



# Connecticut GUARDIAN

*The Yankee Courier on page 13*

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## Civilian experience leads to unique opportunity, mission enhancement during pandemic

**Sgt. 1st Class Jordan Werme**  
130th Public Affairs Detachment

There's a common theme among reasons why United States Service Members choose to serve: they often want to make a difference. And in situations where the National Guard is called upon to assist their communities during times of crisis, it is the unique nature of the National Guard that allows its members to make that difference.

Because National Guard Service Members are also community members and often hold civilian jobs very different from their military careers, there are skill sets hidden within the force that can make any given mission that much more successful. Meet 1st Lt. Ashley Noel, 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

Noel began her military career a decade ago as a combat medic with the 192nd Engineer Battalion, an enlisted Soldier looking to make a difference as a medical professional. But when members of the 143rd CSSB were called upon to provide assistance during a pandemic, it wasn't her medical background that proved the difference maker.

As the 143rd is a logistics focused unit, it is often tasked with supply distribution during state emergencies. But in this particular case the mission involved managing a warehouse of more than 170 thousand square feet, coordinating civilian and military personnel, and providing life-saving personal protective equipment to first responders and hospitals. It required experience.

"My expertise is warehouse management and distribution," said Noel. "This is similar to what I do on the civilian side. So I was able to ease everyone into [the mission] due to the warehouse management aspect of it."

Noel has more than six years' experience in warehouse management, including two for a major online retailer, and currently does the same for a large plastics fabrication company in Connecticut.

"When we got here it was just a completely empty warehouse," said Noel. "We were starting from zero. Just establishing where we're going to put everything, how we're go-



*First Lt. Ashley Noel, 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, poses for a photograph. Noel is the Officer in Charge of a warehouse holding Department of Public Health personal protective gear and hospital equipment waiting to be distributed to hospitals, alternative care facilities, and first responders.*

ing to put it there, how we're going to inventory everything, how we're going to manage the system is kind of where I came into play."

The distribution mission began in late March, taking deliveries and building stock, and was running 24 hours a day with Soldiers and civilians working in shifts to ensure

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**Guardsmen and Militia Members:** Contact  
your chain of command or unit admin.

*Any further questions or concerns about the  
Connecticut Guardian, contact the editor  
directly.*

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# CTNG Cyber Team stands ready to assist with COVID-19 response

**Tim Koster**  
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

Whenever the population faces a crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, malignant actors stand ready to take advantage of the situation by feeding into people's fear to gain valuable personal identifiable information and banking and credit card data.

According to a recent FBI public service announcement, Google reported an average of more than 18 million COVID-19 scams and malware-related phishing attempts during the month of April. These were in addition to more than 240 million daily spam messages related to the coronavirus and economic stimulus checks.

Since the Connecticut National Guard was called upon by Governor Ned Lamont to assist with the state's response to the novel-coronavirus outbreak, Soldiers and Airmen from various military occupations have stepped forward to help their community, including the state's Defense Cyber Operations Element team.

Although the team has not been called upon to assist with any direct cyber-attack related to COVID-19, they continue to monitor and share trends they are seeing with other local, state, and federal agencies and disseminate appropriate information to help keep service members, their families, and the community safe from these digital attacks.

"The Defense Cyber Operations Element team, which is part of the Connecticut Army National Guard's [directoriate of information management], trains for this," said Maj. Ryan Miller, Connecticut National Guard Defense Cyber Operations Element team leader. "We would respond to any incident that the governor deemed appropriate and exceeded the state's ability to respond organically."

According to Miller, the biggest threat facing both service members and the public is phishing: a fraudulent attempt to gather information such as bank account numbers or passwords from people via emails masquerading as a reputable company or person.

"There's reported social engineering attempts ... personnel masquerading as either law enforcement or someone wearing [personal protective equipment] masquerading as medical support staff, perhaps in the community at large, offering some service related to COVID-19 but with nefarious intent," said Miller. "Perhaps they're selling bogus test kits or otherwise seeking donations for a public program that doesn't really exist."

As a government organization, the Connecticut National Guard is in a daily battle with these digital deviants who scan and probe its system. Part of the DCOE's mission is to analyze these attacks to look for trends and high-risk threats.

Miller said that there hasn't been a noticeable uptick in overall cyber-attacks but the criminal's branding has changed to take advantage of COVID-19. The best practice to avoid falling victim to one of these attacks it to apply some common sense and ask yourself if the request makes sense.

According to the FBI's 2019 Internet Crime Report, people in the United States lost more than \$57 million dol-



*Malignant actors try to take advantage of people during times of crisis. The best way to prevent falling victim to these predators is to remain vigilant and exercise appropriate preventative measures.*

lars to phishing scams. The reason these crimes are so effective is because the emails or text messages the criminals send look like they come from a trusted source, such as your bank, credit card company, app store, etc. and make a claim that they've noticed some suspicious activity on your account, that they require some personal information, or attach a fake invoice just to name a few. These messages will often contain links with the call-to-action which will bring you to a legitimate looking website and prompt you to enter the information the criminals are trying to steal.

"Instead of clicking any link or using any phone number contained within an email, exercise some prudence and judgement," said Miller. "Look up the purported name of the agency or entity using your search engine and make a phone call or send an email based off the contact information on their official webpage [to verify the legitimacy of the email]."

As with most things, maintaining the first-line of defense against these attacks is in the hands of the user. Here are some helpful hints to help you identify whether an email is a possible phishing attempt:

- 1. Legitimate companies will never ask for your sensitive information via email or text**

If you receive an unsolicited email or text message asking you to provide sensitive information such as bank account numbers, your social security

number, or password, it's most likely a scam.

- 2. They will use your real name**

Phishing attempts are generally blasted out in mass-quantity and will use a generic salutation such as "dear valued customer". Any business you regularly do business with will use your name and typically ask you to call them regarding your information.

- 3. Real companies will have domain emails**

Many scammers will do their research before sending an email and create an email account in the name of someone who is a legitimate employee of the company they're posing as. So don't simply look at the name of the person who is sending the email, look at their address, too. If the domain section of the address (the part after the @) doesn't match the company, it could be a scam.

- 4. Watch out for misspelled words**

Look out for poor grammar, strange sentences, and misspelled words. Emails from legitimate companies will be well written.



