile Museum—the same venue as the 2021 function. Considered “one of America's Five Greatest Auto Museums,” the facility has enough space to host both the TAGs and the field-grade officers who will enjoy their own reception in another part of the building.

That same night, company-grade officers and warrant officers are invited to the lively Freight House District and the adjoining Reno Aces Ballpark for their annual mixer. Guests will enjoy pregame food and beverages before taking in a minor-league baseball game. A Nevada Guard flyover will precede the event.

The conference planned 5k fun run is August 19, and will take runners through downtown.

Meetings and the industry exhibition begin later that day in the Reno-Sparks Convention Center, which is only a few miles away. The Nevada National Guard Association will provide transportation from official hotels to the convention center and other event sites.

The break in the traditional schedule involves the States Dinner, which usually concludes the conference. In Reno, it's planned for the evening after the First Business Session on August 19 at the Reno Events Center downtown, just a short walk from downtown hotels. Western Wear is the recommended attire.

The popular Spouses Luncheon is the next day downtown at the Reno Ballroom. It will have a 1920's/Speakeasy theme.

The Governor's Farewell will end the conference on August 21. It's also set for the Reno Ballroom. That will feature headline entertainment that will be announced at a later date.

Conference and hotel reservations will open on the NGAT website in mid-May at <https://ngat.org/ngaus-conference/>. ★



SDI / EANGUS SCHOLARSHIP

Sonoran Desert Institute (SDI) is proud to partner with the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) to offer the SDI/EANGUS Scholarship. The scholarship provides full tuition and fees each semester for the Associate of Science in Firearms Technology Degree program to one recipient annually.

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Closes May 31, 2023

Application Window Open for NGAUS Scholarships



The application window is now open for a \$5,000 scholarship exclusively to NGAUS Active Life and Digital Life Members and their family members.

The application period for the AFBA NGAUS Active Life Member Scholarship runs through June 1. To apply go to www.ngaus.org/membership/member-benefits/scholarships/afba-scholarship-application.

Every July, NGAUS awards two \$5,000 scholarships underwritten by the Armed Forces Benefit Association to applicants who are full-time students pursuing an under-graduate, graduate or post-graduate degree.

Leonard DRS and the National Guard Educational Foundation have established the Leonardo DRS Guardian Scholarship Fund, providing college scholarships to the children of National Guardsmen who lost their lives in support of the war on terrorism. Eligible students can apply for up to \$25,000 paid over a four-year college education or \$12,500 paid over a two-year community college or vocational school. For more information visit www.ngef.org. ★



