

INSIDE IMCOM

INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND NEWS

**PRIDE IN OWNERSHIP: CG
TOURS FORT HOOD BARRACKS**

**FORT BLISS NEW CG HOSTS
VIRTUAL COVID-19 TOWN HALL**

**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:
USAG OKINAWA COMMANDER**

OCT/NOV/DEC 2020
ISSUE 13



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Commander’s Corner.....3

Digital garrison mobile app: an Army enterprise solution.....4

AMC recognition of outstanding legal professionals.....4

Volunteer spotlight: USAG Okinawa commander plants seeds of volunteerism.....5

Service culture center: It’s fall and the start of a new year.....6

Inside thinking.....8

Video corner: IMCOM command video.....8

Passport Services Division moves to IMCOM.....9

Command group ICE card.....9

Hunting the good stuff: CG tours Fort Hood barracks, homes.....10

Who are you?.....12

Chaplains corner.....13

Hunting the good stuff: Fort Bliss new CG hosts virtual COVID-19 town hall.....14

IMCOM G9 FMWR town hall.....15

Teleworking across the enterprise.....16

What’s next?.....16

In case you missed it.....17

Inside IMCOM is a publication created by the IMCOM professional, for the IMCOM professional, to increase awareness of fellow team members and foster deeper relationships among the IMCOM workforce.

Inside IMCOM is part of our service culture. It is a venue to recognize our amazing staff, exchange useful lessons and best practices, share information with one another about the more interesting aspects of our work in our communities, and spark new ideas to inculcate our service culture and enhance our working environments.

We can’t do that without you! If you are assigned to IMCOM – whether a Soldier, contractor or civilian – you are an *Insider*. You have interesting information to share and we want to know about it.

Inside IMCOM depends on columns, commentaries, articles, letters and photos from you.

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Cover photo: Fort Bliss, Texas held a two-day community flu drive, Oct. 8-9, 2020, at the installation Main Exchange. Precautions such as new gloves for each patient have always been part of the flu drive process, but social distancing, masks and temperature checks are all new this year. Photo by Michelle Gordon, Fort Bliss Public Affairs

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COMMANDER'S CORNER

I’m glad you decided to open and read this holiday edition of *Inside IMCOM* - it’s full of information designed to add value to the lives of IMCOM professionals. Before I tell you about this issue, I want to wish you and your family, friends and loved ones a relaxing, enjoyable and safe holiday season.

Every member of our global team has been in a fight for nine long months, and whether your fighting position is in an IMCOM facility or at home teleworking, we have all definitely earned some R&R! I could not be prouder of your resiliency, determination, professionalism and ability to get things done in spite of COVID-19. I want you to spend your off time wisely; don’t let up on the vigilance required to protect yourself, so we can protect the force, so the force can protect the nation!

As an organization we also look forward to our annual Garrison Commander’s Conference Nov. 16-19. While I consider these leaders our center of gravity, I know the teams of professionals who back them up are a large part of their success. The GCC gives commanders a venue to exchange ideas and best practices, and get synched on key issues. I know this event, albeit virtual this year, will further strengthen our team and our Army.

In this issue of *Inside IMCOM*, our senior civilian, Randy Robinson, describes exciting new programs designed to help IMCOM professionals advance their careers and help their teammates do likewise.

Page 8 has links to the new and improved IMCOM Communication Toolkit and IMCOM Command video for your use, and page 15 highlights our HQ G8 team for their heroic work closing out FY20 as well as photos of our newly branded south lobby and elevator banks. For you HQ staff teleworkers, our building is getting quite a facelift; you’re going to be impressed when you return. This issue also highlights a leader who embodies our service culture (p5), an interview with one of our front leaders in housing services (p10), a story about a new IMCOM mission (p9), and much more.

Again, my sincere best wishes for a wonderful and healthy holiday season. Enjoy the season, but be smart. Look out for your buddy. We need everyone back and in the fight so we can attack 2021 like we did 2020!

People First - Winning Matters

LTG Douglas M. Gabram
 Commanding General
 U.S. Army Installation
 Management Command



Download the digital garrison app today!

Digital Garrison mobile app: An Army enterprise solution

By Sarah Luna, IMCOM Public Affairs

The Digital Garrison mobile app is a modern tool that serves as a one-stop shop for installation services. More than 57,000 members of the Army family have downloaded and are using the app since it launched on Aug. 11, 2020. Digital Garrison is a total win for the Army, saving thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of staff time while improving readiness. A common access card is not required for the free download on Google Play or Apple stores. Anyone who enters a garrison or uses installation services benefits from Digital Garrison.

Army leadership continues to drive the message of how Digital Garrison impacts readiness. IMCOM Commanding General LTG Doug Gabram tells us how.

“Digital Garrison is the first of its kind enterprise-wide mobile app that communicates to our entire force,” he said. “It is our weapon of choice for providing accurate and up-to-date information and connecting members of the Army community with a full array of installation services.”