# CTNG in the Spanish-American War

**Brig Gen (CT-Ret) Robert Cody**  
Contributor

"I have the honor to request you provide from your state the quota of volunteers as follows: One regiment of infantry, 1 light battery, and two heavy batteries to serve in the arms of service designated, for the period of two years unless sooner discharged. The rendezvous for your state will be Niantic." Russell A. Alger, Secretary of War, April 28, 1898.

With this telegraph received by the Adjutant General, the Connecticut National Guard was poised to participate in the first major war with an overseas power, not contiguous to the U.S. and the U.S. Army was not ready. At the end of the 19th century, the Army and War Department reflected the old America. The Regular Army had small units scattered across the country and there was no perceived threat from a foreign power. Our national security strategy at the time emphasized maritime hostilities. The Navy was the first line of defense and the Army was relegated to coastal defense. Congress saw no need to give large sums of money to the Army. The feeling at the time was that rapid mobilization of the National Guard would make up for any shortfalls.

But the National Guard was in even worse shape. With numbers exceeding 100,000 men, the state militias were still under strength. The National Guard was also inadequately supplied. Units of the National Guard were still armed with the single shot, black powder Springfield rifles, while the Regular Army was using modern bolt action, magazine fed Krag-Jorgensen rifles.

The National Guard was also poorly trained and disciplined. Members of these units knew little more than the rudiments of close order drill. Weekly drills primarily consisted of parades and military balls. Summer encampments were a "jolly lark" and saw some

target practice and close order drill. Tactical training and marching with full gear over considerable distances was absent and would prove to be a serious shortcoming. Blame for these systemic shortcomings should be placed on the Regular Army for not having a program of supervision for the National Guard. It was understood that the Guard would provide the bulk of the necessary manpower in time of war. Another problem with the National Guard was concern over the legality of sending its units overseas. The National Guard of each state was under the control of the Governor, not the President. The United States at this time essentially had some forty-five separate armies.

The Connecticut National Guard provided close to 3,000 men for President McKinley's two calls for 50,000 volunteers from the country's National Guard regiments. Two regiments of infantry were organized and mustered into service in Niantic, Meriden and Danbury. Many young men falsified their ages to enlist. Some very irritated parents took the train to Niantic to retrieve their well intentioned, but naive sons.

After training at Niantic, the First Regiment had its companies distributed to many posts throughout New York and New England, while the Third Regiment was assigned to the Second Corps. This unit trained at Camp Meade, Pennsylvania and Savannah, Georgia, but was never deployed. The regiments were mustered out of service by March of 1899. The state also organized three batteries of artillery. These three units remained in the state until December 1898, when they were also mustered out. Although they did not leave the United States, the Connecticut units did sadly, experience 39 deaths from disease while in service to the United States.

*Brig Gen Cody retired from the CTARNG in 2014 and currently teaches 7th Grade US History in Stamford. He may be reached at [rmcody81@gmail.com](mailto:rmcody81@gmail.com) for comments or article recommendations.*



Members of the Connecticut Organized State Militia set up a mobile field hospital at Saint Francis Hospital in Hartford, Conn. March 24, 2020. (Photo by Tim Koster, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs)

## CT Militia Assists with COVID-19 Response

**1st Lt. Jeff Clark**  
**2nd Governor's Foot Guard**

Over the past month during the current Covid-19 pandemic, the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard has been hard at work supporting the Public Health needs of Connecticut.

In conjunction with the Connecticut National Guard, The Department of Public Health, and the New England Disaster Training Center, the Second company Governor's Foot Guard has been assisting in the set up of multiple 25 bed Mobile Field Hospitals (MFHs) throughout Connecticut, four to be exact.

The purpose of the four Mobile Field Hospitals is to provide our local hospitals with extra capacity for patient care during this Covid-19 pandemic. The MFHs come in multiple sections, including main structures, frames, flooring, HVAC, full electrical/lighting, annex shelters, a garage bay for ambulance access, and multiple entrances and exits.

The MFH units are transported by truck. To this day the four Mobile Field Hospitals have been deployed at Danbury Hospital, Saint Francis in Hartford, Middlesex Hospital, and Sharon Hospital.

"This is one of the most important missions completed by the State Militia in the modern era," said Capt. Joel Hurliman, Executive Officer of the Second Company

Governor's Foot Guard.

Since mid March, the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard has been put on State Active Duty and, in conjunction with elements of the First Company Governor's Horse Guard and elements of the First Company Governor's Foot Guard, have set up the MFHs state wide.

As an active military unit within the command of the Connecticut Military Department, the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard has been training for the past year for such a mission. In mid March, when the need for extra hospital capacity was evident, the Governor ordered the MFHs out. As a sworn and trained military unit, the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard deployed the Mobile Field Hospitals.

"We all worked very hard on the Mobile Field Hospitals. Some were very long days, but we don't do this for ourselves we do it for the State of Connecticut to help protect our citizens," said Staff Sgt. Michael Hedman, of Milford, Connecticut. "There is a sense of pride, honor, and loyalty, and it is now our duty. That is what keeps us going."

Each Mobile Field Hospital consists of a floor, two main tent bodies joined together in the middle, various annexes attachable to the main bodies, each annex is mission specific. Supporting all of this is full HVAC and electrical capacity, florescent lighting and outlets. The various units of the Governor's Guards tapped into the skills of every

member be it truck drivers, electrical, mechanics, paramedics, construction workers, every aspect of civilian life were called upon, volunteered, and contributed.

The Governor's Foot Guard has been known for its participation throughout Connecticut, marching in holiday parades, and patriotic events, highlighted by our scarlet uniforms and bearskin hats. Its membership is made up of your neighbors, friends, and fellow Connecticut citizens.

Major Richard K. Greenalch, Jr. 67th Commandant of the Second Company Governor's Guards said, "Elements of the Governor's Guards have been training since March of last year, learning how to deploy the Mobile Field Hospital Units. Although no one could have predicted the current Coronavirus pandemic, the Connecticut Military Department and the Department of Public Health demonstrated considerable foresight to entrust the Organized Militia with this important mission. And that trust was well-placed, for the Governor's Guards successfully completed its assigned mission, and by so doing, continued its history of 245 years of continuous service to the residents of Connecticut."

If you or someone you know are interested in more information, or membership opportunities, please go to <https://portal.ct.gov/MIL/Organization/Governors-Guards/2GFG/2GFG-Home-Page>, call (860) 508-3356, or email us at [2GFG.CTMD@mail.mil](mailto:2GFG.CTMD@mail.mil). No prior military experience is needed, and uniforms are provided.



