



# NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

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*"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."*

## Soldier identified to receive Medal of Honor

By J.D. Leipold  
Army News Service

**WASHINGTON** – Former Army Capt. William D. Swenson will be presented the Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama in a White House ceremony Oct. 15, making him the sixth living recipient of the nation's highest military award for valor during combat in Iraq or Afghanistan.

The Washington State native will receive the Medal of Honor for his conspicuous gallantry at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty, Sept. 8, 2009, during combat operations against Taliban insurgents in Kunar Province, Afghanistan.

"It's a monumental event for me, for my family and for my teammates," Swenson said after receiving word directly

from Obama. "This day also means a lot to those I served with."

During his second tour in Afghanistan, Swenson served as an embedded trainer with the Afghan Border Police Mentor Team from 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division. He was tasked with mentoring members of the Afghan National Security Forces.

On the morning of Sept. 8, 2009, Swenson and his team moved on foot into the rural community of Ganjgal for a meeting with village elders. It was then he and his team were ambushed by more than 50 well-armed, well-positioned insurgent fighters.

As the enemy unleashed a barrage of rocket-propelled grenades, mortar and machine gun fire, Swenson returned fire,

coordinated and directed the response of his Afghan security force, and simultaneously tried to call in suppressive artillery fire and aviation support.

After the enemy effectively flanked the coalition forces, Swenson repeatedly called for smoke to cover the withdrawal of the forward elements.

Surrounded on three sides by enemy forces inflicting effective and accurate fire, he coordinated air assets, indirect fire support and medical-evacuation helicopter support to allow for the evacuation of the wounded.

The captain ignored enemy radio transmissions demanding surrender and maneuvered uncovered to render medical aid to a wounded Soldier, Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth W. Westbrook.

**See MEDAL, page 3.**



*(Photo by Andrew Stamer)*

The steel skirting of one of the twin towers was all that remained after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attack.

## 412th CSB honors 9/11 victims

By Maj. Michael Ozols  
412th Contracting Support Brigade  
Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston,  
Texas

**SAN ANTONIO, Texas** – Members of the 412th Contracting Support Brigade and Mission and Installation Contracting Command-Fort Sam Houston took part in the first San Antonio 110 9/11 Memorial Climb to the top of the Tower of the Americas here Sept. 11.

They joined firefighters, law enforcement and members of the community to honor the first responders and victims of the attacks that took place Sept. 11, 2001.

The inaugural memorial and climb

to the top of the Tower of the Americas honored the 343 firefighters, more than 60 law enforcement officers and thousands of civilians who were killed that day. The climb to the top consisted of 65 flights or 952 stairs, and participants were asked to go to the top of the tower twice, representing 110 floors and the height of the World Trade Center Twin Towers. Each firefighter, law enforcement and military participant was asked to carry the name of a first responder who died in the towers. A bell was rung for them and their name was placed on a replica tower at the top of the Tower of the Americas at the end of the second climb.

See 9/11 MEMORIAL, page 3.

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# Spotlight on...

For Spotlight submissions, click on the icon.

## Contracting NCO says mission first, Soldiers always

*Sgt. 1st Class Derrick A. Wade is an acquisition, logistics and technology contracting noncommissioned officer assigned to the 619th Contingency Contracting Team at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.*

### Describe your current position

As a contracting NCO for a deployable contingency contracting team, I provide the supported commanders enhanced operational flexibility by leveraging the local economy for contracted life and logistics support. In addition, I am responsible for executing operational and garrison contract support for supplies, services and minor construction for the 60,000 Soldiers and civilians within the U.S. Army Pacific area of operation.

### Describe your passion for the job.

I enjoy purchasing new items and equipment that I have never seen or heard of. I enjoy being able to see how the taxpayers' dollars are spent and how they are used to better support the armed forces, especially the Soldiers and their families.

### Where do you call home? Tell us about your family and what you enjoy doing during your time off.

I am from Pensacola, Fla., and am



**Sgt. 1st Class Derrick A. Wade**

married to Latasha Wade, a staff sergeant in the Army. We have one daughter, Jade Epiphany Monroe-Wade, 14.

I attend church, go to American Military University, do volunteer work, play video games with my daughter and enjoy family outings.

### How does your job support the Soldier?

I provide line material handling equipment, vehicles, communications and various office supplies to Marines, Soldiers, sailors and airmen.

### What would you like others to know about you?

Mission First, Soldiers Always. Support and Defend!

## U.S. Army Contracting Command

Commanding General  
**Maj. Gen. Camille M. Nichols**

ACC Command Sergeant Major  
**Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray**

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**Director, Office of Public & Congressional Affairs**  
**Art Forster**

**Public Affairs Team Chief**  
**Ed Worley**

Editor  
**David San Miguel**

**Public Affairs Team**  
**Larry D. McCaskill, Giselle Lyons, Beth E. Clemons**

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Send submissions and correspondence to the U.S. Army Contracting Command, Office of Public and Congressional Affairs, ATTN: Editor, NewsBlast, 3334A Wells Road, Redstone Arsenal, AL 35898-5000. Telephone: 256-955-7634, DSN 645-7634 or email at acc.pao@us.army.mil.



**NEWSBLAST**



*(Courtesy photo)*

**Capt. William Swenson sits in Task Force Chosin mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle while conducting a consultation meeting with the Muslim community, October 2009.**

## MEDAL continued from page 1

Swenson stopped administering aid long enough to throw a grenade at approaching enemy forces, then assisted with moving Westbrook for air evacuation.

After using aviation support to mark locations of fallen and wounded comrades, it became clear that ground recovery was required due to the proximity of heavily-armed enemy positions to potential helicopter landing zones.