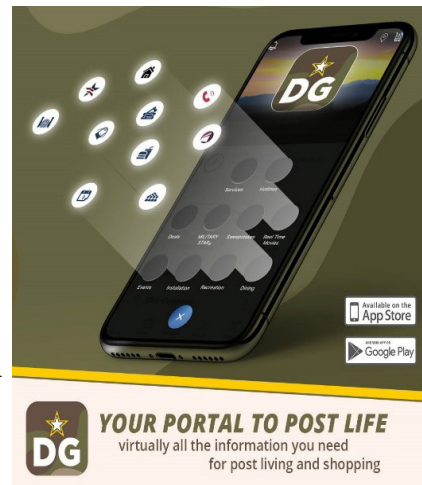
Leaders like LTG Gabram often refer to the communication capabilities such as push notifications for emergency situations and the announcements section that is ideal for command information. The information Digital Garrison provides improves the quality of life for Soldiers, Family members, Army civilians and Soldiers for Life (retirees and veterans) and all members of the Army community.

While the app is designed to automatically update from garrison public-facing websites in order to not increase manpower requirements by IMCOM personnel, updates won't be completely automatic until December. Until then, updates occur after manual review of data, usually within 24 hours. The Federal Information Security Modernization Act compliant Digital Garrison also meets or exceeds industry standards for similar apps in downloads, app utilization and ratings.

IMCOM appreciates the never-ending support of our Army and Air Force Exchange Service partner for the creation of Digital Garrison, maintenance and improvements. Defense Commissary Agency also contributes to the growing value of the app with CLICK2GO online ordering where curbside pickup is available. MWR keeps everyone up to date on events, activities and opportunities to explore.

Digital Garrison improves daily. Currently, 62 Army installations participate, with more garrisons added as they achieve technical requirements.

Upcoming features for Digital Garrison include location specific customization options, news, social media connections, ICE comments, appointment scheduling and more. Connections to the Army PCS Move app and ArmyMaintenance.com will further synergize readiness in the coming months.



AMC recognition of outstanding legal professionals

Brian Toland, AMC Command Counsel, recognized three IMCOM legal professionals for their outstanding contributions to AMC and the power of the patch over the last year. Maricela (Marcy) Harper won the Paralegal Excellence Award, Kari Lynn Crawford won the Edward J. Korte Preventive Law Award, and Josh T. Randolph won the Vincent J. Faggioli Achievement Award. LTG Douglas Gabram also recognized the awardees in an MS Teams ceremony (see right).



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

USAG Okinawa garrison commander plants seeds of volunteerism

By Winifred Brow, USAG Okinawa Public Affairs

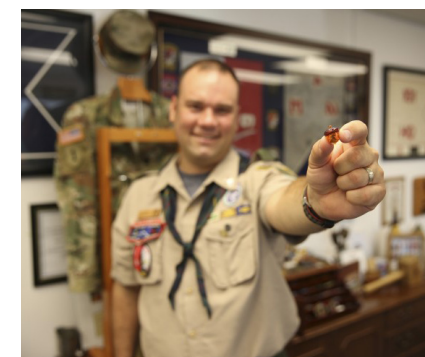
LTC Joel Gleason gets a little sheepish when he talks about the acorn he carries in his pocket, and he is quick to explain.

“I’ve always got an acorn on me, and the reason is this: A lot of what I do here involves planting something that I’m not going to get to see finished,” said Gleason, the commander of U.S. Army Garrison Okinawa.

Gleason has made a point of volunteering extensively in the communities where he has been stationed, largely with the Boy Scouts of America, and he sees his job as garrison commander as an extension of that spirit of service. He hopes to inspire others to do the same.

“It’s like an oak tree,” Gleason said. “Oak trees are going to outlive you. If you plant an acorn, there’s something that’s going to last longer than you do. I would say that garrison command, scouting, a lot of what I try to do in my life, are the same, where I’m putting something in the ground that is going to last longer than me.”

Gleason is the Scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 101 in Okinawa, and as the father of four sons, it’s a role that comes naturally to him. Kipp, 16, is an Eagle Scout who continues to look for community volunteer projects; Colton, 13, is a Life Scout, the rank below Eagle Scout; and Cooper, 12, is a Second Class Scout on the trail to being a First Class Scout.



LTC Joel Gleason, commander of USAG Okinawa and Scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 101 in Okinawa, displays one of the acorns he carries in his pocket. Photo by U.S. Army

Gleason and his wife Trista also have a 3-year-old son who can join the Cub Scouts in kindergarten. Gleason also volunteers with his church, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers and other



LTC Joel Gleason, center, helps scouts from Troop 261 fill their water bottles at a reconstructed ancient fountain in Pompeii in July 2018. Photo by U.S. Army

organizations around the Army as needed.

Gleason said there are many reasons he and his family volunteer—and why they encourage others to do the same.

“If you need a hobby, nothing is going to be more fulfilling than something where you know at the end of the day you made the world a little bit better,” Gleason said.

Also, volunteering helps the family settle after every Army move, Gleason said.