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## ***COVID-19 Impact Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights***

During these challenging times, our nation's Guardsmen and Reservists are answering the call to duty to protect the health and well-being of all Americans. We owe a duty to them to ensure full compliance with the employment and reemployment rights of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA). The Veteran's Employment and Training Service (VETS) interprets and provides guidance on USERRA and investigates complaints filed under this law. VETS offers the following frequently asked questions and answers:

### **Does this factsheet create new USERRA rights and obligations in light of COVID-19?**

No. The statute and regulations still govern USERRA rights and obligations. This factsheet addresses some scenarios that might arise from the application of USERRA in the context of this pandemic.

### **Does a member of the National Guard or Reserves who is called to active duty in response to the COVID-19 emergency have employment and reemployment protections under USERRA?**

- Yes, if called to duty under federal authority. National Guard or Reserve duty under federal authority (such as Title 10 or Title 32) is covered by USERRA.
- National Guard duty under state authority, commonly referred to as State Active Duty, is not covered under USERRA. However, members of the National Guard serving on State Active Duty may have similar employment protections under state law and should contact the appropriate state office for assistance.
- Note that the authority under which orders are issued can change, even in the course of a service member's performance of service.

### **Can a service member be furloughed or laid off upon return from uniformed service?**

- Yes, if it is reasonably certain that he or she would have been furloughed or laid off had he or she not been absent for uniformed service.

# ESGR



## ESGR Statement of Support is the Cornerstone of Good Military-Employer Relations

**Thad Martin**  
Chair, Connecticut Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)

In September of 1793, President George Washington placed the cornerstone for the United States Capitol and, while just one of thousands of stones that went into the building's construction; it will forever retain a special significance.

For ESGR, the cornerstone of our employer support efforts is the Statement of Support Program. It also symbolizes an ESGR's end state of sorts – where employers support and value their employment of Reserve Component service members in the United States and its territories, strengthening our collective readiness.

The first Statement of Support was signed Dec. 13, 1972, in the Office of the Secretary of Defense by General Motors' Chairman of the Board Richard C. Gerstenberg. And in another milestone, President Richard Nixon was the first President to sign a Statement of Support.

The Statement of Support Program aims to increase employer support by encouraging employers to act as advocates for employee participation in the military. Building and maintaining a pool of supportive employers is critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the Nation's Guard and Reserve units.

The language of the Statement of Support is simple and straightforward:  
“We fully recognize, honor, and comply with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

We will provide our managers and supervisors with the tools they need to effectively manage employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.

We appreciate the values, leadership, and unique skills Service members bring to the

workforce and will encourage opportunities to hire Guardsmen, Reservists, and Veterans.

We will continually recognize and support our country's Service members and their families, in peace, in crises, and in war.”

Since 1972, hundreds of thousands of employers have signed Statements of Support, pledging their support to Guard and Reserve employees. In FY 2019, nearly 9,400 U.S. employers put pen to paper to demonstrate their commitment to our men and women in uniform.

If your employer goes above and beyond to support your military service, it's highly likely they'd sign a Statement of Support. Connecticut ESGR can assist in researching whether your organization has previously signed one, and, if not, in helping arrange a signing ceremony. ESGR also provides a commemorative Statement of Support plaque for the organization to display for all its employees, customers and visitors to see.

To learn more about ESGR's Statement of Support program or to arrange a signing event, please contact Volunteer Support Technician Ben Beaudry at (860) 524-4970 or Benjamin.A.Beaudry.ctr@mail.mil



## NOEL

Continued from Pg. 1

a smooth operation. Noel was installed as the Officer in Charge for first shift, with other qualified leaders performing the role during other shifts.

“When we were reviewing the in-processing paperwork for the Soldiers who came on for the mission,” said Capt. Ulrick Brice, 143rd CSSB, overall OIC for the mission, “we saw that she had warehouse management experience, so we knew we wanted her on board.”

“For any kind of operation like this,” said Noel, “any kind of distribution center, you need to have the foundation and fundamentals. Even though this is an extremely manual process, with my experience ... I was able to establish the foundation to what we have now, and now we’re just cruising through it.”

Managing the warehouse mission is not the only challenge Noel is facing during this period. Due to the impact of the pandemic on normal operations, Noel was unable to integrate into the CSSB under normal conditions. So when she was called in to help, it was to work with people she hadn’t yet had the opportunity to meet or work with before. Following her time with the 192nd, Noel was transferred to the 169th Aviation Battalion in early 2020 before another reassignment to the CSSB in March. Integrating into a new

unit as a leader can present its difficulties, but Noel was pleased with the transition.

“This is a great team with great leadership, and they made me feel comfortable immediately, so the transition has been easy,” she said.

Transition has been another common element during Noel’s military career. She initially enlisted as a medic, but then chose to transition to the officer corps and away from medical care into logistics.

“I think my plan was always to become an officer,” she said. “I completed my freshman year of college and then I joined the National Guard, served as a medic for five years before going to OCS. As an officer I can see that I can make more of a difference, and that’s why I wanted to make that transition.”

Noel’s path to service and career trajectory may be shared by countless other service members, but her ability to make a difference during this pandemic emergency is unique to the nature of the Guard.

“I think it’s important to know that not a lot of people do this and it is an extreme honor to be a part of it,” said Noel. “I think if anyone is interested in joining, just really think about it – it is a really good opportunity, it provides you with stability and it definitely makes you know life is worth living. You know you have a purpose, and it’s never boring.”

## CYBER

Continued from Pg. 3

### 5. Be wary of unsolicited attachments

Most legitimate companies don’t send you unsolicited attachments. Instead, they’ll direct you to download files from their website, which is typically secured.

### 6. Double check URLs before clicking

If an email or text message is asking you to go to the company’s website, hover your mouse over the link to check the URL before clicking. Even if an email looks legitimate, the link they may be sending you to could be fake and contain a virus.

In addition, it is important to make sure you keep your computer and phone software and anti-virus software up-to-date to ensure you are closing security gaps before they

can be exploited. Whenever possible, enable multi-factor authentication to add yet another layer of protection.

If you believe you’ve been a victim of a phishing or COVID-19 scam, service members should inform their chain of command and visit [identitytheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov) to learn more information about steps you can take if your social security, credit card, or banking account is compromised.

# Coping with COVID-19

Sgt. 1st Class Stephanie Cyr (Ret.)  
Contributor

The COVID-19 pandemic continues. Knowing truth from fiction, staying healthy both physically and mentally, and financial safety are keys to emerging from this time in a good situation. Tricare, the CDC, AARP, Medical News, WHO (World Health Organization) and John Hopkins university offer the following information.