TAPS

As of April 30, 2023

MSG (Ret) Charles R. Briggs, Life Member #11342, Houston

LTC (Ret) Edwin B. Bright, Life Member #3173, Dallas

MSG (Ret) James Brown Jr., Life Member #12722, Garland

1SG (Ret) Gary K. Cravens, Life Member #25733, Paris

**SGT Jermine Flagg, 1836th Trans Co, Killeen

MSG (Ret) Joe B. Forbes, Life Member #16795, Dallas

SSG Ruperto Garcia Jr., Dallas

CMSgt (Ret) Edward C. Gordon Jr., Life Member #235, South Houston

Mr. Ronnie M. Hall, Life Member #3144, DeSoto

Mr. Larry Jack "Hondo" Hudson, Moran

Mr. Ronald "Ronnie" Joost, Life Member #2425, West Point

Mr. Patrick Karlik, West

MSgt Ronald S. Marich, Life Member #1478, Arlington

* Mr. Carroll Meeker, Life Member #30502, Wolfforth

Mr. Nathan B. Moore, Burnet

MSG (Ret) Joe A. Munoz Jr., Life Member #10957, Georgetown

MSG (Ret) Lelon J. Norman, Life Member #14397, Liberty Hill

Mr. Ignacio V. Perez, Life Member #6812, Retired, Elgin

CPT Larry M. Pyka, Life Member #3444, Fredericksburg

MAJ (Ret) Allen J. "Tater" Richards, Flower Mound

SPC Kristian Rocha, Mission

SSG (Ret) Arturo Rodriguez, Life Member #7477, San Antonio

SGT Johnny J. Satterfield, Life Member #27659, Midland

COL (Ret) Walter I. Skinner, Life Member #787, Corpus Christi

SSG (Ret) Donald B. "Tiny" Taylor, Benton, AR

*SPC Sidi Y. Traore, Killeen

Mr. Donald B. Taylor, Retired, Benton, AR

LTC (Ret) George C. Wilson Jr., NGAT Annual Member, Red Oak

SSG (Ret) John Carl Worthington, Life Member #23003, Pampa

SSG Robert A. Young, Life Member #18505, Houston

* Had NGAT Life Insurance Policy

** Had No-Cost Active Guard Policy of \$1,000



IF YOU ARE AWARE OF THE PASSING OF A CURRENT OR FORMER TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD MEMBER, PLEASE NOTIFY US BY PHONE, MAIL OR EMAIL NGATNEWS@NGAT.ORG.

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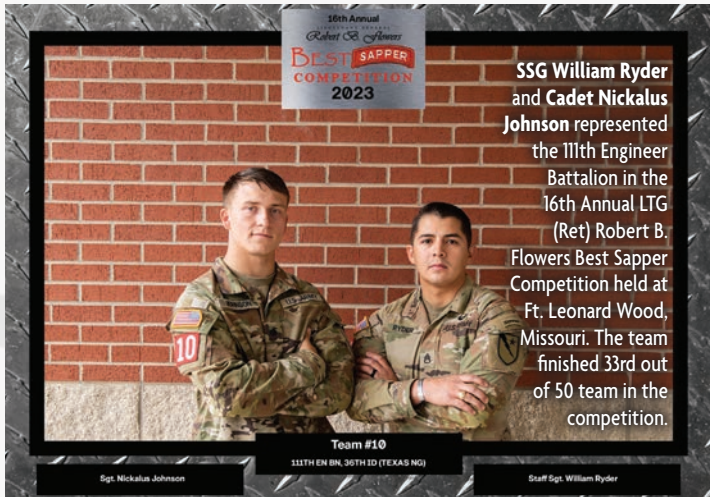
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 3706 Crawford Avenue
 Austin, Texas 78731-6308

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PERIODICAL



SSG William Ryder and Cadet Nickalus Johnson represented the 111th Engineer Battalion in the 16th Annual LTG (Ret) Robert B. Flowers Best Sapper Competition held at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri. The team finished 33rd out of 50 team in the competition.



FROM LEFT, Lt Col Jason Ulibarri, an instructor pilot, and 1st Lt Eric Murray, a student pilot, both assigned to the 149th Fighter Wing, Air National Guard, conduct preflight checks prior to launch during Coronet Cactus, March 30, 2023, at Davis Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona. (Photo by AIC Derek Gutierrez)



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TEXAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S TEAM #47, 1LT Copeland Zaunbrecher and 2LT Nathaniel Lacorte, as they placed 13th out of 50 teams in the 2023 Best Ranger Competition April 14-16, 2023, in Fort Benning, GA.



NGAT PLANNING CALENDAR

(As of April 30, 2023)

2023

29	May	Memorial Day (NGAT Office Closed)
14	Jun	U.S. Army Birthday/Flag Day
19	Jun	Juneteenth (NGAT Office Closed)
3-4	Jul	Independence Day (NGAT Office Closed)
12-17	Aug	EANGUS Annual Conference, Rochester, Minnesota
18-22	Aug	NGAUS Annual Conference, Reno, Nevada
1-4	Sep	Labor Day (NGAT Office Closed)
11	Sep	Patriot Day
9	Oct	Columbus Day (NGAT Office Closed)



NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY Demon Regiment Inducted NGAT Life Member, **COL (Ret) Ronald R. Wilkins** into the Hall of Fame during the 73rd annual Demon Battalion Military Ball on April 15. NSU's Department of Military Science annually hosts the event to honor graduating ROTC cadets and recognize supporters of the program. **COL (Ret) Wilkins** was honored for his service to the nation and his communities, and for making a lasting impact to serve as examples for cadets to emulate throughout their careers. (Photo courtesy of Northwestern State University)