“Whenever you volunteer, you have an instant social group that you’re with,” Gleason said. “We move every two years. If we don’t find ways to engage with the community as soon as we arrive, then that’s a pretty lonely life.”

In addition, serving as Scoutmaster also helps Gleason maintain a balance between work and life.

“Volunteering makes me a better leader, makes me a better Soldier; it makes me a better dad,” Gleason said. “It ensures that even if I have the busiest of weeks, I’m committed to hanging out with my kids one night a week.”

In addition, Gleason wants Soldiers to know that if he can find the time to volunteer, they can too. In fact, he knows many extremely busy Soldiers who make volunteering a priority.

Ultimately, Gleason said he sees volunteerism as exponentially helpful, like an oak tree creating many acorns.

Service Culture Center: It's fall and the start of a new year

By Mr. Randy Robinson, IMCOM Executive Deputy to the Commanding General



When we enter a new fiscal year I often reflect on where we have been, where we are, and where we are going. During this time, I also get to see and feel the beauty of fall—the color of changing leaves and cooler weather. Many things come to mind—the majority include the many accomplishments of our great IMCOM workforce. We (you) have accomplished many things—this is magnified knowing we have accomplished them in the challenging COVID-19 environment.

Two specific areas come to mind which are key to IMCOM's success now and into the future. IMCOM's Service Culture and Talent Management. This month I held a virtual Supervisor Town Hall to discuss these two topics which I want to share with you.

The key to IMCOM's service culture is engaged and caring leadership. In previous DEOMI surveys, some of our employees have commented on the desire for their supervisors to be more involved in communication and in their professional de-

velopment. When promulgated as part of our ethos, IMCOM's Service Culture helps get after this. Remember perceptions are reality. When we all understand this, we will move forward to the next level. Operation Excellence (OPEX) is IMCOM's approved enterprise customer service training program to instill IMCOM's Service Culture principles throughout the IMCOM workforce. OPEX derives from our Service Culture foundations of engaged leaders/employees, effective communication, fair recognition and organizational pride/identity.

Our service culture components, as depicted in the below diagram, are becoming ingrained in the culture of the organization. We realize these principles require sustained and long-term commitment and periodic evaluation and adjustment.



We are launching a campaign to educate and reinforce the principles of our Service Culture within IMCOM HQs. On 23 October, an email was sent out soliciting nominations for facilitators to

be trained and assist with this campaign. Some may note this was originally targeted for the GS 12-14 level; however, based on one employee's recommendation, this was expanded to include GS 11s—this one recommendation assists us in expanding training and developmental opportunities for IMCOM team members. The aforementioned training schedule is targeted for November through 2021. Each of us should be enthusiastic about continuing to improve ourselves and our organization. An OPORD clarifying the way ahead is forthcoming.

The second area I want to highlight is civilian talent management. The Army has robust training programs in support of civilian development—the key is ensuring all are aware of these opportunities. Our G-1 Talent Management team has done an exceptional job creating a chart that depicts civilian development by grade. (see next page). Carol Mitrising was able to link applicable Army webpages for these specific courses to the courses on the chart. THANK YOU, Carol! I encourage each of you to utilize this tool as you refine your Individual Development Plan (IDP) and discuss training opportunities and needs with your supervisor.

In addition to Army programs, IMCOM has training and development opportunities. The Emerging Enterprise Leader

(EEL) program is just one example. The EEL program provides formal leadership development opportunities for mid-grade GS 11-12 (and NAF equivalent) civilian employees, enterprise wide, who are competitively selected and developed. This program would not be possible without the GS 13-14 (and NAF equivalent) employees as operational contributors who serve as mentors and facilitators to the program.

In my listening sessions with employees, some have asked for additional training and developmental opportunities. We reestablished IMCOM's Mentoring

Program targeted for IMCOM HQs GS13-14/NAF05 employees. The program will run approximately 6 months and consist of 10 employees assigned a project/challenge and develop feasible solutions. Challenges will be real time, real world, and Army/IMCOM related. I will meet with the team(s) monthly for updates/progress reviews and will also lead mentoring and professional development discussions. The Service Culture facilitator training and mentoring programs offer additional developmental opportunities for the HQ team.

I look forward to continue

serving with each of you as we move forward in the new fiscal year. Let's make the most of it, forge a cohesive team, and capitalize on our lessons learned and many strengths.

I appreciate one of F. Scott Fitzgerald's lines in "The Great Gatsby," "Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall." Yes, it is fall, a new fiscal year, and restart. Together we will move forward to "deliver quality base support from the Strategic Support Area, enabling readiness for a globally responsive Army." Enjoy the beauty of fall! It's an honor to serve with you!