There are many myths and misinformation are circulating about coronavirus, which could cause serious harm if followed. COVID-19 can infect anyone, not just the young and old, and especially those with compromised health conditions. COVID-19 is not a mutated form of the common cold, but one of a large family of coronaviruses. Exposing yourself or possessions to the sun or temperatures higher than 77 degrees Fahrenheit does not prevent or kill COVID-19. The ability to hold one’s breath for more than 10 seconds without coughing or discomfort, does not mean you are free of COVID-19 or for that matter, any other lung disease. The consumption of alcohol does not keep you from contracting COVID-19, but may cause impairment making you more susceptible. There is no evidence that, other than possibly assisting social distancing, eating garlic will protect one from getting COVID-19. Antibiotics will not prevent COVID-19, because they do not work against viruses. Spraying alcohol or chlorine on the body will not kill COVID-19 inside the body and can cause serious chemical burns to the skin. Gargling with bleach should not be ever done, because it will not kill the virus in the body and will cause serious internal damage. No home remedies, including vitamin C, silver colloid, essential oils, fish tank cleaner, burning sage and sipping water every fifteen minutes, will protect against COVID-19. There is no vaccine for COVID-19.

Scammers believe that a sucker is born every minute. COVID-19 has produced a new set of scams to part you from your money and personal information. The Department of Justice, Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), along with the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) website [fcc.gov/covid-scams](https://www.fcc.gov/covid-scams), and IRS (Internal Revenue

Service) have identified COVID-19 scams. These scams and schemes are coming in the forms of IRS-Impersonation telephone scams and email phishing and malware schemes in order to get access to stimulus checks. The FCC reports scam calls offering home test kits, scams targeting home medical supplies such as insulin, and services that claim to clean heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems.

Protect against scams by doing the following. Independently verify companies, charities or individuals that contact you. Check websites and emails received about services or products related to COVID-19 to authenticate these communications are not impersonating legitimate groups. Ignore offers for COVID-19 vaccines, cures, or treatments. Do not give money to businesses, charities, or individuals on crowdfunding sites, without making sure they are legitimate. Be wary of any donations that request payment in the form of cash, wire transfer or gift card. Visit the FCC website and listen to actual coronavirus scam calls.

Here are some recommended measures to reduce the possibility of contracting COVID-19. Stay home as much as possible. Wash your hands often. Observe social distancing protocols of six feet. Wear a cloth mask when going to confined spaces like the grocery store. Stock up on supplies to minimize shopping trips, but do not hoard. Higher risk groups can have others shop for you or try home delivery. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces. Contact your health provider if you get sick.

Stress relievers can include taking breaks from watching, listening, or reading the news. Take care of your body by maintaining a routine, eating healthy and exercising. Connect with others, especially if developing feelings of anxiety, sadness, or depression. The American Legion has instituted “Buddy Calls”. Check in and up on friends with a phone call.

The massive amount of COVID-19 information is becoming more confusing as each day passes. Any of the listed organizations’ websites will provide you with accurate facts. The important idea is to follow recommended guidelines to stay safe.

# SEXUAL ASSAULT. SEXUAL HARASSMENT. NOT IN OUR ARMY.

## Sexual Assault Response Coordinators

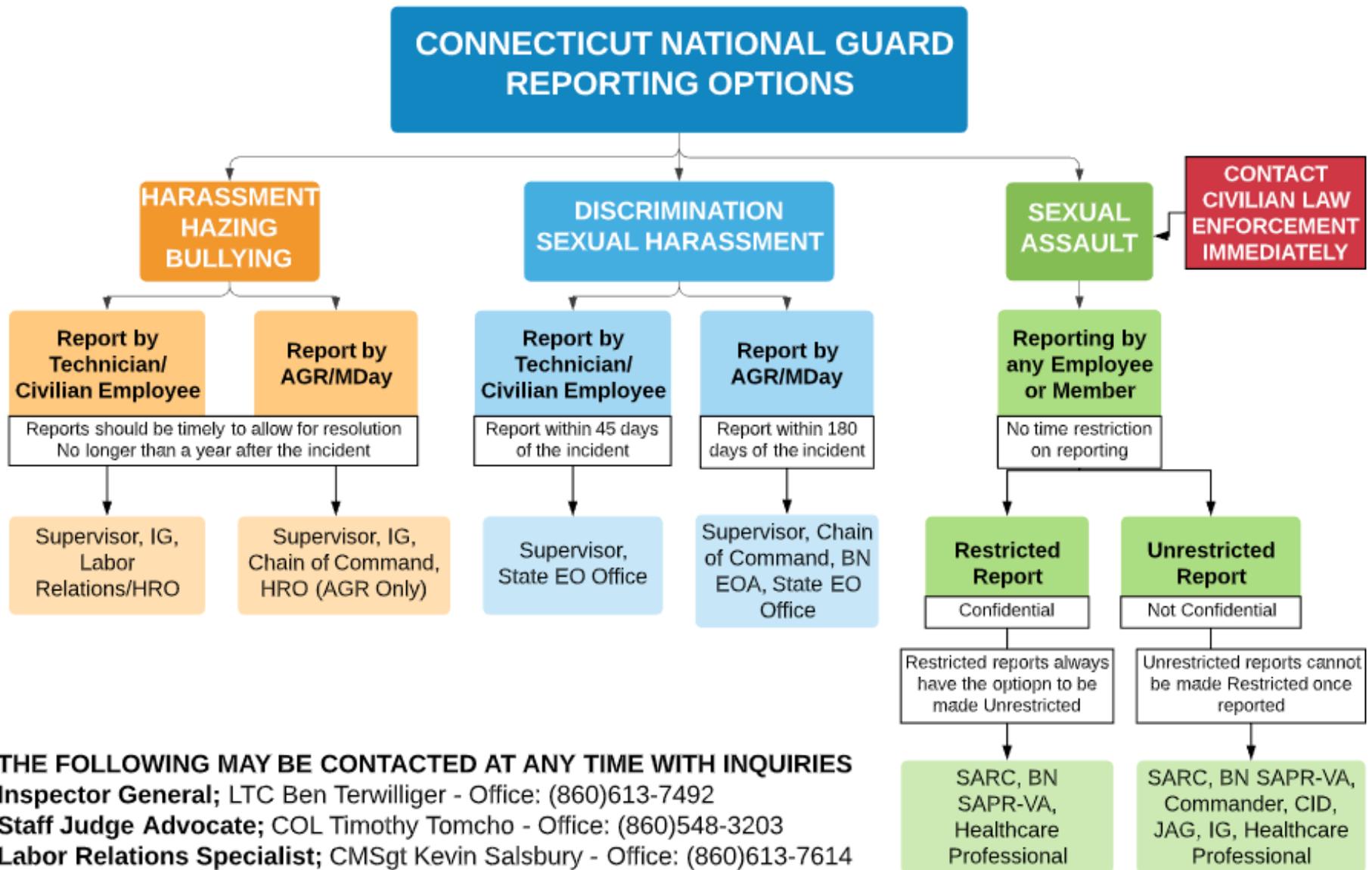
**CTARNG SARC** ..... 860.883.4798  
**103rd AW SARC (24hr)** ..... 860.895.3526

