

Keith L. Ware Competition – Community Relations

Category A – Individual Achievement

Nominee: Ms. Leah Rubalcaba

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
JOINT BASE MYER – HENDERSON HALL
204 LEE AVENUE
FORT MYER, VIRGINIA 22211-1199

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

January 19, 2012

Office of the Commander

Public Affairs Office
Installation Management Command
2405 Gun Shed Road,
Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234-1223

To whom it may concern:

I am pleased to endorse Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Community Relations Officer Ms. Leah Rubalcaba as a nominee in the 2011 Keith L. Ware awards competition, category A, individual achievement.

In the attached package, you will find facts and information about Ms. Rubalcaba. She is the recipient of many awards, most recently named as the Installation Civilian of the Quarter. As important as these awards are, they do not begin to reveal the depth of her passion and dedication to service personnel, their Families and their community home away from home.

Ms. Rubalcaba has an innate sense of how interdependent the military and civilian communities are. She works with sensitivity to ensure community relations events are inclusive rather than exclusive. The events we are submitting include several examples of her work. Toward the end of 2011 for the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon Cruise, Ms. Rubalcaba worked to encourage the Southwest District of Columbia community to provide a gift for single military members. She was steadfast in seeing to it invitees had the proper information to attend the luncheon cruise, even providing transportation to and from the Washington DC waterfront. This event benefitted 350 personnel; needless to say, there was a full house onboard the Odyssey that day.

As you will see in a letter from our Senior Commander that follows, Ms. Rubalcaba has energy, heart and determination. I am very proud of our community relations program and subsequent association with our civilian communities in the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia.

I urge you to give Ms. Rubalcaba strong consideration for the Keith L. Ware community relations award in individual achievement.

Jennifer L. Blair
Lieutenant Colonel, US Marine Corps
Acting Joint Base Commander



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY MILITARY DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
103 THIRD AVENUE
FORT LESLEY J. MCNAIR, DC 20319-5058

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

December 9, 2011

Office of the Commanding General

Leah Rubalcaba
Community Relations Officer
Directorate of Public Affairs
Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall
Building 59, Room 111
Fort Myer, VA 22211

Dear Ms. Rubalcaba: *Leah*

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for your annual support as the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Community Relations Officer and as a member of the Washington Waterfront Association in supporting the annual Thanksgiving luncheon cruise held November 22, 2011, onboard the Odyssey cruise vessel. The success of the event benefitted 350 of our Service members and Veterans.

I particularly want to thank you for ensuring maximum attendance by Service members throughout the National Capital Region, to include Wounded Warriors and their Families from the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and the Warrior in Transition Unit at Fort Belvoir.

Thank you for the work you do to support the Joint Base Commander in his mission to foster and maintain good community relations – especially with our great neighbors here in southwest Washington D.C.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Linnington
Major General, US Army
Commanding

*Leah -
your energy
contributes to amaze
me. Thanks for all
you do for our Soldiers
& their families!*

*VIA
MG L.*

Keith L. Ware Competition – Community Relations

Category A – Individual Achievement

Nominee: Ms. Leah Rubalcaba

Name, position, duty description

Ms. Leah Rubalcaba, nominee for Community Relations, Category A: Individual Achievement is Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall's Community Relations Officer, planning, coordinating and directing community relations strategies and programs that promote the understanding of the mission and contributions of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall (JBM-HH) and its partners to the general public.

Ms. Rubalcaba performs outreach to three main audiences: Washington, District of Columbia (500,000 plus), Arlington and Alexandria areas of Northern Virginia (350,000 plus), and military and civilian personnel of the National Capital Region (100,000 plus, including active duty and reserve component military personnel, retirees, veterans and family members).

Ms. Rubalcaba was hired at Fort Myer in 2005 and through her own hard work, innovation and creativity in the position has risen in rank from GS9 to GS12. She develops and maintains relationships with military personnel from the lowest to the highest in rank along with their families; key civilian personnel – mayors, county managers, senators, congresspeople -- as well members of neighboring civic associations and ordinary Main Street USA citizens. She created the current community relations program, taking the division to a level rich with a speakers bureau, aviation, band and honor guard activities, community outreach events such as the first Open House ever conducted at Fort Myer and numerous "high visibility" occasions as well as the small, everyday but important activities of a community – such as the Arlington Neighborhood Day parade. She has opened the door of the JBM-HH military community to often suspicious civilian communities and made the military accessible to everyone, including a partnership with Amidon-Bowen Elementary School youngsters in the District of Columbia.

