

2026 NGAT Minuteman Award — p. 6

SAVE *the* DATE
NGAT Conference
Feb 25-28, 2027
Corpus Christi, TX



INSIDE

- 6 NGAT Conference Overview
- 7 Legislative Awards
- 15 NGAT Bat Cruise is Back!
- 17 Scholarship Winners



Get FirstNet on your own device

FirstNet® is the **only** wireless network built with and for first responders – and as a member of the National Guard, **you're eligible** to get FirstNet on your own device.

Whether you're **on duty or on call**, FirstNet offers:

- **Priority and**, for first responders, **preemption** capabilities – never competing with commercial traffic
- **Reliable coverage** designed for emergencies, remote locations and high demand
- **No throttling** for FirstNet users anywhere in the U.S.

Visit an AT&T store and **use affiliation code TEXTFED22** or scan the QR code to learn more and sign up.



Proud sponsor of the 67th Annual National Guard Association of Texas Conference



©2026 AT&T Intellectual Property. FirstNet and the FirstNet logo are registered trademarks and service marks of the First Responder Network Authority. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

2026 - 2027 Board of Directors

President	Paul Cerniauskas
President-Elect	Angela Matthews
Vice-President	Julie Perez
Secretary	Amanda Roberts
Treasurer	Andrew Wenzel
Executive Director	Marvin Harris
HQ, Joint Forces	Jonathan Ireland
HQ, TXARNG	Amanda Roberts
71st Troop Command	Michelle Auyer
HQ, 36th ID	Kenyatta Carrasquillo
56th IBCT	Trent Teague
72nd IBCT	Vacant
36th CAB	K.C. Bouldin
176TH Engr Bde.	Kenneth Porter
71st EMIB	Julie Perez
36th Sustainment Bde	Vacant
136th MEB	John C. Cody
HQ, TXANG	Brendan Gorman
136th AW	Thomas Ryan
147th ATKW	Bruce Robison
149th FW	Matthew Moore
Retired Rep.	Vacant
Retired Rep.	Christy Buckley
Retired Rep.	Gary Moseley
Family Readiness Rep	Vacant
At Large Rep	Andrew Wenzel
At Large Rep	Tielow-Taneesha Henson
At Large Rep	April Ruiz

Editor Theresa Billeck-Zuniga
Graphic Designer design@mediation.net
Publisher Multicopy Printing Co. Inc.

NGAT NEWS

3706 Crawford Ave
Austin, TX 78731
512-454-7300
1-800-252-NGAT (6428)



Submit articles and photos for the NGAT News Magazine to:
ngatnews@ngat.org

NGAT Home Page: www.ngat.org
Executive Director: Marvin Harris, CAE—mharris@ngat.org

Deputy Executive Director/Membership Director:
Theresa Billeck-Zuniga—tbz@ngat.org

Insurance Administrator/Corporate Programs:
Terri Marshall—tmarshall@ngat.org

NGAT News (usps 015-752) published quarterly by the National Guard Association of Texas, 3706 Crawford Avenue, Austin, Texas 78731-6308.

Periodicals postage paid at Austin, Texas 78710 and additional offices.

POSTMASTER SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO:
NGAT News, 3706 Crawford Avenue, Austin, Texas 78731-6308

MEMBERS MAY EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGES TO:
membership@ngat.org



CONTENTS

p10



NGAT CONFERENCE WINNERS

p12



NGAT CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

p18



BEST WARRIOR

4

From the President
New Scholarship

5

2026-2027 Executive Committee
Outgoing & Incoming
NGAT Board of Directors

6

NGAT Conference Overview
NGAT Minuteman Award

7

Legislative Award
NGAT Membership Contest

8

Bylaw changes

9

Resolutions Update

10

Conference Event Winners

11

Thank you to our Corporate Sponsors

12-13

NGAT Conference Highlights

14

Legal Update

15

The Bat Cruise is Back

16

NGAT Relief Fund
Legion de Lafayette Ceremony

17

2026 NGAT Educational Foundation

Scholarship Winners

18

Best Warrior

19

Former NGAT Employee Becomes a Firefighter

20

NGAUS Update

21

EANGUS Update

23

TAPS

24

NGAT Planning Calendar

ON THE COVER

CSM (Ret) Donna Balderston proudly displays the Minuteman Trophy presented to her at the recent NGAT Conference in Waco, Texas, in recognition of being named the 2026 NGAT Minuteman recipient. (Photo by SFC (Ret) Chris Evans)

Follow us on





FROM THE PRESIDENT



GREETINGS, TEXAS GUARDSMEN AND FAMILIES!

WE HAD A VERY SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE IN WACO. The venue was an excellent setting for our event, and I greatly appreciate the tremendous effort the conference committee and fulltime staff devoted to creating such a meaningful and well-organized experience.

I'm pleased to report that we came together as an association and achieved several important accomplishments. **We passed two resolutions, approved five bylaw amendments,** and were privileged to hear remarks from Major General (Retired) Frank McGinn, NGAUS President, and Brigadier General Carrie Perez, Director, Army Personnel Management (GI).

At the conference, we also presented our first **NGAT Government Affairs Award** to recognize individuals who have demonstrated exceptional support for the Texas National Guard. I would like to again express congratulations and appreciation to this year's awardees—U.S. Representative John Carter, Texas 31st Congressional District; Texas State Representative Terry Wilson, Texas House District 20; Ms. Xiomara Villareal, Senior Legislative Assistant of Texas 31st Congressional District; and Mr. Jeff Frazier, Chief of Staff for Texas House District 20—for their continued advocacy.

The strength of our association lies in the commitment of its members—coming together at both the state and national levels to safeguard the interests of Texas Guardsmen. We now look forward to the upcoming national level conferences: the **Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) in Daytona Beach on July 31-August 3,** and the **National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) in Indianapolis on August 28-31.**

My appeal to you is simple: NGAT membership matters. If you are reading this, please tell three people about NGAT and why they should join. The next fight to protect the benefits Texas Guardsmen deserve is always just around the corner, because those benefits never remain safe without our collective voice. NGAT exists to defend those benefits and advocate on your behalf. Help us grow our membership—and thank you for your support.

May God bless you and your families, and may God bless Texas.

PAUL CERNAUSKAS
COL (Ret)
President

HONORING A LEGACY OF SERVICE



The COL (Ret) Frank Zuniga & MSG (Ret) Theresa Billeck- Zuniga Scholarship

THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION is proud to accept donations for the **COL (Ret) Frank Zuniga & MSG (Ret) Theresa Billeck-Zuniga Scholarship**, established in recognition of their passion and commitment to the Texas National Guard and the National Guard Association of Texas.