## Chaplain and Legal

**CT Chaplain** ..... 860.548.3240  
**CT Special Victims's Council** ..... 703.607.2263

## Medical

**Military Treatment Facility (Westover)** 413.557.2623  
**Navy Health Clinic New London** ..... 860.694.4123



**THE FOLLOWING MAY BE CONTACTED AT ANY TIME WITH INQUIRIES**

**Inspector General;** LTC Ben Terwilliger - Office: (860)613-7492  
**Staff Judge Advocate;** COL Timothy Tomcho - Office: (860)548-3203  
**Labor Relations Specialist;** CMSgt Kevin Salsbury - Office: (860)613-7614  
**State Equal Opportunity Office;** Ms. Tasha Dow - Office: (860)613-7610  
**Sexual Assault Response Coordinator;** Mrs. Katherine Maines - Office: (860)613-7611; Cell: (860)883-4798  
**State Chaplain;** Lt Col Eric Wismar - Office: (860)548-3240; Cell: (860)883-5278

# Connecticut Soldiers Coordinating Distribution of PPE, Emergency Supplies

Sgt. 1st Class Jordan Werme  
130th Public Affairs Detachment

The Connecticut National Guard is no stranger to state emergencies. In the past several years, members of the Guard have been involved in the relief responses to multiple natural disasters in Connecticut and other states, including Hurricanes Katrina, Irene, and Sandy. But when the emergency involves multiple states and countries, the response has to meet the conditions.

Whether you know it as the Novel Coronavirus, COVID-19, or SARS COV-2, there is no escaping the impact of Corona Virus Disease 2019. When it came to the west coast of United States in January 2020, the Department of Defense began its involvement. Before the end of February, the DoD had established a dedicated task force and by mid-March, 27 states had activated portions of their respective National Guards to assist in COVID-19 response operations.

The Connecticut National Guard, under the direction of the governor, began working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Corrections, and other state agencies to assist in providing Personal Protective Equipment and other needed items to health care facilities, first responders, and other authorized recipients. Before March was finished, this multi-agency distribution operation would include more than 175,000 square feet of warehouse space, and dozens of military and civilian personnel working to cover 24-hour operations for intake and delivery of lifesaving equipment.

“When we got here it was just a completely empty warehouse,” said 1st Lt. Ashley Noel, 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. “We were starting from zero. Just establishing where we’re going to put everything, how we’re going to put it there, how we’re going to inventory everything, how we’re going to manage the system.”

“We’re command and control,” said Staff Sgt. Richard Flodquist, 1048th Medium Truck Company, “so we’re overseeing it all. Starting out in these operations a lot of us are coming from different backgrounds since we’re in the National Guard. We have daily jobs, and a lot of us don’t have any experience in a warehouse, so we’re helping each other out in just developing the plan and working out kinks as we go. But it’s been very smooth.”

As the National Guard coordinates the warehouse operations, deliveries come in from many different sources. Keeping track of supplies, distributions, and funding are key aspects of maintaining a working, efficient operation. And with the Guard having no involvement in determining what agencies receive the supplies, making sure the deliveries can be made as quickly as possible is an important aspect of the mission.

“FEMA is pushing items down to us,” said Capt. Ulrick Brice, 143rd CSSB. “Things we would have for typical disaster relief, like cots, water, MREs – the bare essentials for any disaster operation. The State of Connecticut procurement office is reaching out to whatever vendor they can to see what supplies they can get. The [vendors are] trying to meet demand from several states simultaneously.”



*Pallets of Personal Protective Gear and hospital equipment are received, organized, and distributed to hospitals and medical personnel from a warehouse operated by the Connecticut National Guard.*

“A truck will roll up to the warehouse,” said Staff Sgt. Michael Peterson, 1048th MTC. “Soldiers will help off-load and get things straightened out and they’ll get us a count of how many we received. The tough part comes when eight trucks get delivered at once, four orders come in at once, and things are moving from bin to bin. Keeping an accurate account is important.”

An accurate accounting of supplies is important not just for financial tracking, but because each item has to be prioritized according to need. And while the Guard doesn’t decide what supplies go where, Soldiers are tasked with ensuring the orders are filled correctly and accurately.

“You have Level One, Level Two, and Level Three,” said Brice. “Level One is a medical center, a hospital. That’s the priority, they get the stuff. When it comes in, it goes out. Level Two would be a state organization that has people in their care. Department of Children and Families, Department of Corrections, and others that actually have people in their care. And Level Three is a town or municipality.”

As states continue to look for necessary supplies, vendors are trying to keep up with demand, said Brice. As the shipments are taken in, all eligible agencies – from hospitals to fire departments – are able to see the inventory in real time through a shared system.

“I did not expect coming in here that there would be so many orders for mattresses, cots, beds, things like that,” said Flodquist. “Right now we’re building stock. That’s the main concern right now, just getting as much as we can

back there to fulfill those requests as they come in.”

Working a warehouse facility means that Soldiers and civilians are working together, often in close proximity. In order to maintain a safe facility during the pandemic, Centers for Disease Control precautions are implemented for anyone entering the facility.

“We’re taking all the precautions we can here to minimize risk and mitigate it,” said Flodquist. “As long as everybody’s following those guidelines that are put out by the CDC, take care of washing their hands, not touching their faces, and wearing a mask and gloves. I think you minimize risk quite a bit by following those guidelines.”

“When we come in every day we get our temperatures taken and fill out a questionnaire,” said Peterson. “We put on a mask before going in and we wear gloves. The shipments are sprayed down with cleanser before any hands touch them.” This ensures that the equipment and supplies entering the warehouse are safe to be handled by the staff, and that they don’t carry any pathogens out when delivered.