Civilian development by grade

| GS01-09 (and equivalent NAF/FWS/LN etc. pay band/scale*) | GS-11 (and equivalent NAF/FWS/LN etc. pay band/scale*) | GS-12 (and equivalent NAF/FWS/LN etc. pay band/scale*) | GS-13 (and equivalent NAF/FWS/LN etc. pay band/scale*) | GS-14 (and equivalent NAF/FWS/LN etc. pay band/scale*) | GS-15 (and equivalent NAF/FWS/LN etc. pay band/scale*) |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| | | | | | SETM Enterprise Placement Program (EPP) |
| | | | | | CPD: Senior Leader Seminar (SLS) |
| | | | | | CPD: Leadership for a Democratic Society at the Federal Executive Institute (FEI) |
| | | | | | White House Leader Development Program (WHLDP) |
| | | | | Army Senior Civilian Fellowship (ASCF) | |
| | | | | Senior Service College (SSC) | |
| | | | | Naval War College Senior Level Course | |
| | | | | Defense Senior Leader Development Program (DSLDP) | |
| | | | | Project-based SETM TDY | |
| | | | | CES Continuing Education for Senior Leaders (CESL) | |
| | | | | CPD: Harvard University Program for Senior Executive Fellows (SEF) | |
| | | | | CPD: Senior Manager Course (SMC) | |
| | | | | ETM TDY | |
| | | | | ETM Leadership Shadowing | |
| | | | | Command & General Staff Officer College (CGSOC) | |
| | | | | Naval War College Intermediate Level Course | |
| | | | | Executive Leader Development Program (ELDP) | |
| | | | | DoD Level Program | |
| | | | | Army Congressional Fellowship Program (ACFP) | |
| | | | | Emerging Enterprise Leader (EEL) Participants | |
| | | | | EEL Operational Contributor | |
| CES Basic Course (BC) - dL & Resident | CES Intermediate Course (IC) - dL & Resident | | | CES Advanced Course (AC) - dL & Resident | |
| | Defense Civilian Emerging Leader Program (DCELP) - GS07-12 | | | | |
| | | | | Organizational Leader Development Course (OLDC) - dL | |
| | | | | Manager Development Course (MDC) - dL | |
| | | | | Supervisor Development Course (SDC) - dL | |
| | | | | Action Officer Development Course (AODC) - dL | |
| | | | | CES Foundation Course (FC) - dL for ALL New Army Civilians | |
| | | | | HQDA Career Program training | |

Links for GS01-09 courses

HQDA civilian leadership system: <https://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace/amsc/courses>

HQDA civilian leadership development: <https://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace/amsc/courses>

HQDA competitive professional development: <https://actnow.army.mil/>

HQDA DoD developmental programs: <https://actnow.army.mil/>

HQDA senior enterprise talent management/enterprise talent management: <https://www.cslido.army.mil/>

HQ IMCOM emerging enterprise leaders: https://army.deps.mil/Army/commands/imcom_HQ4/G1/TMD/SitePages/tm.aspx

HQDA career program training: <https://actnow.army.mil/>

The chart can also be found on SharePoint at: https://army.deps.mil/Army/commands/imcom_HQ4/G1/TMD/tm-programs/IMCOM%20Civilian%20Development%20Plan_Chart_Oct20_wlinks.pdf

*NAF: Non-appropriated fund
FWS: Federal wage system
LN: local national

For additional assistance email: Usarmy.jbsa.imcom-hq.mbx.tmd-civilian.development@mail.mil

INSIDE THINKING

IMCOM Communication Toolkit recently updated

By Scott Malcom, IMCOM Public Affairs Director

The IMCOM Communication Toolkit is a guide to help IMCOM professionals at all levels define and explain important IMCOM topics. It clarifies terminology to set conditions for synchronized communications through FY 21.

Each section includes bullet comments that serve to educate as well as provide talking points. Use these to facilitate leader-to-led communications with IMCOM professionals and engage with community partners. This toolkit empowers you with information to help you remain nested with IMCOM and AMC priorities. The information will help you engage audiences to tell your important story. Feel free to pull slides from the toolkit for use in your own briefings and/or information products. The IMCOM Communication Toolkit is a living document, and you can always find the latest version here:

https://army.deps.mil/army/cmds/imcom_HQ/PAO/SitePages/Home.aspx

While the toolkit is effective for synchronizing communications across this complex and geographically dispersed command, it is not perfect, and our environment changes frequently. We hope you use it, and when you see something we can do better or data we can update, please provide that feedback to the IMCOM professionals on the last page.

People First - Winning Matters!



COMMITTED TO SERVICE | ENHANCING READINESS | FOUNDATION OF THE ARMY CULTURE



Video corner: IMCOM command video

The IMCOM command video also received an upgrade. The new and improved video is now available for download. Use the video in your content:

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/768599/us-army-imcom-command-video>



Passport Services Division moves to IMCOM

By Susan Merkner, IMCOM Public Affairs

Military members and their families needing passports and visas saw few changes at the Fort Belvoir, Virginia, passport office, following an administrative move Oct. 1.

Management of the Passport Services Division at Fort Belvoir officially passed from the Army Headquarters Services within the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army, U.S. Army Headquarters Services, Directorate of Executive Travel, to IMCOM.

None of the passport office's 31 civilian employees were relocated from Fort Belvoir to IMCOM headquarters, said Angela Johnston, chief, Passport Services Division at Fort Belvoir.