COL Zuniga, a West Point graduate, served in the United States Army and the Texas Army National Guard from 1984 to 2012. His distinguished service included deployments in Desert Shield, Desert Storm, and Afghanistan. He was a highly decorated Soldier, receiving the Legion of Merit, two Bronze Stars, seven Meritorious Service Medals, the Ranger Tab, Airborne Wings and the Lone Star Distinguished Service Medal, among others. In 2013, he was awarded the NGAT Minuteman Award. He passed away on April 22, 2026, after a courageous battle with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) or better known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

His wife of 29 years, MSG Billeck-Zuniga, served in the United States Air Force and the Texas Army National Guard from 1981 to 2007. She served on the NGAT Board of Directors from 2001 to 2006 and as NGAT President from 2006 to 2007. In 2009, she received the NGAT Minuteman Award, and in 2015, she was inducted into the Texas Military Forces Hall of Honor for her significant contributions at both the state and national levels. Since her retirement from the Army in 2007, she has continued her service as a full-time employee of NGAT.

This scholarship was created to support current and former service members of the Texas Army National Guard who demonstrate leadership, academic achievement, and a commitment to serving their communities both in and out of the classroom.

You may donate to this scholarship online at www.ngat.org/ngatef or by mailing a check payable to the NGAT Educational Foundation, 3706 Crawford Ave, Austin, TX 78731. We thank you for your continued support.

2026-2027 NGAT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



COL (Ret) Paul Cerniauskas
President



MSgt Angela Matthews
President-Elect



SFC Julie Perez
Vice President



SGM Amanda Roberts
Secretary



COL (Ret) Andrew Wenzel
Treasurer



LTC (Ret) Marvin Harris
Executive Director

THANK YOU TO OUR OUTGOING NGAT BOARD OF DIRECTORS



LTC Craig Neeley
36th Combat Aviation Brigade



MSgt Graydon Phillips
136th Airlift Wing



Capt Keith Cook
149th Fighter Wing



CSM (Ret) Donna Balderston
Retired Rep



Capt Steve Ramirez
At Large Rep



Maria Daniels
Family Readiness Rep

WELCOME TO OUR NGAT INCOMING BOARD OF DIRECTORS



CW4 K.C. Bouldin
36TH Combat Aviation Brigade



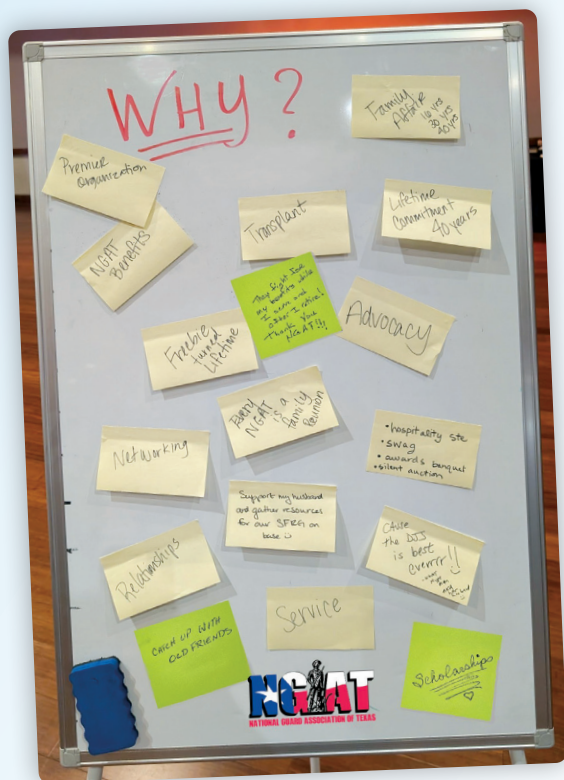
SMSgt Brendan Gorman
HQ, Texas Air National Guard



MSgt Thomas Ryan
HQ 136th Airlift Wing



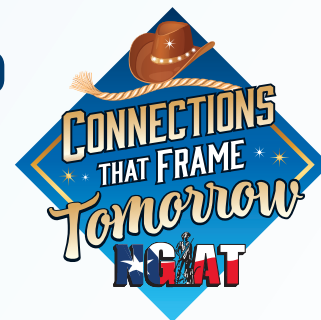
Capt Matthew Moore
149th Fighter Wing



DURING THE WELCOME PARTY NGAT members came by and posted some of the reasons they are members of NGAT.

NGAT CONFERENCE RECAP

THE 2026 NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS (NGAT) CONFERENCE brought together Texas Army and Air National Guard members, retirees, industry partners, and supporters in Waco, Texas, for several days of networking, professional development, and recognition.



Conference attendees participated in association meetings, leadership briefings, and exhibits featuring organizations and businesses that support the Texas National Guard. The event also provided an opportunity for members from across the state to reconnect and strengthen relationships within the Guard community.

A highlight of the conference was the recognition of outstanding service and achievement among NGAT members and supporters. Awards presented during the conference included the inaugural NGAT Government Affairs Awards, recognizing elected officials and legislative staff members for their continued advocacy and support of the Texas National Guard. Additional honors included the presentation of the NGAT Minuteman Award and special recognition for leadership and service to the association and military community. ★

Mark your calendar for the 2027 NGAT Conference to be held February 25-28, 2027, in Corpus Christi, Texas. This is earlier than normal so please **SAVE THE DATE!**

CSM (RET) DONNA BALDERSTON SELECTED AS 2026 NGAT MINUTEMAN AWARD RECIPIENT

THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS (NGAT) is proud to announce that Command Sergeant Major (Ret) Donna Balderston has been selected as the 2026 NGAT Minuteman Award recipient in recognition of her lifelong dedication, leadership, and unwavering service to NGAT, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), and the Texas National Guard community.

CSM (Ret) Balderston honorably served her state and nation from January 1983 to August 2014, retiring after more than 30 years of distinguished military service at the highest enlisted rank. Throughout her military career, she established herself as a dedicated leader who consistently stepped forward to support Soldiers, Airmen, and the mission. Her professionalism, work ethic, and commitment to those she served with earned the respect of peers and leaders alike. That same dedication continued long after retirement, as she remained actively engaged in supporting and advocating for the National Guard community at both the state and national levels.

A member of NGAT since 1995 and a Life Member since 2008, CSM (Ret) Balderston has served on the

NGAT Board of Directors on multiple occasions and currently represents retired members, ensuring their voices remain an important part of the Association's direction and future. She has also maintained a long-standing commitment to EANGUS since 1984 and became a Life Member in 2013. Nationally, she serves as the EANGUS Retiree Committee Chair and contributes to several retiree-focused organizations supporting military members, veterans, retirees, and their families. Her continued involvement demonstrates her passion for ensuring service members remain informed, connected, and supported throughout every stage of their military journey and beyond.

For decades, CSM (Ret) Balderston has faithfully represented NGAT and EANGUS at conferences, events, and community engagements across the country. Whether serving as a delegate, volunteer, mentor, or advocate, she has consistently demonstrated a willingness to give her time, energy, and personal resources in support of others. She has attended NGAT conferences for more than 25 years and has remained a visible and dependable presence within the organization, always willing to assist wherever needed. Her dedication to mentoring



younger generations of service members and retirees alike has made a lasting impact on countless individuals throughout the Texas National Guard community.