**Keith L. Ware Competition – Community Relations
Category A – Individual Achievement
Nominee: Ms. Leah Rubalcaba**

Justification

Ms. Leah Rubalcaba, nominee for Community Relations, Category A: Individual Achievement has created a community relations program that tells the Army story to the nation's citizens and links the military and civilian communities to their mutual benefit.

She establishes and maintains relationships with both military and civilian community representatives, organizations and individuals. As the commander's trusted agent, Ms. Rubalcaba communicates the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall mission to some 950,000 people in the District of Columbia, Alexandria and Arlington, Virginia, and the JBM-HH military family: active duty and reserve component military personnel, military retirees, and their families. She is as comfortable speaking to senior military personnel and key community leaders as she is to a group of senior citizens or children because she has their best interests at heart and usually knows each one by name.

Ms. Rubalcaba tells the military story because she is proud of the United States armed forces and wants to relay all the information she has. One example of this is with the children – most of them living below the poverty level – of Amidon-Bowen Elementary School in Southwest Washington, D.C. She arranged for 44 of the children to attend a special showing of "Spirit of America" for VIPs. The school itself could not provide transportation, but Ms. Rubalcaba arranged for one of JBM-HH's buses to collect them at the school and deliver them to the Verizon Center Friday, 9 September 2011, then return them to the school.

Many of these youngsters had not been outside of their neighborhoods. Further, Ms. Rubalcaba wanted them not only to see the extraordinary show, but to be able to be seated with and greeted by some of the military VIPs! The children were blown away, and just absolutely thrilled about being able to be near a uniform. Please see attached photographs for a good picture of a young boy meeting the Headquarters Battalion Command Sergeant Major during this event.

Ms. Rubalcaba has opened the doors of the military community to the general public literally and figuratively. Literally, in September 2008, she planned for, coordinated and executed the first open house Fort Myer, Virginia, ever had. The "Centennial of Military Aviation" celebrated the Wright Brothers' first military flight at Fort Myer in September 1908. She coordinated for speakers and with area aviation groups and organizations including Arlington County, Leadership Arlington, Aviation Museum at College Park, the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum (which provided volunteers and exhibits and sponsored the Discovery of Flight Foundation and The Wright Experience). A replica of the Wright Flyer was delivered to Fort Myer the day before the event, the Arlington Historical Society paraded around the day of the event in period costume. Inside the Consolidated Operations Facility, there were games and exhibits, including a test Wright Flyer where participants could sit in the seat and "fly." Participants could touch and carve on the same wood the Wright Brothers used to create their aeroplane. In addition, Ms. Rubalcaba planned and coordinated for a military tattoo by the 3rd U. S. Infantry (The Old Guard), static displays of military equipment, flyovers and something for everyone of every age. See some good photographs of this event which told the communities of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall what their military is all about.

Figuratively, Ms. Rubalcaba has opened the doors of the military community to the general public as well. She considers each question she's asked the most important one she has ever taken. Her answers are thorough, researched and often coordinated with multiple directorates and

organizations on and off JBM-HH, because she knows she is the first face of the military a person may encounter. She spends countless hours *after hours* attending neighborhood meetings to keep the more than 100 JBM-HH neighbor communities informed about what goes on at their military base. Through frequent and continuing personal contact, Ms. Rubalcaba maintains strong relationships with staff assistants of U.S. Congressional Representatives from nearby districts, area and neighboring Civilian Aides to the Secretary of the Army, state senators and representatives, regional elected officials, chambers of commerce, boards of education and educators. She is in direct and frequent coordination with the Department of Defense, general officers and their staffs from the Department of the Army, Headquarters, the Installation Management Command and the Military District of Washington.

There are many more events, people and partnerships in one year, but as a wrap-up for 2011, one event typifies an extraordinary community relations program and contains all the elements to make the best program work: “Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon Cruise for Servicemembers and Wounded Warriors.”

Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall is made up of Fort Myer, Virginia, and Henderson Hall (the Marine side of the house), and Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. As part of community relations outreach for Fort McNair, Ms. Rubalcaba works closely with the southwest Washington Waterfront Association, composed of businesses, non-profit organizations, U.S. and District of Columbia government agencies and residents, all of whom are delighted to be part of JBM-HH through the efforts of Ms. Rubalcaba.