Army officials decided the office should remain at Fort Belvoir because of its proximity to Washington, D.C., where numerous military members require passports and visas for official travel. The office has a fleet of three vehicles that can deliver items to U.S. embassies and other federal buildings in the area.

In the first three quarters of fiscal year 2019, the Passport Services Division issued 137,344 passports and 25,534 visas for active-duty military and family members. The office also has been affected by the challenges of operating during the coronavirus pandemic and handling the summer surge of military members and families moving worldwide.

The transfer from HQDA to IMCOM is part of the Army's modernization and cost-effectiveness efforts.

In 2019, then-Army Secretary Mark Esper ordered an examination of the Passport Services Division and other Army operations to determine the most suitable placement for command and control in an effort to reduce the size of



Michael Stancil, support specialist with Fort Belvoir's Passport Services Division (right), helps Defense Logistics Agency employee John Sneed renew his DOD passport Sept. 30. Sneed is part of DLA's Rapid Deployment Team and must be ready to travel worldwide on short notice. Photo by Paul Lara

HQDA. The intent is to place authorities, responsibilities and resources at the lowest level of command competent and capable of managing them.

U.S. Army Materiel Command assumed control of the Passport Services Division and designated IMCOM to oversee the division's resources and personnel. The move synchronizes passport services functions with similar logistical and installation support activities under AMC in support of Army priorities.

Although the office's mission remains unchanged, the transfer required about a year's worth of coordination and administrative changes.

For more information, visit <https://passport-matters.army.mil/>.

Command group ICE card

The command group has their own ICE comment card for feedback from IMCOM professionals. Use the link or QR code to submit a comment:

<https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&sp=131023>



HUNTING THE GOOD STUFF

Pride in ownership: CG tours Fort Hood barracks, homes

By Brandy Cruz, Fort Hood Public Affairs



LTG Douglas Gabram, Installation Management Command commanding general, speaks with PFC Amber King of the 3rd Cavalry Regiment during a tour of her barracks at Fort Hood, Texas, Nov. 3. Photo by Brandy Cruz, Fort Hood Public Affairs

LTG Douglas Gabram, commanding general of Installation Management Command, toured housing and barracks at Fort Hood Nov. 3, and also thanked the workforce for their hard work during the pandemic.

“First off, it’s always a privilege to be back at the Great Place,” Gabram said. “It’s great to see Soldiers, it’s great to hear from Soldiers, it’s great to go through barracks.”

The IMCOM commander, who is in charge of Army installations worldwide, was given a tour of Fort Hood’s housing areas and barracks to see the improvements being made firsthand. He was also able to speak with Soldiers actually living

in newly renovated barracks to find out their perspective.

PFC Amber King, who moved into the recently renovated 3rd Cavalry Regiment barracks six months ago, said having her own private room and a kitchen was a huge upgrade from her former barracks. The newly-renovated barracks are apartment-style, with a kitchen and two bedrooms. Each bedroom has a twin bed, bedside table with lamp, a desk and chair. There is also a large walk-in closet with the ability to lock it from the outside to keep items more secure.

“It’s much better,” King said. “I like having my own room, instead of just a wall locker to divide

the space.”

Gabram said Army senior leaders’ No. 1 priority is to improve barracks worldwide. He added that they are currently working to provide the resources available to fix them.

“The good news is for our Army, our facility investment plan ... it’s a 10-year strategy,” he said. “Improvements to barracks and operational infrastructure at Fort Hood are a big part of that strategy.”

During the tour, Gabram was shown the interior of some older homes in McNair Village and Chaffee Village. Chris Albus, project manager for Fort Hood Family Housing, a Lendlease privatized military housing community, told the IMCOM commanding general that they are continuously making improvements to the homes on post.

“Frankly, I can’t say enough about the teamwork between the garrison, the installation, the senior commander, the chain-of-command and

our housing partner, Lendlease,” the general said following the tour.

“We have new plans and renovations in the next five to 10 years that are going to fix a lot of the issues.”

Gabram also took the time to thank garrison employees who provided significant contributions throughout the year, working tirelessly to provide the best service to the installation throughout the ongoing pandemic.

“You are still here, giving 110% and that means a lot,” the general told the garrison employees before presenting them with his challenge coin.

Gabram encouraged them all to continue doing great things across the installation because, when it comes down to it, this is their home, even if they live in the surrounding communities.

“This is our home and we have to take pride,” he added. “Pride in ownership.”



LTG Douglas Gabram, Installation Management Command commanding general, presents a challenge coin to Judy Johnson from the Directorate of Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation at Fort Hood, Texas, Nov. 3. Photo by Brandy Cruz, Fort Hood Public Affairs

WHO ARE YOU?

What is your name and title?

Michael Fancher, chief, DPW housing division at Aberdeen Proving Ground

How long have you worked at the housing office?

Since June of 2016. I love it here, the peer group is great. I was given a lot of good training my first year and Connie Glen, at IMCOM HQ G4, gave me awesome mentors.