In addition to her military and association involvement, CSM (Ret) Balderston has devoted years of volunteer service within her local community, further reflecting her lifelong commitment to serving others. Her sustained leadership, selfless service, and steadfast commitment to the National Guard family embody the very spirit of the NGAT Minuteman Award and the enduring values of the Texas National Guard. ★

NGAT MEMBERSHIP DRIVE A SUCCESS

THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS (NGAT) ran a successful membership drive from October 1, 2025, through February 28, 2026, recognizing units that demonstrated outstanding support and commitment to strengthening the association. Cash prizes were awarded to the top units that secured the highest number of new members during the campaign period.

Overall, the association experienced a remarkable increase of 269 new members, reflecting the continued dedication of Texas National Guard Soldiers and Airmen in supporting NGAT's mission of advocacy, professional development, and member benefits across the state. The strong participation from units throughout Texas highlights the importance of maintaining a united voice for the National Guard community.

NGAT extends its appreciation to all units and members who participated in the membership drive and helped make this initiative a success.

1st Place (\$500) — 13 new members Co C, 3-144th Inf Rgmt—56th IBCT—Seagoville, TX



NGAT President COL (Ret) Paul Cerniauskas (left) presents the 1st place membership drive check (\$500) to CSM Rodney Morgan, 56th IBCT CSM (center), and COL Brent Kemp, Commander, 56th IBCT, on behalf of Co C, 3-144th Inf Rgmt.

2nd Place (\$300) — 12 new members HHC, 3-141st Inf Rgmt—72nd IBCT—Weslaco, TX



NGAT President COL (Ret) Paul Cerniauskas (left) presents the 2nd place membership drive check (\$300) to COL Rodney Kelley, Commander, 72nd IBCT (center), and CSM Martin Zapata, 72nd IBCT CSM, on behalf of HHC 3-141st Inf Rgmt.

3rd Place (\$150) — 10 new members Co A, 3-144th Inf Rgmt — 56th IBCT — Greenville, TX



NGAT President COL (Ret) Paul Cerniauskas (left) presents the 3rd place membership drive check (\$150) to CSM Rodney Morgan, 56th IBCT CSM (center), and COL Brent Kemp, Commander, 56th IBCT, on behalf of Co A, 3-144th Inf Rgmt.

(Photos by SFC (Ret) Chris Evans)

NGAT PRESENTS FIRST GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AWARDS

THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS (NGAT) is proud to announce the inaugural NGAT Government Affairs Awards, recognizing individuals who have demonstrated exceptional support and advocacy for the Texas National Guard.

Congratulations and sincere appreciation go to this year's award recipients:

- U.S. Representative John Carter, Texas 31st Congressional District
- Texas State Representative Terry Wilson, Texas House District 20
- Ms. Xiomara Villareal, Senior Legislative Assistant, Texas 31st Congressional District
- Mr. Jeff Frazier, Chief of Staff, Texas House District 20

Their continued support and advocacy for military construction (MILCON) initiatives have greatly benefited the Texas Military Department and the Texas National Guard. During every visit to Washington, D.C., their offices have consistently been welcoming and accommodating, always making time to hear NGAT's issues and concerns.

In addition, their behind-the-scenes efforts played a significant role in preserving the Texas National Guard tuition assistance program and likely contributed to increased funding for the program. Their dedication and commitment to supporting Texas service members and their families continue to make a lasting impact. ★



U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JOHN CARTER (right), Texas 31st Congressional District; and Ms. Xiomara Villareal, Senior Legislative Assistant for Texas' 31st Congressional District, proudly display their awards from the inaugural NGAT Government Affairs Awards.

(Photo by SFC (Ret) Chris Evans)

NGAT MEMBERS APPROVE KEY BYLAWS AMENDMENTS AT 2026 CONFERENCE

ONE OF THE MAJOR ACTIONS DURING THE 2026 NGAT CONFERENCE business session was the approval of several significant bylaws amendments designed to modernize the association, improve governance, and better align NGAT with its current strategic priorities. All proposed changes presented to the membership were approved.

Key approved changes included:

- Reducing the number of conference delegates from 150 to 100 based on conference attendance trends to help ensure attainable quorum requirements.
- Updating Board of Directors composition to reflect current Texas Military Department force structure changes while maintaining balanced representation.
- Eliminating the separate Junior Enlisted Director positions to allow members of any rank to serve as unit directors and encourage broader participation.
- Establishing new standing committees for Membership and Resolutions to strengthen member engagement and legislative coordination efforts.
- Granting the Executive Director greater authority over staff compensation decisions within the board-approved budget structure.
- Revising dissolution language to provide greater flexibility in the future distribution of association assets consistent with NGAT's mission and nonprofit requirements.
- Approving several administrative updates recognizing virtual meetings, digital voting procedures, and clarifying board governance processes.

To view the newly updated bylaws visit: www.ngat.org/board-of-directors/. ★



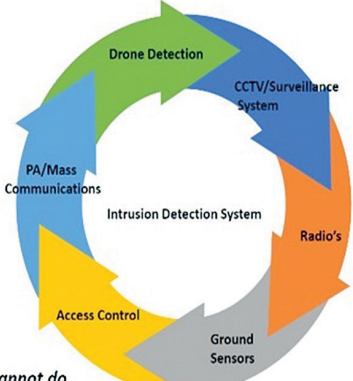
“Your One Stop Shop for All Security Needs”

Specializing in:

- Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS)
- CCTV/Surveillance Systems
- Access Control Systems
- Drone Detection
- Concealed Weapons Detection
- Body Camera's
- Fiber Optic & Structured Cabling
- PA/Mass Communication Systems
- Fire Alarm Systems
- Life Safety Systems
- Ground Sensors
- Design and Consulting
- 24/7 Monitoring Service

Tito Ferrera
Federal Sales Manager
tferrera@pyrocomsystems.com
 915-772-0880, ext. 1328

Product/Service Overview – 360 Degree Full System Integrator



There is very little we cannot do.





CONNECTED ANYWHERE. DEPLOYED FAST.

When conditions are extreme and every second matters, PTS delivers battle-tested rapid deployment communications that keep your team linked, informed, and ready to act.

Rapid Deploy

Operational communications on the ground in minutes, not hours.

Resilient

Built for the harshest environments —rugged, encrypted, and reliable.

Global Reach

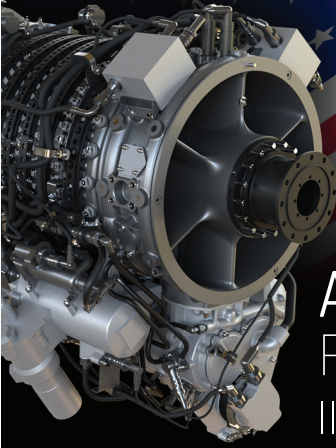
Satellite and terrestrial solutions for any location, any mission.