With so much uncertainty over the duration of the current pandemic and the need for appropriate PPE, the warehouse operation currently has no end date. As with past emergency responses, National Guard Soldiers are prepared to continue as long as they are needed.

The National Guard is unable to take in requests for supplies. Agencies looking for deliveries must follow existing procurement channels.



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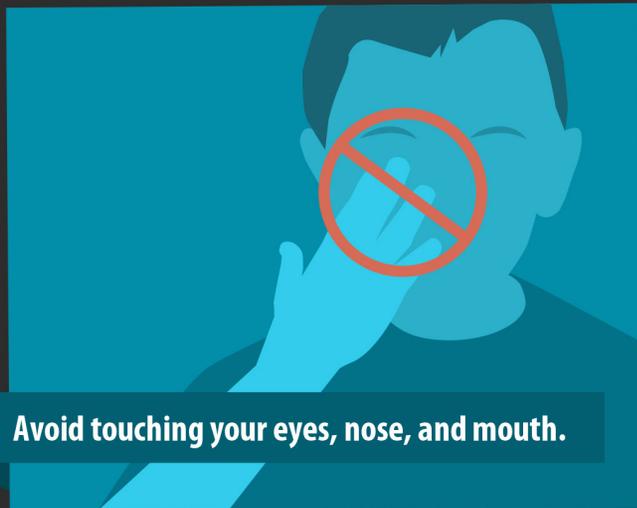
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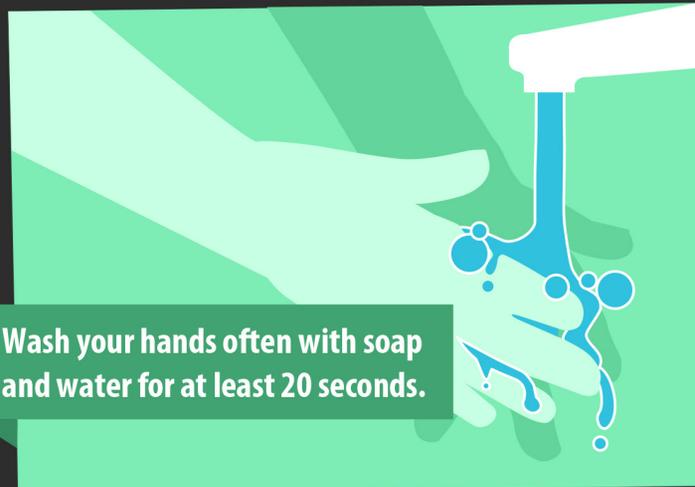
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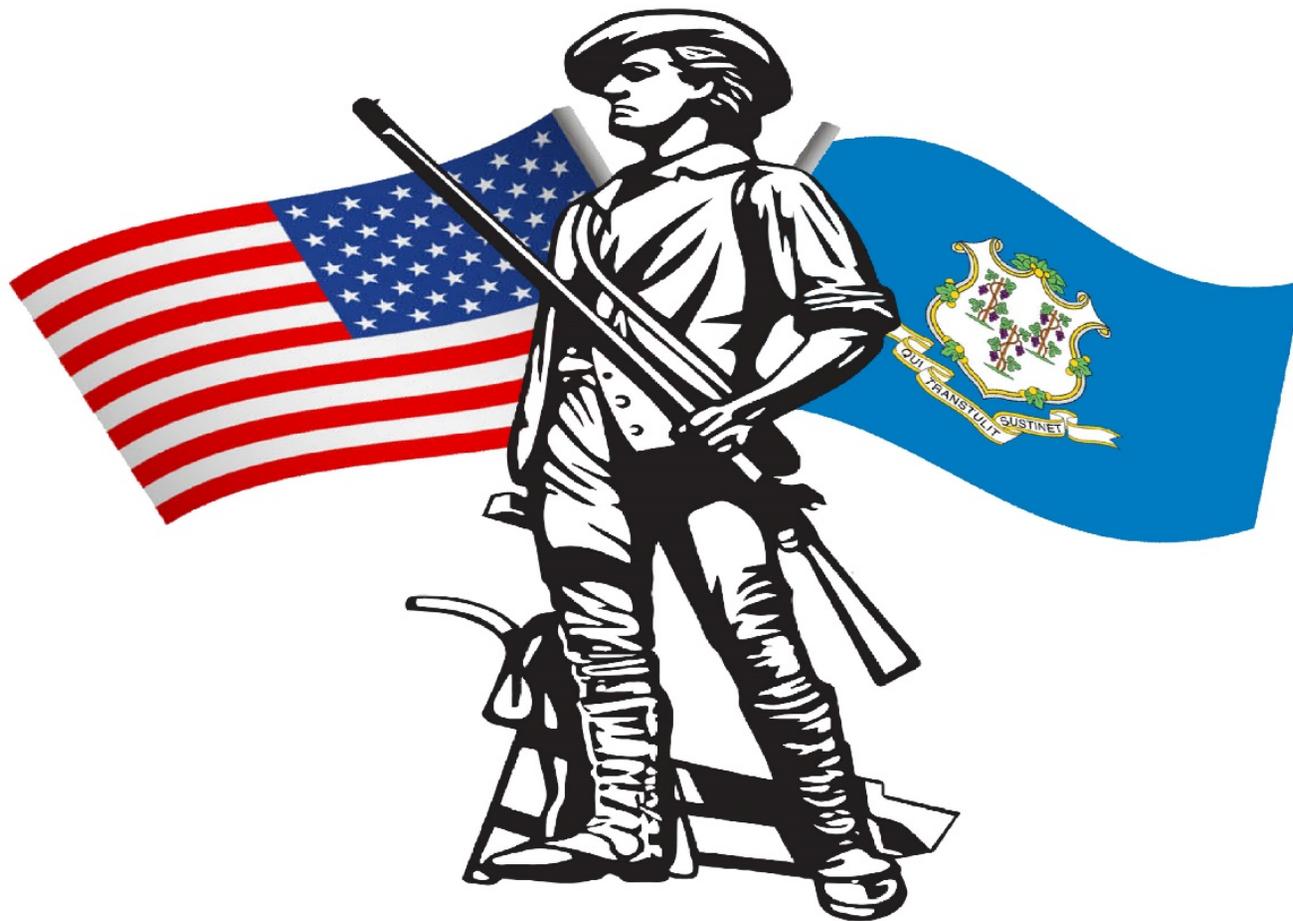


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## Nick Federico: Pilot, Guardsman and future doctor

Tech Sgt. Tamara Dabney  
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Aviation and medicine are 1st Lt. Nick Federico's passions, so maybe it was fate that led him to cross paths with Col. Sean T. Brennan, a Neurosurgery Physician Assistant who also happens to be a member of the Connecticut Air National Guard.