What are your day-to-day operations?

Our office is primarily responsible for performing oversight and quality assurance of Corvias, our privatized housing partner. We make sure work orders are performed on time and to satisfaction, conduct inspections on life, health and safety concerns and perform home inspections before residents move in. We also provide oversight and quality assurance of our barracks and provide support to service members who live on and off post.

How has your division changed since COVID-19?

We have been mostly teleworking and meeting virtually. We are still conducting inspections while adhering to the CDC guidelines for PPE and social distancing. The APG residents have been very cooperative and understanding during the pandemic which we are very appreciative of. Our partnership with Corvias has remained strong throughout the pandemic. We really do have a great partnership here.

What is your favorite thing about your job?

When my office can help resolve an issue for a resident. My staff does a great job with this.

Where are you from?

Originally from Bethel, Connecticut. I moved to Maryland in 1997 and settled at APG in 2008.

What are some of your hobbies?

I am an avid golfer and hiker. I have golfed at some great courses in Florida and hiked the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia.

Who is your favorite football team?

NY Giants, University of Connecticut

If you won the lottery what would you do?

I would help out my family first, then I would buy a place in the Caribbean as a vacation spot.



Michael Fancher, chief, DPW housing division at Aberdeen Proving Ground
Courtesy photo

We want to get to know IMCOM professionals across the enterprise. Know a great professional? Email Brittany Nelson at Brittany.j.nelson2.naf@mail.mil

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

A cure for burnout

By IMCOM Chaplain (LTC) Loren B. Hutsell



Chaplain (LTC) Loren Hutsell

“He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.” – Isaiah 40:29

Once upon a time, there was a very strong woodcutter. He asked for a job in the timber market, and he got it. The pay and working conditions were great. The woodcutter was determined to do his best.

On his first day, the woodcutter's boss gave him an axe and showed him the area where he was to work. That day the woodcutter brought in 18 trees. His boss was very much impressed and said, “Congratulations, keep it up!”

Very motivated by his success, the woodcutter tried even harder the next day, but he could only bring in 15 trees. The third day he tried harder, but he only could bring in 10 trees. Despite his extraordinary efforts, day after day he brought in fewer and fewer trees.

“I must be losing my strength,” the woodcutter thought to himself. He went to his boss and apologized. He explained that he could not understand what was going on – why he was bringing in fewer trees.

“When was the last time you sharpened your axe?” his boss asked.

“Sharpen? I have no time to sharpen my axe. I have been very busy trying to cut trees,” the woodcutter replied.

The moral of this story, of course, is to recognize the importance of pausing from work to “sharpen your axe.” Symbolically, the phrase “sharpening your axe” represents attention to essential priorities which make us more effective in our workplace. One of the key priorities

for keeping us sharp at work is getting sufficient rest. When our lives are extremely busy we have to intermittently take our foot off the gas pedal, and pull over to replenish ourselves. If we fail to do this we are prone to become dull, ineffective and susceptible to burnout. None of us are immune. Self-care is a matter of resiliency. When we determine to make time in our schedules to pause and give priority to the Lord, family, rest and health, we're less susceptible to weariness and exhaustion.

Are you feeling burnout right now? Consider taking pauses in your week for restful or rejuvenating activities. A key action to consider is spending personal time of connection with God. As we take time throughout the week to pause for prayer and contemplation of God's Word, we are refreshed by God's help and strength. In Matthew 11:28, Jesus said, “Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” When we lay our burdens down before Christ, our souls find peace as we rely on his strength and compassion.

What are some ways this week that you can pause from the busyness of life to sharpen your axe?

Prayer: Almighty God, thank you that you take notice of the most personal details of our lives.

Thank you for your promises throughout your Word to give strength to the weary and power to the weak. Help each of us to remember to pause from the busyness of life to take time to rejuvenate our spirit, mind, and body. Restore and refresh us with your peace and renew us with your strength. Amen.



HUNTING THE GOOD STUFF

Fort Bliss new CG hosts virtual COVID-19 town hall

By Michelle Gordon, Fort Bliss Public Affairs

Three weeks after taking command of the 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss, Texas, MG Sean Bernabe hosted his first Fort Bliss COVID-19 live Facebook Town Hall, Oct. 22, 2020.

Although this was Bernabe's first town hall as the senior commander, it was the seventh one the Fort Bliss leadership has held since the novel coronavirus emerged in the United States earlier this year. He hosted the town hall to discuss the amended "Fort Bliss Come to Work Safe, Live Safe Order."

Bernabe said the intent of the amended order was to protect the health of the Fort Bliss community, while also supporting and remaining in sync with the latest emergency directive issued by Mayor Dee Margo of neighboring city, El Paso.

Joining Bernabe at the event were Fort Bliss Garrison Commander COL Stu James and William Beaumont Army Medical Center Commander COL Mike Oshiki, as well as subject matter experts from the Fort Bliss Directorate of Emergency Services; Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation; the Directorate of Human Resources, community housing partner Balfour Beatty Communities, and other leaders from throughout the installation.