This year the “Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon Cruise for Servicemembers and Wounded Warriors” was held Nov. 22. Ms. Rubalcaba worked to have 350 honored guests from the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda, the Warrior in Transition Unit at Fort Belvoir, the Armed Forces Retirement Home of Washington, D.C., the Veterans Affairs Medical Center of Washington, D.C., and many service members who were not able to go home for Thanksgiving and who don’t have family in town. She arranged for the day to be donated to and in honor of the military personnel – single personnel this year. Washington Waterfront Association members donated the ship; its food vendors donated a Thanksgiving meal and volunteered to work the cruise, serving food to all the guests. Most of the service members onboard could not have afforded to take such a cruise. Ms. Rubalcaba arranged for three JBM-HH 44-pax buses to transport JBM-HH Soldiers and Marines and other service members from Fort Myer to the southwest waterfront marina and back. Along with the traditional meal onboard, there was entertainment and dancing, a police boat escort up the Potomac and back, the D.C. Harbor Patrol’s fireboat, the John H. Glenn, provided an official send-off, shooting water 70 feet into the air; a trio from the D.C. Army National Guard’s 257th Army Band played music in the first dining room, and the ship’s D.J. played popular dance tunes in the second dining room. See some excellent photos of this activity, attached, most of which Ms. Rubalcaba took herself!

Thanks to the efforts of Ms. Rubalcaba, this November cruise provided an unforgettable adventure to our honored service members. It is a gift that civilian community members in the Washington, D.C., community – thanks to Ms. Rubalcaba – were proud to provide.

Ms. Rubalcaba goes the second and third mile in her job as community relations officer whether there is a small or large event. Her efforts in making relationships key have strengthened existing partnerships and built new ones.

Her aim is to link military and civilian communities for their mutual benefit, and she makes it look easy.

Keith L. Ware Competition – Community Relations

Category A – Individual Achievement

Nominee: Ms. Leah Rubalcaba

Tab A – Photographs

The five photos – in order in which they appear – are as follows:

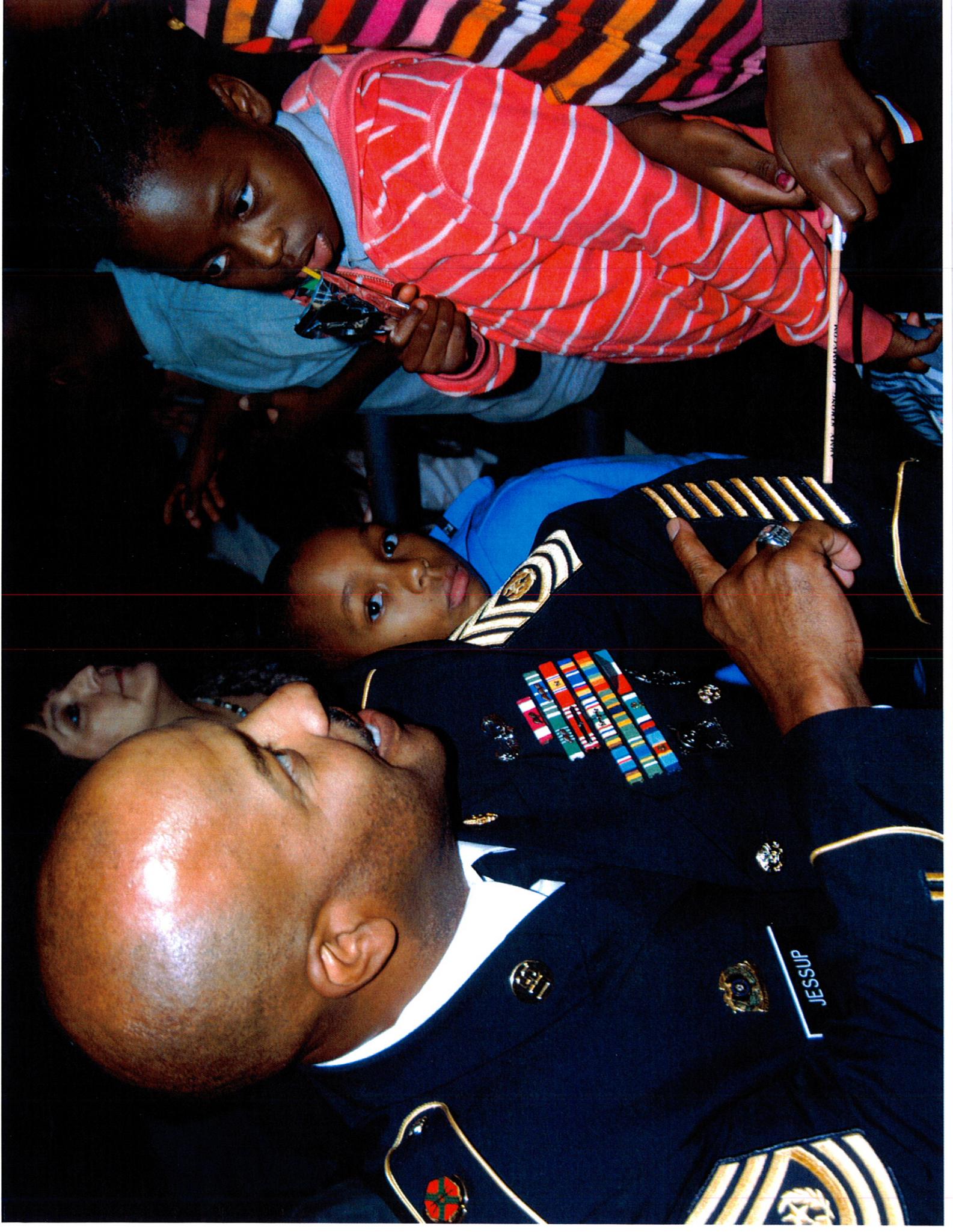
Headquarters Command Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Jessup shows his stripes to, from left, Robert Freeman, Jaylin Davis and Jaida Murray during the intermission of the Spirit of America matinee Sept. 9 at the Verizon Center in Washington, D.C. The youngsters are Amidon-Bowen Elementary School children, invited to a special showing of Spirit of America. (Photo by Jim Dresbach)

Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Command Sgt. Maj. Necati Akpinar participates in the first day of school 2011 at Amidon-Bowen Elementary School in Washington, D.C. The school is one of a Community Relations outreach partner with JBM-HH. (U.S. Army photo)

A replica of the Wright Flyer makes its appearance Sept. 5, 2008 outside Conmy Hall at Fort Myer for the “Centennial of Aviation” Open House for the following day, Sept. 6. (Photo by Adam Skoczylas)

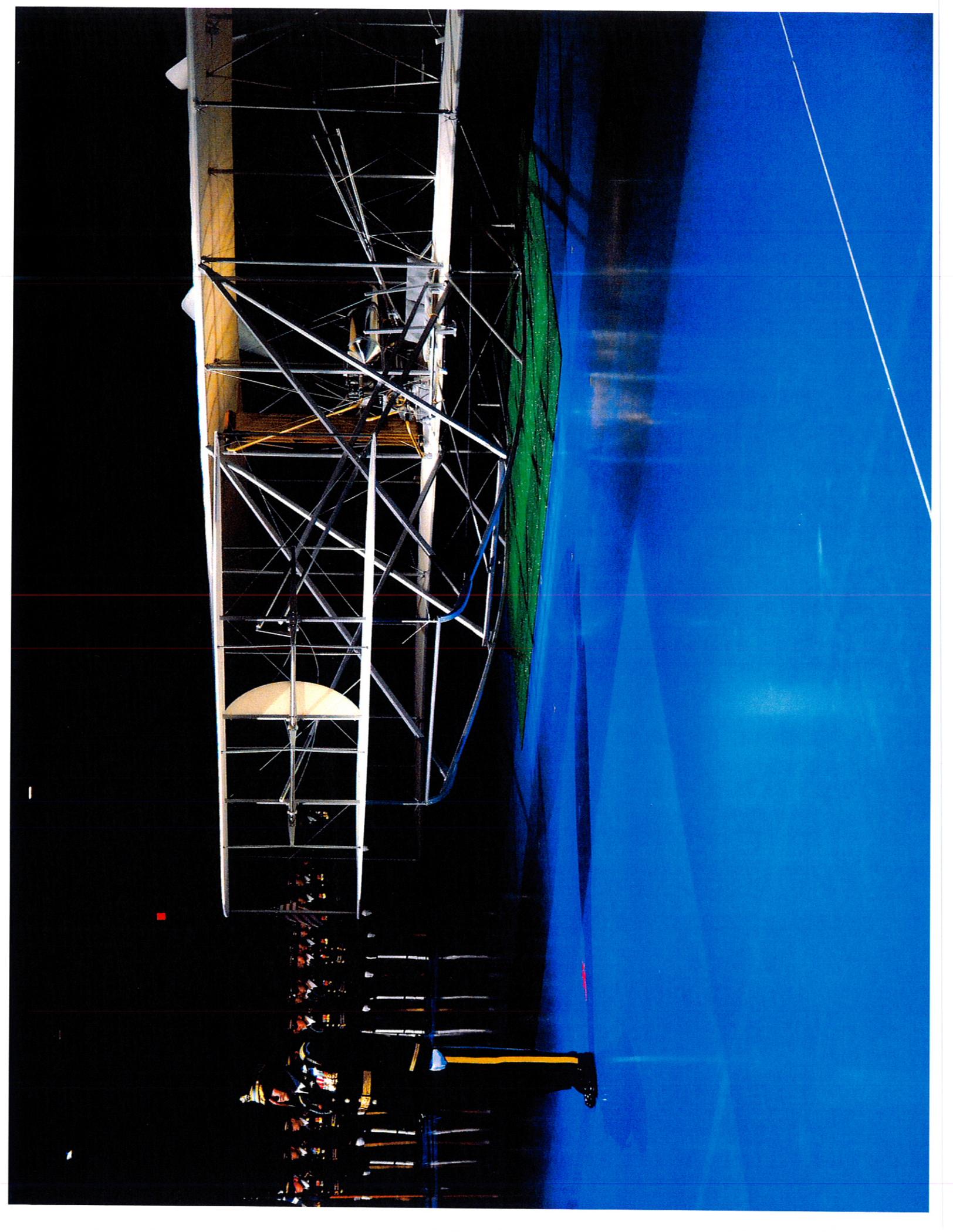
The day of the open house for the “Centennial of Military Aviation,” Sept. 6, 2008, the Wright Flyer replica is celebrated inside Conmy Hall with full military honors by 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard). (Photo by Adam Skoczylas)