Brennan met Federico, an Embry-Riddle trained pilot, while Federico was a student at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. Given Federico's background in aviation, it did not take much effort for Brennan and an Air National Guard recruiter to convince him to join the Connecticut Air Guard, which is host to the only Air Force flying unit in the state. Federico is now assigned to the 103rd Medical Group under Brennan's command.

Federico's journey, from earning his pilot's license at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University to earning a medical degree from UCONN, to now training to become an aerospace medicine specialist in the Guard, is a path less trodden.

Looking to fulfill his childhood dream of becoming a pilot, Federico enrolled in Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 2012. While there, he earned his pilot's license and a Bachelor of Science degree in Aviation. All was going well for Federico until, one day, he broke his leg and was no longer able to fly.

"I broke my leg during flight school, and of course, you need your legs to fly, because you operate the rudder pedals that way," said Federico. "So I was knocked out from flying for a few months. It was probably the most pivotal thing that led me to going into medicine."

Federico's interest in medicine was initially sparked by the aviation program at Embry-Riddle, which requires aspiring pilots to learn about the physiological impact of flying. However, it was the high quality treatment that Federico received from doctors for his broken leg that inspired him to pursue his interest in medicine.

"Getting shuttled around to all these doctor's offices was a totally new experience for me, and I just connected with all of the care that I received from different types of health providers," said Federico. "It was the thing that led me in the direction of medicine."

As a medical student at UCONN, Federico studied five to seven days a week, for ten hours a day. While he had not completely abandoned flying, Federico's new dream was to become a doctor. In most instances, the fields of aviation and medicine are completely unrelated. It wasn't until his chance encounter with Brennan that Federico discovered a way to combine both of his passions by becoming an aerospace medicine specialist in the Air National Guard.

"I thought this [joining the Guard] was a good way to combine both interests, aviation and medicine," said Federico. "It also helps pay for school, which is big. I just have a lot more opportunities in the Guard in both fields."

UCONN applied Federico's aerospace medicine training to his degree plan, which enabled him complete requirements for the Guard and his medical degree at the same time.

"The Air National Guard, my medical unit, and my school have been really awesome about

working together to count my training as elective credits for med school, so that I didn't have to miss any time," said Federico. "And it is really unique, because most medical students would never get to take a class on flight medicine. It was cool."

Federico graduated from medical school in May and will begin his emergency medicine residency in the summer. In the meantime, he is using his expertise to support National Guard COVID-19 response efforts at nursing homes in Connecticut.



1st Lt. Nick Federico is a pilot and a member of the Connecticut Air National Guard, 103rd Medical Group. Federico graduated from University of Connecticut Medical School with a Doctor of Medicine Degree. (Photo courtesy of 1st Lt. Nick Federico)

"I'm actually on orders right now, assisting with the nursing home visits for the Department of Public Health," said Federico. "It was really nice that I had this free time to be able to step up and actually serve the state."

For Federico, serving in the Air National Guard has opened the door to a new world of opportunities. The pilot-turned-physician wants other young, ambitious men and women to know that they too can experience what the Guard has to offer.

"I would say give it a shot, because being in the Guard, I've been able to do things that most people don't have the opportunity to do, said Federico. "The people that I work with are awesome and they bring in a whole breadth of experience from different places. It makes me feel grateful."

# Commander's Column

**Capt. Estelle Baik**  
Communications Flight Commander

Welcome to the Connecticut Air National Guard's first virtual UTA. As the newly appointed Communications Flight Commander, I am honored to serve with you and be a part of this great team, the Flying Yankees. After serving seven years in active duty as an intelligence officer and Air Force ROTC instructor, I have been looking forward to my new role in the Connecticut Air National Guard. From customer service to cybersecurity, the 103rd Communications Flight is one of the core functions that aid, promote and protect our C-130 mission. Recently, we have been challenged to expand our capabilities and services outside of the base, especially with the virtual UTA - rest assured, we are only a phone call a way to assist you while working remotely.

Telework may be an unfamiliar concept because military duties traditionally involve being present with others and our weapons. From flying to maintaining our aircraft, providing in-person feedback sessions, or working in the SCIF, the military work force has focused and relied on the interactive culture on base. Now, we are forced to continue our military operations at our residences. Whether writing EPRs/OPRs, staying current on training, or completing CBTs, we are expected to maintain our readiness and fitness to fight. As we embark on our first virtual UTA this month, I caution you that it may not be the last, so please take note of what does not work, what does works, and what works best - we will appreciate any constructive feedback. I also ask my fellow Flying Yankees to be patient with us, yourselves, and even your pets if they accidentally chew on your internet at home. More importantly, please do not compromise security over convenience.

Security is easily dismissed when we become impatient with technology. We will encounter many frustrations with technology and the whole situation during this virtual UTA. We will naturally compare ourselves and our platforms to the private and social sectors, and ask why we do not use popular platforms like Zoom or Slack. While they may be user friendly, we must always remember that they are not secure, and therefore, any of our military work done on them can be accessed and collected by our enemies (I have seen this happen first hand while working at USCYBERCOM). Our indulgence in social media does not guarantee our privacy and security. We are always vulnerable in the network because our enemies can easily manipulate and deceive. User friendly and convenient platforms do not guarantee security; thus, be patient this weekend and do not be frustrated if your virtual UTA experience does not go as hoped. If you are unsure or in need of any tech assistance, we are and will continue to be available! The Communication Focal Point number is: (860)-292-2375.

Wishing everyone and your families good health. Stay Home. Stay Virtual.



## Guard family channels service experience during COVID-19

**Maj. Dawn Surprenant**  
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

When National Guard members are called to duty, spouses often take care of the home front. But what happens when the spouse is called to service?

Senior Master Sgt. Dana Babcock, 103rd Operations Group Aircrew Flight Equipment NCOIC, is a full-time member of the Connecticut Air National Guard, which is continually supporting the state's COVID-19 response. Due to guidance and increased social distancing measures, Dana is currently teleworking during the pandemic. His wife, Sarah, however, is on the front lines battling the virus.