Ready When You Are

WWW.PTS-INC.COM | 256-539-6787
INFO@PTS-INC.COM



www.rolls-royce.com/us



AMERICAN-MADE FOR AMERICA'S ARMY

||

AE 1107 Powering the Bell MV-75 Cheyenne



RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE Report

ADVANCING RESOLUTIONS: THE NGAT CONFERENCE AND THE PATH AHEAD FOR TEXAS GUARD MEMBERS



MAJ JONATHAN IRELAND
Resolutions Committee Chair

AS THE ANNUAL NGAT CONFERENCE DREW TO A CLOSE, MEMBERS GATHERED TO ADDRESS THE PRESSING CONCERNS THAT EMERGED. The Resolutions Committee's proceedings centered on a simple yet powerful message: the commitment and service of Texas Guard members must be matched with requisite comparable protections.

The Resolutions Committee started with expressing deep gratitude to the attendees for their continued dedication amidst a tumultuous global backdrop. "You have pressing duties and responsibilities, yet you still chose to represent our veterans' professional association," they noted. The Committee also emphasized that meaningful progress, whether pertaining to Tricare enhancements, GI Bill reforms, or the preservation of duty statuses, requires persistent efforts over time, stating that "our benefits do not happen on their own."

With a structured agenda, the NGAT meeting highlighted both ongoing and past resolutions while introducing two vital new proposals for consideration: (1) the call for uninterrupted pay for Guard service members during funding lapses and (2) the push for the permanency of State Tuition Assistance (STA).

UNINTERRUPTED PAY: A NECESSITY, NOT A BARGAINING CHIP

The effects of the 2025 government shutdown remain vivid in the memories of Texas National Guard members and their families. For 43 days, funding disputes left many in a precarious financial position, even as they were tasked with vital missions. The ramifications were significant; drill sessions were cut or canceled, overall readiness dwindled, and essential supply chains were disrupted. Full-time military technicians found themselves facing furloughs or forced into the heart-wrenching decision of working without pay... a stark reality underscored by technicians voicing their struggles to provide for their families.

In response, the proposed resolution dubbed the Support for Uninterrupted Pay and Benefits for Texas National Guard Members During Federal Funding Lapses emerged, building upon the advocacy efforts from previous years. Endorsing bipartisan initiatives like the Pay Our Troops Act, currently identified as H.R. 5401, this resolution seeks to establish ongoing appropriations for military pay even during government shutdowns. The Resolutions Committee acknowledged the challenges ahead, noting, "This one will be an uphill battle," but reinforced the need for unwavering support in advocating for Guard members' pay.

Uninterrupted pay is not merely a logistical issue; it is a matter of principle. The resolution seeks the same reliability from national leadership that Texas Guard members consistently provide during disasters, border missions, and overseas deployments. The repetitive refrain among NGAT members remains clear: "Our service members are not negotiable for pay."

THE CASE FOR PERMANENT STATE TUITION ASSISTANCE: INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

In addition to pay stability, the committee spotlighted a newly proposed resolution advocating for the STA to be enshrined as a statutory entitlement in Texas. The STA program has demonstrated its profound impact, enabling Guard members to pursue vital educational opportunities that bolster both individual careers and the overall readiness of the force. With demand at an all-time high, thousands of requests for support have illustrated the program's value.

Yet, the fragility of the program became glaringly apparent during the turbulent 2025 state budget cycle, where initial proposals sought to eliminate funding altogether. In a testament to the power of advocacy, public sentiment and legislative efforts subsequently restored and even enhanced support. However, this troubling incident revealed a broader trend; without statutory protections, educational benefits could be threatened in future budget negotiations.

Transforming STA into a permanent entitlement would provide much-needed stability and protect against arbitrary cuts, serving as an essential tool for recruiting and retaining talent in the Texas National Guard for generations to come.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

The resolutions put forth at this year's conference reflect NGAT's unwavering commitment to convert real-world challenges into tangible actions. The lessons learned from the 2025 government shutdown have made it abundantly clear: the rights and benefits of our Guard members should never be treated as political bargaining chips. Equally important is the understanding that investing in education through STA is a fundamental necessity for cultivating a skilled and dedicated force.

As NGAT pursues these critical resolutions, collaboration with the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) and Texas lawmakers remains integral. The road to securing uninterrupted pay and permanent STA will be challenging, yet the bedrock of this advocacy lies in the personal stories and steadfast unity of the members who tirelessly serve.

To all members: Your experiences and insights will continue to fuel this essential work. If you're eager to contribute your perspective, reach out to the Resolutions Committee at resolutions@ngat.org. Together, we can ensure that the Texas National Guard remains a resilient force, supported as steadfastly as it serves our state and nation. ★



NGAT CONFERENCE WINNERS

From creative finds to all-out hustle, y'all showed up and made it something special. Thank you to everyone who jumped in and played along. That's what this conference is all about...connecting, competing, and having a little fun along the way. Already looking forward to next year!

Golf Tournament Winners

1st Place: "Par-Timers" were also the Stars and Stripes winner for being the top All Military Team. On behalf of the NGAT Educational Foundation, their team won \$400.



Pictured L-R: James Bush, David Holland, Johnnie Felps and Bill Richards

2nd Place:
Cliff Burgoyne
John Cody

3rd Place:
Paul Tate
Frank Snyder
Curtis Schneider
Aaron Clark

Closest to the Pin & Longest Drive: Johnnie Felps

The golf tournament raised \$270 additional funds for the NGAT Educational Foundation.

Hospitality Room Winner



Congratulations to the **Audie L. Murphy Chapter** of the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Association on yet another win as the Best NGAT Conference Hospitality Room. Their pirate-themed room was a huge hit with conference attendees.

Best Warrior



Maj Gen Thomas Suelzer (center), The Adjutant General of Texas, presents the Texas Military Department Adjutant General's Trophy to **MG Monie Ullis** (right) and **CSM Jose Escobedo** for the Texas Army National Guard's victory at this year's Best Warrior Competition.

Silent Auction



This year the NGAT Silent Auction featured an abundance of new donations and raised **\$5,200** for the Texas National Guard Foundation. Thank you to everyone who donated and everyone who bid on items.

Fun Run Winners

Men's Category:

1st Place: Lee Buckley
2nd Place: Matthew Moore
3rd Place: Milton Gutierrez

Women's Category:

1st Place: Donna Balderston
2nd Place: Sylvia Newby





2026-27 NGAT CORPORATE PARTNERS

PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



CORPORATE SPONSORS



ALLEVIATE, LLC



NON-PROFIT SPONSORS

Cup & Flower Foundation
Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)
Grand Canyon University

Herzing University
HTX Labs
Jewish War Veterans
Liberty University

Purdue University Global (Kaplan)
Texas State University
Texas Veterans Commission



(Photos by SFC (Ret) Chris Evans)

NGAT CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



The NGAT Board of Directors poses for photo with CSM (Ret) Donna Baldrston (center) following her selection as the 2026 NGAT Minuteman recipient.