Commander’s Update Brief – Photos by Stephen Satkowski











Unclassified

Commander's Update Brief



IMCOM
SOLDIER • FAMILY • CIVILIAN

Community Relations/Outreach

Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall – Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon Cruise

PURPOSE: Partnership serves to foster ongoing relationships with community leaders and organizations from the southwest Washington Waterfront Association who host this annual event free for Wounded Warriors, active duty service members and veterans from throughout the National Capital Region.

WHAT THEY DO: Donate the Odyssey ship for the luncheon cruise held 22 Nov, arrange to have all food donated and provide volunteers to serve the traditional Thanksgiving meal. Event includes entertainment and dancing as the ship makes its way up the Potomac and back to the southwest waterfront marina.



350 guests attended the 2011 event: Wounded Warriors from the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and Fort Belvoir; service members from all services; and veterans from the DC Armed Forces Retirement Home and VA Medical Center.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
JOINT BASE MYER-HENDERSON HALL
FORT MYER, VA. • FORT MCNAIR, D.C. • HENDERSON HALL, VA.
204 LEE AVENUE
FORT MYER, VIRGINIA 22211-1199

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

IMMH-PA

18 January 2012

The Major General Keith L. Ware
Public Affairs Communications Competition
Installation Management Command Public Affairs Office
Building 2261, 2405 Gun Shed Road
Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234-1223

Attention: Ms. Margaret Brewster

To Whom It May Concern:

I am proud to recommend Ms. Leah Rubalcaba, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Community Relations Officer, a nominee in the 2011 Keith L. Ware awards competition, category A, individual achievement.

As you can see from the materials we are submitting, Ms. Rubalcaba has planned the Thanksgiving Luncheon Cruise onboard the Odyssey cruise ship for the past seven years. Her aim has always been to provide a Thanksgiving Day opportunity for Wounded Warriors, service members and veterans, and she has done so in a lavish way.

Many of the participants - this year she focused on single service members - had planned to spend the holiday alone. Most of the participants cannot afford to take an exclusive cruise on the Potomac.

Thanks to Ms. Rubalcaba, community members in the Southwest Washington, D.C., community donate the cruise and volunteer to serve the service members. The food is exquisitely prepared by area chefs, and of course, it's free. This is an event which gives units from the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda, the Warrior in Transition unit at Fort Belvoir, the Armed Forces Retirement Home of Washington, D.C., and service members across the National Capital Region a priceless memory. There's fun and dancing and fellowship onboard the Odyssey during this cruise.

I highly recommend Ms. Rubalcaba for this award.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Hodges
Director
Public Affairs Office