The Fort Bliss community was encouraged to post their questions in the comment section of the town hall Facebook live feed, which was hosted on the Fort Bliss garrison Facebook page. Those questions, as well as the top questions routinely answered by the leadership, were addressed live during the 30-minute event.

The top topic was Soldier training – both locally on Fort Bliss and at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. Bernabe reminded the virtual audience that, despite the pandemic, training is essential to maintaining Soldier readiness for the wartime mission. He also highlighted some of the measures taking place to ensure it is conducted safely.

"As we send units to the National Training Center, we are testing every Soldier – making sure that they are not COVID-positive," he said. "Once they arrive there, they are actually in a protective bubble – isolated from outsiders."



COL Stu James, Fort Bliss garrison commander, thanks the Bliss community during their COVID-19 live Facebook town hall. Photo by Michelle Gordon, Fort Bliss public affairs

Referencing local training, Bernabe said commanders and command sergeants major are doing a "great job" enforcing physical distancing, face coverings, and hygiene and sanitization, which all contribute to the health and safety of the force.

Other topics discussed included: installation access, operational statuses of on-post gyms, restaurants, and religious services, enforcement of the amended Fort Bliss order, the process for renewing expired Department of Defense ID cards, as well as COVID-19 testing and contact tracing.

He thanked the Fort Bliss community and asked for their continued cooperation with the standards set in place to help flatten the curve – both on and off post.



MG Sean Bernabe hosted his first Fort Bliss COVID-19 Facebook Town Hall as the senior commander, Oct. 22, 2020. Photo by Michelle L. Gordon, USAG Fort Bliss Public Affairs Office

IMCOM HQ G9 FMWR town hall

By Susan Merkner, IMCOM Public Affairs

LaShawna Jordan of NAF Personnel Services (below) was honored as G9 Employee of the Year for fiscal year 2020 at the IMCOM G9 Town Hall meeting Oct. 29 via MS Teams.



James McIntyre of the Mission Support Office was named G9 Employee of the Quarter for the fourth quarter of FY 2020. Awards for outstanding performance and employment longevity also were presented.

Paul Burk, G9 Director, updated attendees on the current situation with COVID-19 and discussed priorities, key actions and upcoming events.

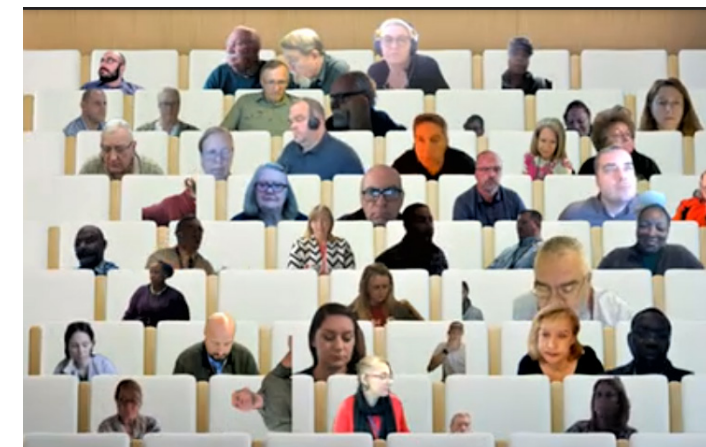
As of Oct. 26, 76% of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs/activities were open, many of them with modified program delivery. Mr. Burk said leaders are planning short-, mid- and long-term strategies to mitigate lost revenue.

G9 Employee Spotlights, accolades for recent COVID-19 response work, were presented to:

CYS employees Jacky Hingleton, Emily Murphy, Nanette Pigg, Susan Rowe and Theresa Sanders; the virtual AHHI team chiefs, Scott Copus, Veronica Gonzales, Donna McGrath, Jackie Nitsche and Chandra Upshaw; and the programs branch team.

Business and Recreation employees Tom Barclay, Sarah Galon, Christina Kruger, Ken Mathews, Krystyna Mrozek, John O'Sullivan and Misa Whiteford, for Above and Beyond Innovation.

Jim Lovell and Vic Spong from MSO for exceptional customer service assisting in the planning, tracking and management of the pandemic.



G9 town hall attendees

NAF Contracting employees Maria Assaf, Alicia Cox, Caitlin DeSantis, Matthew Lutes, Jessica Ruiz and Alexis Thomas and the Army Ten Miler Support team for the virtual race 2020, and for customer service in negotiating and terminating settlements, timely return of fees on cancelled events, and finding masks for AL and child care providers.

Marketing's Pierre Laxa, Ryan Magnuson and Ryan Stikeleather for customer service, innovation and creativity for COVID-19 emergency messaging on the digital signage platform and enterprise web, and for creatively engaging customers with virtual programming on social media to help keep MWR "top of mind" during social distancing.