NGAT members hold their glasses up to cheer another successful NGAT Conference wine tasting event.



LTC (Ret) Westly West, NGAT Educational Foundation (NGATEF) Board of Trustees call out the names of the 2026 NGATEF scholarship winners at the 2026 NGAT Conference General Session.



Brig Gen Andrew J. Camacho, Deputy Adjutant General—Air, (left) participates in a mentoring session during the NGAT Conference.



CH (MAJ) Milton Gutierrez conducts chapel services at the close of the NGAT Conference.



NGAT Board members left to right SFC Julie Perez, MSG Tielow-Taneesha Henson, SFC Mireya Cruz (former NGAT President) , MSgt Angela Matthews and SFC Michelle Auyer (kneeling) pose for a photo to complete a portion of the welcome party scavenger hunt challenge.



Catching up with old friends and making new friends are the primary benefit of the NGAT Hospitality rooms at the NGAT Conference.



MAJ Joseph Garcia (center) addresses the NGAT Board of Directors and conference attendees during the 67th Annual NGAT Conference.



SMSgt (Ret) Rick Newby (right) won this 50" Smart TV during the exhibit hall passport drawing and generously gifted it to the lowest-ranking airman attending the awards dinner, SSgt April Ruiz. Congratulations to SSgt Ruiz on her new TV!



The NGAT Welcome party featured the music of Daniel Lopez Y Aventura which played a combination of Tejano, country, oldies and pop music during the NGAT Welcome party.



Getting in that group shot for the welcome party scavenger hunt at the NGAT Conference.



LEGAL UPDATE with Doug O'Connell

WHAT SERVICE MEMBERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE SERVICE MEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT

THE SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT (SCRA)—originally passed in 1940 as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act and significantly updated in 2003—remains one of the most important legal protections for America's military members. Its purpose is simple: to shield active-duty service members and their families from certain financial and civil burdens so they can focus on the mission without stateside distractions. The law applies to all active-duty members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Space Force, as well as Reservists and National Guard members serving on qualifying federal active-duty orders. In many cases, protections also extend to spouses and dependents.

One of the SCRA's most widely used benefits is the 6 percent interest-rate cap. Any debt incurred before entering active duty—including credit cards, car loans, student loans, and mortgages—must have its interest rate reduced to no more than 6 percent per year for the duration of active service (and sometimes beyond). Creditors cannot charge higher rates or add fees that effectively increase the cost. To trigger this protection, service members must send written notice and a copy of their active-duty orders to the lender.

Housing protections are equally critical. Landlords cannot evict a service member or their family without a court order if the monthly rent falls below an inflation-adjusted threshold (roughly \$9,000–\$10,000 in recent years; the exact figure updates annually). Service members who receive permanent change-of-station orders, deploy for 90 days or more, or separate from service can terminate residential or automobile leases early

without penalty. Foreclosure on a pre-service mortgage is also restricted: no sale or seizure can occur during active duty or for nine months afterward unless a court approves it.

The SCRA further provides relief in the courtroom. If military duties prevent attendance at a civil proceeding (divorce, child support, debt collection, etc.), service members can request a stay of proceedings for at least 90 days. Default judgments entered against a deployed member can often be reopened. The law does not apply to criminal cases.

To invoke these rights, service members should provide written notice with military orders to landlords, creditors, or courts. Many installations offer free legal assistance through the Armed Forces Legal Assistance Program or installation legal offices. Protections generally last for the period of active duty plus a short window afterward.

In short, the SCRA is a powerful tool designed to ease the unique stresses of military life. Every service member and family should familiarize themselves with it early—before financial or legal issues arise. When questions surface, consult your unit's legal assistance office promptly. Knowing and using these protections can prevent unnecessary hardship and let you serve with peace of mind. ★

Doug O'Connell is a retired TXARNG Colonel and lifetime member of NGAT. If you need help with a legal issue, contact O'Connell West, PLLC at 512-547-7265 or admin@OConnellWest.com.



O'CONNELL WEST, PLLC

Experienced. Dedicated. Ready to fight for YOU! Our team brings more than 150 years of combined military experience and over 125 years of combined legal experience.

Call us at 512-547-7265

OCONELLWEST.COM



THE BAT CRUISE IS BACK!

COME OUT, RELAX & RECONNECT
WITH FELLOW NGAT MEMBERS AND FRIENDS!

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2026
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

..... PLEASE ARRIVE BY 5:30 PM

NGAT BAT CRUISE TICKET PRICES

Ticket prices include the
sightseeing bat cruise and
complimentary beverages
and snacks.

Life Members	FREE
Life Member Guests	\$5
Annual Members	\$10
Annual Member Guests	\$15
Non-Members	\$20
Non-Member Guests	\$20



**REGISTER ONLINE BY
AUGUST 4, 2026**



**REGISTRATION & ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:**

<https://ngat.org/ngat-bat-cruise/>



**CAPITAL CRUISES AT THE HYATT REGENCY HOTEL
208 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX 78704**

★ **LET'S MAKE MEMORIES ON THE WATER!** ★

NGAT LIFE MEMBERS ARE FREE!

EVENT NO SHOWS WILL NOT BE REFUNDED.

NGAT REPRESENTED AT LEGION DE LAFAYETTE RECOGNITION CEREMONY

THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS (NGAT) was proudly represented by MSgt Angela Matthews, NGAT President-Elect, at a special recognition reception hosted by the National Guard Educational Foundation (NGEF) on March 21 in Washington, D.C. (<https://www.ngaus.org/newsroom/ngef-honors-another-13-major-contributors>)

The event honored a new group of distinguished contributors to the Legion de Lafayette, a prestigious giving society recognizing individuals and organizations whose philanthropic support strengthens the mission of the NGEF. The foundation plays a critical role in preserving National Guard history, supporting educational initiatives, and advancing awareness of the Guard's enduring impact on our nation.

NGAT's participation in the Legion de Lafayette reflects a deliberate investment in telling the Texas National Guard story at the national level. The association contributed \$10,000 in support of a proposed special exhibit within the National Guard Memorial Museum's World War II gallery highlighting the 36th Infantry Division.

This exhibit concept, brought forward by MG (Ret) James K. "Red" Brown, will showcase the legacy, service, and sacrifice of the 36th Infantry Division—one of Texas's most storied units. NGAT's contribution helps ensure that the history of the "T-Patchers" is preserved and shared with a national audience for generations to come.