"I work as a critical care nurse at Hartford Hospital on the ICU float team, meaning I can be assigned to work in any of the six ICU's, their associated step down units, and anywhere else in the hospital where critically ill patients are located," said Sarah. "My position requires me to always be on my toes, be flexible, maintain calm and never stop critically thinking. It's fast paced and challenging but

I love it."

The Babcock family roles have seemingly reversed during the pandemic, said Sarah.

"We've been through two deployments since we've been married and while Dana was gone, I was the one who kept things running at home and raising our family," she said. "I was the one consistently worried about his safety. Now, it feels like the opposite is happening."

This prior experience has helped the family cope with the challenges posed by COVID-19, said Sarah.

"We've had to learn how to be fluid and flexible as partners and as parents to keep things as normal as possible for our children during this pandemic," she said. "I am so grateful to have a husband who understands what it is to serve."



Dana's aircrew flight equipment experience has also helped Sarah protect their family from possible exposure.

"He built me a decontamination tent on my front porch, which gives me a place to keep my soiled clothes and sneakers until I can wash them," said Sarah. "My decontamination tent was created based on the aircrew contamination control area used in the chemical warfare exercises at the base. It was so cool to see how he was able to translate his expertise from the guard into something that also

helped me"

The Connecticut National Guard continues to support front line healthcare workers like Sarah, providing medical supplies, equipment, and personal protective items to the state's health care system.



*U.S. Army Capt. Joyce Avedisian, 14th Civil Support Team nuclear medical science officer, prepares to test patient samples for COVID-19 in an analytical laboratory system vehicle parked outside Charter Oak Family Health Center in Hartford, Connecticut, April 24, 2020. The Connecticut National Guard's 14th Civil Support Team is working in partnership with the Connecticut Department of Public Health state lab to test samples from 70 to 80 patients per day in locations throughout the state.*

## Connecticut National Guard provides mobile COVID-19 testing lab

**Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker**  
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The Connecticut National Guard has turned a vehicle designed to test for environmental chemical, biological, and radiological contamination into a mobile clinical laboratory to expand the Connecticut Department of Public Health's COVID-19 testing capacity.

The 14th Civil Support Team brought its analytical laboratory system to Charter Oak Family Health Center on April 24, 2020 for the first of what the Guard and Connecticut Department of Public Health plans to be many sites the team will visit to conduct testing.

"The initial intention for this process is to be able to take the testing to areas where individuals have no means to be able to go and get tested," said Dr. Jafar Razeq, Connecticut Department of Public Health state laboratory director. "So we thought that by utilizing this mobile unit, we will have trained individuals moving around the state going into areas where we can test individuals and have results within a very short period of time."

This presents a new mission for the civil support team, who primarily uses the mobile laboratory for environmental samples, but is ready to provide this expanded capability.

"The process was conceptualizing the mission, establishing limiting factors and capabilities, coming up with an agreement for operation, training our personnel, and at this point it's logistics and ensuring we can meet the demand the state has," said U.S. Air Force Maj. Robert Burgess, 14th Civil Support Team commander.

Health care workers from local clinics like Charter Oak conduct the swab inside their own building and deliver the sample to the vehicle, which contains the lab space in the

back. This quick transfer saves time compared to sending the sample to the state lab in Rocky Hill.

Working together, the Department of Public Health and civil support team hope to test 70 to 80 patients per day seven days per week.

"Time is of the essence in this unprecedented public health emergency," said Razeq. "Test results are needed as soon as possible from the time the patient is tested. So we hope that this will be a successful program that other states can look at and see if they can implement it in their state."

Every state's civil support team has at least one analytical laboratory system to test environmental samples and some states, depending on their population, have two, said Burgess.

In Connecticut, the plan was implemented quickly.

"We were contacted about a week and a half ago with the concept and we worked through the processes and got the approvals to start the operation today under the direction of the lab director and Connecticut Department of Public Health," said Burgess. "This is what the civil support team is here for—providing support to our federal, state, and local officials. We're honored to be a part of it."

The Connecticut Department of Public Health is happy to have the support of the National Guard in carrying out this mission, said Razeq.

"I'm very impressed," said Razeq. "We went from the time the first communication happened to actually doing testing in less than two weeks. That's remarkable and I could not ask for a better collaboration."



Airman 1st Class Arielle Robles, 103rd Maintenance Group administration specialist, helps set up recovery center beds at Kaiser Hall at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut, April 21, 2020. Robles is an exercise science student at the university and is now helping convert her usual classroom building into surge capacity space for local hospitals in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Guardsmen supports COVID-19 response at her university

**Staff Sgt. Steven Tucker**  
103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

A campus typically busy with students and staff in late April sits mostly dormant as the COVID-19 pandemic has forced Central Connecticut State University, like many others, to send students home and move classes online.

One of CCSU's students, however, has returned wearing a uniform to support the state's COVID-19 pandemic response.

Airman 1st Class Arielle Robles, 103rd Maintenance Group administration specialist, typically reports to Kaiser Hall for her exercise science classes. Now she is helping turn the gym floor into a COVID-19 recovery center floor.

"It's crazy to see that where we would normally go for class or to work out is being turned into a field hospital, but it feels good to be helping the community and my school in this way," said Robles.

While not in a classroom setting this time, the 20-year-

old South Windsor native is still learning at Kaiser Hall.

"It's been an eye-opening experience," said Robles. "I'm a traditional Guardsman and now I'm getting to see more of what we do to help the state, so it really puts everything in perspective and shows that we're all here to help."

This is not the first time Robles's experiences in the Guard and at CCSU have crossed paths. She used the knowledge from her Training for Sports Performance class to help her fellow Airmen improve their physical fitness.

She has a deep interest in healthcare and wants to combine her career interest with her military experience by working as a Certified Athletic Trainer for military personnel.

For Robles, education always stays fresh on the mind even during this unusual time.

"I get calls from school sometimes, so I'm still trying to balance that schedule as well," said Robles, who continues

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"It's crazy to see that where we would normally go for class or to work out is being turned into a field hospital, but it feels good to be helping the community and my school in this way."

*Airman 1st Class Arielle Robles*

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to excel in her classes online while actively supporting the state's COVID-19 response.

Robles takes pride in the opportunity to serve her state in a familiar setting.

"My favorite part is helping out and knowing there's a bigger picture to this," said Robles.

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# Service Member and Family Support Center Staff Directory



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