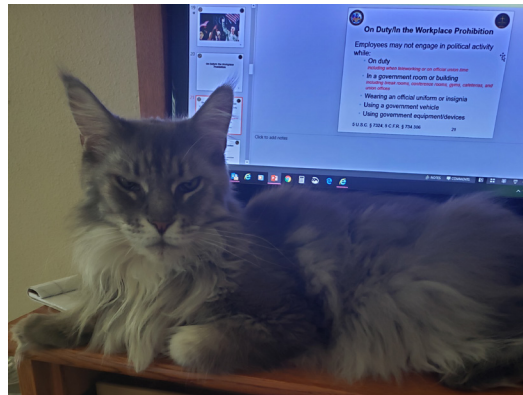
Length of service awards for the fourth quarter of FY 2020 were presented:

- 35 years: Marshall Copus, Denise Faison, Veronica Gonzales, David La Pradd
- 25 years: Bryan Hartsell, Karen Rosso
- 20 years: Haimanot Abbit, Maggie Dupree, Kelly Frank, Julie Kelley, Tae Bong Son
- 15 years: Edna Quinones
- 10 years: Jessica Jones, Warren Mason Jr., Karen Nichols, Marcia Smith
- 5 years: Naomi Wilkins

The next G9 town hall sessions are scheduled at 12:30 pm and 2 p.m. Dec. 16 via MS Teams.

Teleworking across the enterprise

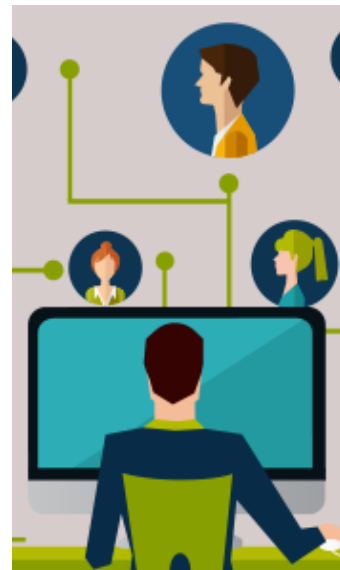
Thank you for your telework station submissions. Take a look at a few work areas of our fellow IMCOM professionals.



Leslie Sweeney, ready and resilient integration specialist, has her telework companion, Mars, to promptly remind her about lunch time every day. Photo by Leslie Sweeney



Diana Gilstrap, an HR tech/retirement specialist at Fort Carson, has a great view of the sunset while teleworking in Colorado. Photo by Diana Gilstrap



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

G8 close out of FY20

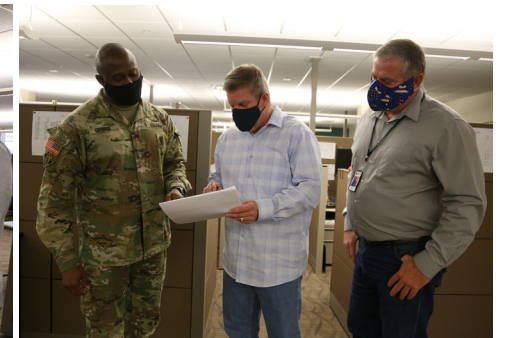
IMCOM HQ G8 successfully closed out the end of FY20. The folks at HQ were working toward completion in coordination with G8 staff worldwide. A special thank you goes out to G8 IMCOM professionals across the enterprise. Great work team! Photos by Brittany Nelson, IMCOM public affairs



Aurora Castaneda, G8 deputy director, looks over paperwork to close out the end of FY20 while enjoying one of the many snacks G8 brought.



(L to R) Mike Morthland takes notes while BG Omuso George, G8 director, discusses information with one of the many snacks G8 brought. Joseph Kaye and David Garza.



BG Omuso George speaks with Paul Minarovic and Bill Maner during the end of year close out at HQ IMCOM.

WHAT'S NEXT?

We want to see your “ugly” holiday sweaters!



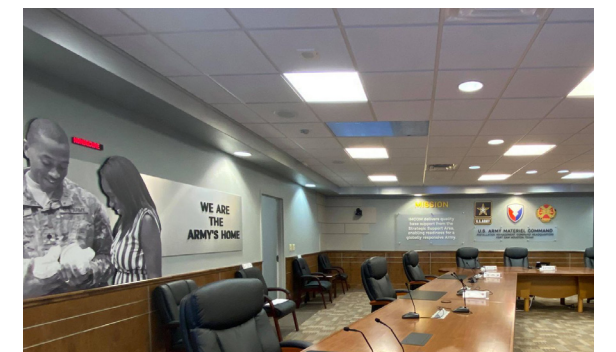
It's time to pull out, find or make your ugly holiday sweater. We want to see the best of the worst this holiday season. Noisy bells? Oodles of ornaments? Tinsel for days? We want them all! The more the merrier, there is no limit to this festive tradition. Email us photos of you in your holly jolly outfits to: brittany.j.nelson2.naf@mail.mil

HQ upgrades

The headquarters is currently getting rebranded. Check out these photos of the new south lobby, ops center, CCR and elevator banks. Photos by Brittany Nelson, IMCOM Public Affairs



Left: south lobby



Right: CCR



Left: OPs center



Right: 1st floor elevator bank