By supporting this effort through the Legion de Lafayette, NGAT is not only honoring the past but actively shaping how the National Guard story is told in the future. Members and supporters who contribute to the NGEF play a direct role in advancing projects like this — projects that preserve legacy, educate the public, and recognize the service of those who have worn the uniform. ★



MSGT ANGELA MATTHEWS (right), NGAT President-Elect, displays the Legion de Lafayette medal and certificate with **MG (Ret) James K. "Red" Brown**, former Commander of the 36th Infantry Division, during a special recognition reception hosted by the National Guard Educational Foundation (NGEF) on March 21 in Washington, D.C.



NGAT RELIEF FUND

The NGAT Relief Fund provides short-term, emergency financial assistance to currently serving and former members of the Texas Army and Texas Air National Guard – and their eligible dependents and surviving spouses – during times of financial hardship. Funded by the Texas Veterans Commission*, the program helps cover essential needs at no cost to the beneficiary. Assistance is subject to available funds and must comply with the Texas Veterans Commission grant requirements.



For the remainder of the grant year (ends August 31, 2026), NGAT is prioritizing first-time applicants to expand the program's reach and help more Guardsmen across Texas.



Scan the QR code to find out more about the NGAT Relief Fund or visit NGAT.org.

*This program is supported by a grant from the Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance. The Fund for Veterans' Assistance provides grants to organizations serving veterans and their families. For more information, visit www.tvc.texas.gov.



NGAT RELIEF FUND UPDATE

As of April 16, 2026



98
APPLICATIONS
APPROVED
across the state



\$195,170
AWARDED IN DIRECT
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
to help Guardsmen and their
families with critical needs.

2026 NGAT EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Congratulations To All Our Winners!

\$5,000



**NGAT EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP**
Emmagrace Olech
Daughter of Col Scott Olech

\$4,000



**NGAT EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP**
Gabriel Lorance
Son of SGM (Ret) Gerald Lorance

\$3,000



**NGAT EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP**
SGT Alexander Laux
Son of MG John Bowlin

\$2,000



**NGAT EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP**
Daniel Lorance
Son of SGM (Ret) Gerald Lorance

\$2,000



**BG (RET) HUGH J. HALL & FAMILY
LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP**
Madison Roberts
Daughter of SGM Amanda Roberts

\$1,500



**MG (RET) PATRICK HAMILTON
LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP**
Ainsley Perez-Greer
Daughter of SFC Julie Perez

\$1,500



**AMERICAN MILITARY UNIVERSITY
SCHOLARSHIP**
Camryn Leslie
Daughter of Col (Ret) Kurt Leslie

\$1,250



**MG (RET) GLORIA JENELL & MARLIN
E. MOTE ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**
PVT Yves Shkolnikov
Texas State Guard

\$1,000



TXNG RETIREES ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP
Sitara Arakere
Daughter of Capt Chaitra Arakere

\$1,000



USAA SCHOLARSHIP
Jonathan Piri
Son of CW4 Andrew Piri

\$1,000



**MG (RET) JAMES K. "RED" BROWN
LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP**
Kirsten Foushee
Daughter of CW2 (Ret) Audrey Foushee

\$1,000



NGAT PAST PRESIDENTS SCHOLARSHIP
SSgt April Ruiz
147th Attack Wing

\$1,000



**MG (RET) CHARLES K. ARIS
LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP**
Jack Farr
Son of COL (Ret) David Farr

\$1,000



**MG (RET) WILLIAM C. WILSON
HONORARY SCHOLARSHIP**
Sarah Stillinger
Daughter of LTC (Ret)
Randell Stillinger

\$1,000



**COL (RET) STANLEY A. & SHERRY
MURRELL LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP**
SGT Bobby Williams
Recruiting and Retention Command, Region 3

\$1,000



**COL (RET) RICHARD E. HARRISON
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**
Blake Gibson
Son of LTC Mark Gibson,
Texas State Guard

BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

(Photos courtesy of the Texas Army National Guard)



THE 2026 TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION took place at Camp Swift in Bastrop, Texas, where 27 competitors from the Army, Air Force, Chile, Czech Republic and Egypt showcased their talents through testing during a demanding 72-hour test of endurance, technical proficiency, leadership and physical skills.

This multi-day event is designed to identify the most capable Soldiers and Airmen in the Texas National Guard. Competitors are hand-selected from Texas' 24,000 Guardsmen and represent their respective units within the Texas Army National Guard and Texas Air National Guard. The competition evaluates participants through a variety of scored events, including:

- Oral knowledge exam boards
- Tactical road marches and ruck marches (up to 12 miles with weighted packs)
- Obstacle courses and Army Combat Fitness Tests (ACFT)
- Day and nighttime land navigation courses
- Live-fire exercises and warrior-task challenges
- A "mystery event" announced on the day of the competition

These events are designed to push competitors to their physical and mental limits, simulating real-world operational challenges and ensuring that winners are highly skilled and versatile.

Chile's strong showing at the 2026 Texas Best Warrior Competition offered more than a demonstration of tactical skill — it highlighted the spirit of partnership, professionalism, and camaraderie that defines military cooperation under the State Partnership Program (SPP).

At the center of that success was Chilean Air Force Airman First Class Felipe Uribe, who earned the title of Overall Best Warrior after excelling across multiple disciplines, including land navigation, weapons, communications, and endurance events.

Winners of the Texas Best Warrior Competition are honored at a formal banquet and earn the opportunity to represent Texas in regional and national Best Warrior competitions later in the year.

This year's winners are as below:



**Chilean Air Force Airmen
First Class
Felipe Uribe
Overall Best Warrior**



**SGT Macie J. Ludwiczek
454th EN CO
TX Army National Guard NCO
of the Year**



**SPC Michael K. Conrad
1-143rd Inf (A)
TX Army National Guard
Soldier of the Year**



**SSgt Cliff Hayes
147th ASOS
TX Air National Guard NCO
of the Year**

The Texas Army National Guard NCO of the Year was not able to attend Regionals so SSG Abraham Allison of the 1-124th CAV will represent Texas. Also Chilean A1C Felipe Uribe was ineligible to participate at the regional level. ★



FORMER NGAT EMPLOYEE BECOMES A FIREFIGHTER

NGAT PROUDLY CONGRATULATES CPT ADRIENNE WILLIAMS on her graduation from the Travis County ESD #2 Firefighter Academy on April 25, 2026.

Adrienne served as an Administrative Assistant at NGAT from November 2021 through August 2025. During the academy's intensive seven-month program, cadets transition from civilians to state-certified firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians.

Adrienne is pictured with her brother and NGAT Life Member, **CPT (Ret) Caleb Williams**, as she celebrates this outstanding achievement and the beginning of her career in fire and emergency services. ★



AUTHENTICALLYAMERICAN.US

**VETERAN Owned.
AMERICAN Made.**

Personalized **Apparel**
for your Business,
Organization, or
Non-Profit.

(at-cost pricing available
for all non-profits)



Cherry Stovall

Regional Government Account Representative
cherry_stovall@bcbstx.com
972-766-4459
Supporting Illinois, Montana, New Mexico,
Oklahoma and Texas

**WE CAN BE
BY YOUR SIDE.**



FEP Dental™

FEP Vision™

bcbstxepdental.com

bcbstxepvision.com

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, as Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.



**CTU PROUDLY SUPPORTS
THE NATIONAL GUARD
ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS.**

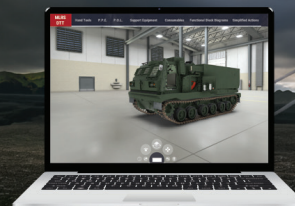
Thank you for being the voice of the Texas
National Guard and its members.

Learn about your military benefits.

coloradotech.edu/military
(855) 230-0555

 **Colorado Technical University**

DiSTI



**VIRTUAL TRAINING SOLUTIONS
FOR WARFIGHTER READINESS**

WWW.DISTI.COM

**Custom Specialty
Mobile Command Centers**



**Mobilize
Your Mission**

ktsv.com
800-521-9701



**Sean J. Noumi,
GySgt, USMC Ret.**

Military Recruiting Strategist
SeanNoumi@Parker.edu

2540 Walnut Hill Lane
Dallas, Texas 75229

CELL 719.337.1944

Parker.edu

[f](https://www.facebook.com/ParkerUniversity) [in](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ParkerUniversity) ParkerUniversity [X](https://twitter.com/ParkerUniv) @ParkerUniv

INDY 2026: NGAUS RETURNS TO THE RACING CAPITAL

AFTER A 25-YEAR ABSENCE, the National Guard Association of the United States is heading back to Indianapolis for the 148th General Conference & Exhibition, promising a blend of serious policy work, professional development and classic Hoosier hospitality. The “Racing Capital of the World” will serve as the backdrop as Guard officers, industry leaders and lawmakers converge to shape the future of the force and celebrate its legacy.

The conference will feature a full slate of business sessions, keynote addresses and breakout discussions focused on modernization, readiness, personnel policy and emerging threats. Attendees can expect updates from senior Pentagon and National Guard leaders, along with indepth looks at equipment, training and legislative priorities that will define the Guard’s role in the coming decade. The exhibition floor will again be a major draw, showcasing the latest in ground vehicles, aviation, cyber, communications and soldier systems from longtime partners and innovative new vendors.

But Indy 2026 is designed to be more than meetings and briefings. The host city is leaning into its identity as home of “The Greatest



Spectacle in Racing,” with planned social events that highlight the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, downtown entertainment districts and local cuisine. Networking receptions, fun runs, spouse and family activities, and state association gatherings will give attendees plenty of chances to reconnect with old friends and build new relationships.

For many, the return to Indianapolis is both nostalgic and symbolic — a reminder of how far the Guard has come since NGAUS last met there, and how central the association remains to its future. Indy 2026 aims to capture that energy: a conference that honors tradition, tackles today’s challenges headon and accelerates toward what’s next.

Texas delegates will be staying at the Courtyard Indianapolis Downtown where the nightly hotel rate will be \$140 plus taxes. To get the discounted rate you must reserve your hotel room no later than July 3, 2026. Registration is now open at www.ngat.org/ngaus-conference/. We hope to see you there! ★

MARK YOUR CALENDER
Aug 28-31, 2026 – Indianapolis, IN

NGAUS ESTABLISHING RETIRED/SEPARATED TASK FORCE

THE TWO RETIRED/SEPARATED REPRESENTATIVES ON THE NGAUS BOARD OF DIRECTORS unveiled the working concept to establish a new association task force at the retired/separated virtual meeting.

The NGAUS Retired/Separated Caucus Task Force would mobilize skilled and experienced members out of uniform to help strengthen association advocacy and its influence on issues related to the current force as well as retirees. Maj Gen (Ret) April Vogel and BG (Ret) Mike Oster told those online that the task force would help turn more retirees into advocates, mentors, educators and storytellers.

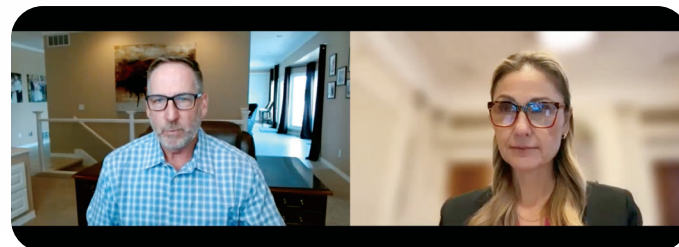
The working concept is for the task force to have four focus areas or “pillars”: Health Care & Benefits Security, Retirement Equity & Transition, Force Relevance & Guard Future, and Advocacy, Membership & Influence. For example, the Retirement Equity & Transition pillar would focus on 20-year parity, tax treatment of retirement pay, benefit gaps compared to active-duty service members and transition support.

The task force would be chaired by one retiree with each panel having a working group of five to seven members selected for their expertise, networks and willingness to actively engage, Oster explained.

Ultimately, the task force would create a Guard Voice Network that would engage civic organizations, contribute to local media and elevate real-world narratives that reinforce NGAUS priorities.

Another goal is to activate more retirees to strengthen employer relationships, support Guard-friendly policies and enhance local understanding of the Guard’s role and value.

The task force will also be a topic of conversation at the Retired/Separated Caucus Lunch at the 148th General Conference & Exhibition, Aug. 28-31 in Indianapolis. It is set for Aug. 30 in the Indiana War Memorial.



A recording of the virtual meeting can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCRW7PsnkPI>. ★

EANGUS ANNUAL CONFERENCE TAKES PLACE IN DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA

THE ENLISTED ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES (EANGUS) is proud to officially announce the 55th EANGUS & Auxiliary Annual Conference & Expo, taking place July 31-August 3, 2026, in beautiful Daytona Beach, Florida, at the Ocean Center.

Each year, the EANGUS National Conference serves as the premier gathering of enlisted National Guard members, retirees, families, and industry partners from across all 54 states and territories. This year's event promises to deliver a powerful combination of professional development, legislative engagement, organizational business, and meaningful connection across our force.

WHY THIS CONFERENCE MATTERS

The annual conference is where the business of EANGUS happens. Delegates from across the nation come together to shape the future of the Association, discuss and vote on resolutions, and engage directly with senior military leaders and policymakers. It is also an opportunity to strengthen relationships, share best practices, and ensure the enlisted voice remains strong at every level.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Attendees can look forward to a full and engaging schedule of events, including:

- National Business Sessions and delegate voting
- Area Caucuses and committee engagement
- Professional Development sessions for enlisted leaders
- A dynamic Expo Hall featuring corporate partners and resources
- Special events such as the Golf Tournament and Fitness Challenge
- Evening networking events including:
- Welcome Night
- Junior Enlisted Night (E-6 and below)
- All-Area Hospitality Night
- The closing dinner, "The Final Lap," held at the iconic Daytona Beach Bandshell



From sunrise fitness events to evening camaraderie, the conference provides something for every member of the EANGUS family.

CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE & ATTIRE

In recognition of the Florida summer climate, this year's conference will emphasize

professional yet comfortable business-casual attire during daytime sessions.

Attendees are encouraged to participate in themed days, including:

- Rep Your State
- Patriotic Day
- Sports Theme Day
- EANGUS/Component Pride Day

Evening events will remain relaxed, while the closing dinner will feature an updated "Island Formal" attire—blending professionalism with the coastal setting for a memorable beachside experience.

REGISTRATION: Available now with tiered pricing based on registration date

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS: Hilton Ocean Front Resort (conference rate available before and after the event)

The success of EANGUS is driven by engaged members. Your participation at the national conference directly contributes to the strength of our advocacy, the development of our leaders, and the future of our Association.

Daytona Beach provides the perfect backdrop for this year's conference — offering not only a productive environment for meetings and development, but also an opportunity to relax, recharge, and connect with fellow members of the National Guard community. ★

POND

3500 Parkway Lane, Suite 500
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

Craig Rezac, Assoc. AIA, Col (Ret)
National Guard Client Lead
M 309.264.5269 | craig.rezac@pondco.com

Gary Kerr, PMP, EIT, CEM, GGP, Lt Col (Ret)
National Guard Program Manager
M 770-823-0488 | kerrg@pondco.com

Engineering | Architecture | Planning | Construction Management pondco.com
We earn the trust that sets us apart.



WGU SALUTES THE TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD

SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

This scholarship is established by WGU to honor the commitment and service of Army and Air National Guard members, recognizing their contributions to their communities and their dedication to public service across the country.

\$4,000

Valued at up to

WGU GUARDING OUR NATION SCHOLARSHIP

This special scholarship assists recipients with \$4,000 in scholarship funds, awarded at \$1,000 per six-month term for up to four terms.



Learn more

wgu.edu/military
866.225.5948



Alexiss T.

M.S., Cybersecurity & Information Assurance
Army National Guard





TAPS

As of May 15, 2026

CPT Julie Attaway, Life Member #27741, Georgetown

Mr. Joe Carrizales, Life Member #22777, Gonzales

COL (CH) (Ret) H. Farrar Bentley, Life Member #32099, Nacogdoches

Mr. Charles D. Davis, Life Member #2035, Arizona

**** PFC Uelion Davis**, HHC 636th MI Bn, Houston

SGM (Ret) Morgan “Andy” Delcuze, Life Member #4442, Mason

Brig Gen (Ret) Reese L. Harrison, Life Member #25197, San Antonio

SPC (Ret) Gilbert H. Kubis, Life Member #10441, Gainesville

SSG (Ret) Carroll D. Le Blanc, Life Member #23645, Port Arthur

SFC (Ret) Orvin Lee, Killeen

*** SPC Jonathan Lightfoot**, Midland

LTC (Ret) Albert Lowman, Life Member #16262, San Marcos

Mr. Theo R. McPhail Jr., Life Member #4067, Irving

**** SPC Nathan Moreno**, 197th STSC, Converse

Mr John Moss Jr., Childress

**** SPC Odunayo Onabanjo**, Co D 1-149th Avn Rgmt, Houston

MSG (Ret) Robert Polley, Life Member #11172, Scurry

**** PFC Dhruva Rana**, A Co 136th ESB, El Paso

SFC (Ret) Willie T. Rios Jr., Life Member #3258, Houston

LTC (Ret) Millard Craig Rushing, Life Member #18851, Lampasas

SGT (Ret) Robert Schliesing, Life Member #1700, Schertz

SSG (Ret) Freddie M. Siebenthal, Life Member #9843, Honey Grove

CSM (Ret) Joseph Talbot, Life Member #11177, Pearland

MSgt (Ret) Rodney L. Tanner, Life Member #3012, Houston

SFC (Ret) Gilbert G. Vasquez, Life Member #5129, San Antonio

CW2 (Ret) Sampson Connell, Life Member #3953, Round Rock

CW4 (Ret) Ollie T. Wilburn, Life Member #8314, San Antonio

Mr. Lavaughn Wingate, Azle

** Had NGAT Life Insurance Policy*

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



*** COL (Ret) Francisco “Frank” Zuniga**, Life Member #31958, Bastrop, 2013 NGAT Minuteman Recipient



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.



National Guard Association of Texas
3706 Crawford Avenue
Austin, Texas 78731-6308

PERIODICAL

ngat.org

TEXAS PARATROOPERS
1 Bn/133FA/71 Abn Bde
REUNION
AIRBORNE

BROTHERS ★ HONOR ★ SERVICE ★ AIRBORNE

AUGUST 15, 2026

RIKENJAKS

358 N LHS DR
LUMBERTON, TX 77657

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT TOM HOGAN AT
tomc.h@yahoo.com

71st AIRBORNE
1906 1973
ALL TEXAN BDE

1st Bn 133rd FA FIEL
TXARNG
M101 105mm
TOWED

★ **COMMEMORATIVE BATTALION COIN** ★



NGAT PLANNING CALENDAR

(As of May 15, 2026)

2026

May 22-25	Memorial Day Observed (NGAT Office Closed)
Jun 14	U.S. Army Birthday/Flag Day
Jun 19	Juneteenth (NGAT Office Closed)
Jul 3-6	Independence Day Observed (NGAT Office Closed)
Jul 31-Aug 4	EANGUS Annual Conference, Daytona Beach, FL
Aug 6	NGAT Bat Cruise, Austin, TX
Aug 15	Texas Paratroopers Reunion, Lumberton, TX
Aug 23-24	NGAT Board of Directors Meeting, Austin, TX
Aug 28-Sep 1	NGAUS Annual Conference, Indianapolis, IN
Sep 4-7	Labor Day Observed (NGAT Office Closed)
Sep 11	Patriot Day
Oct 12	Columbus Day (NGAT Office Closed)
Oct 22-25	AFBA Eagle Meeting, Orlando, FL



TSgt Andrew Vasquez, aircrew flight equipment specialists, and **CMSgt Marcos Rodriguez**, security forces manager, both with the 149th Fighter Wing, savor the moment of the 149th Fighter Wing winning a team award after a combative tournament at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, May 12, 2026. Through combative training, airmen build techniques, skills, and lethal ability needed while serving. (Photo by AIC Jonathan Rasco)



MG (RET) JERRY D. ICENHOWER (pictured), former commander of the Texas State Guard was inducted into the U.S. Army Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame on March 27, 2026, at Fort Benning, Georgia, alongside the Honorable Daniel P. Driscoll, Secretary of the Army, and the Honorable David R. Fitzgerald, Under Secretary of the Army. The school recognizes graduates who have made significant contributions in both military and civilian roles since its establishment in 1958.