With complete disregard for his own safety, Swenson voluntarily drove an unarmored vehicle into the kill zone, exposing himself to enemy fire on three occasions to recover the wounded and search for missing team members.

Returning to the kill zone a fourth time in a Humvee, he exited the vehicle, evaded a hail of bullets and shells to recover three fallen Marines and a Navy corpsman, working alongside then-Marine Corps Cpl. Dakota Meyer, who on Sept. 15, 2011, received the Medal of Honor for his own actions in the battle.

After six hours of continuous fighting, Swenson rallied his teammates and effectively disrupted the enemy assault.

## 9/11 MEMORIAL

The eight participants from the 412th CSB and MICC-Fort Sam Houston carried with them the names of seven firefighters who responded to the twin towers attacks. The participants included: Lt. Col. Sylvia Farmer; Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Hammond; Maj. Manuel Prado; Maj. Michael Ozols; Capt. Francisco Cordero; Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Carter; Staff Sgt. Brian Roussel; and Lysette Sanchez. Names of the firefighters included: Capt. Vernon Richard; James Riches; Lt. Michael Russo; Joseph Rivelli Jr.; Stephen Russell; Lt. Robert Regan; and Kevin Reilly.

Sanchez, a Department of the Army civilian for the 412th CSB, wanted to participate after hearing about the climb through an email. She previously had climbed the tower to raise money to fight cystic fibrosis.

The Tower of the Americas is a 750-foot observation tower and restaurant on the southeastern side of downtown San Antonio. The tower was built in 1968 and, until 1996, was the tallest observation tower in the United States. It is currently the tallest building in San Antonio and the 27th tallest building in Texas.

Roussel, a member of the 607th Senior Contingency Contracting Team at MICC-Fort Sam Houston, is a native New Yorker and volunteer firefighter.

He knows firsthand the sacrifices that first responders have to make during an emergency situation.

“I was honored to be able to participate in this amazing event and carry with me the name of a fallen firefighter,” Roussel said. “Sept. 11, 2001, changed my life forever, and the bravery those first responders showed that day is what

inspired me to enter the military. I will never forget and I hope I honor their memories with my service.”

Participants from the 412th CSB and MICC-Fort Sam Houston were accompanied by more than 600 participants who honored the memory of the men and women who sacrificed their lives during the attacks 12 years ago.

### continued from page 1



*(Courtesy photo)*

**Front row from left are: Lysette Sanchez, Maj. Michael Ozols, Maj. Manuel Prado, (second row), Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Carter, Lt. Col. Sylvia Farmer, Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Hammond, and (back row) Staff Sgt. Brian Roussel joined more than 600 participants for the Sept. 11 memorial climb up the Tower of the Americas in San Antonio, Texas.**

*Readers are encouraged to submit comments or suggestions to the editorial staff via the mailbox icon to the right. Responses will assist the NewBlast staff in producing a publication to better meet readers' expectations and information needs.*



# CID offers tips on protecting online identity

**By U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command**

*Public Affairs Office*

**QUANTICO, Va.** – Now more than ever, Soldiers, Army civilians, and family members rely on the Internet to work, study, stay connected with family and friends, pay their bills or simply unwind. For criminals, the Internet provides an endless stream of potential targets to be victimized.

The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID, continually receives various reports ranging from identity theft to Internet scams, perpetrated by cyber criminals operating throughout the world. Law enforcement's ability to identify these perpetrators is difficult and limited, so individuals must stay on the alert and be personally responsible for their online presence to protect both themselves and their loved ones.

How to protect yourself:

## Online

Know the terms on social networking websites. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other social networking site privacy settings default to everyone. This means anyone can view your profile, not just people you know. Users can and should change this by accessing the Privacy Settings/Profile Information usually found under the respective account tab.

Sample social networking safely. Never disclose private information when using social networking websites. Be very selective about who you invite or accept invitations. Cyber criminals use false profiles to gain access to personal and private information, such as birthdates, marital status and personal photographs. Posts containing personal identifying information, including pictures containing metadata can be used against you and your family.

Click with caution. Always use caution when clicking on links in an email or a social networking post, even from someone you know. Reports of personal social networking accounts being hacked and taken over by criminals have increased in recent years. Clicking on a link that appears to be benign in nature

may contain embedded malware that can compromise your computer. Once compromised, the data on your computer can be exploited and even your computer can be remotely operated as a surrogate in online attacks against others.

Hide your profile from search engines. This can be accomplished by going to the Account/Privacy Settings/ Search and unchecking the "Public Search Results" box. This will remove your public preview from Google, Bing, and Yahoo search returns.

Prevent people from "tagging" you in photos and videos. To do this, go to the Account/Privacy Settings/Profile Information/Photos and Videos of Me and deselect the everyone default.

Keep your personal information safe. Don't provide personal or financial information, user names, or passwords in response to an email, because legitimate companies generally don't seek such information in this manner.

Install/update your anti-virus/firewall software. Antivirus and firewall software is a must for anyone to safely navigate online. Always keep your security software up to date in order to provide the most complete protection from malicious programs as thousands of new viruses are detected every year. Also, ensure your antivirus software program updates automatically and scans your computer on a recurring schedule.

## Free antivirus support

Current Department of Defense employees (excluding contractors, retirees, and family members) with an active AKO account can download antivirus software for free by logging in to the U.S. Army Computer Emergency Response Team website and selecting the antivirus link.

## Smartphones/Mobile devices

Know your apps. When signing up with an app store or downloading individual apps, you may be asked for permission to let them access information on your device. Some apps may be able to access your phone and email contacts, call logs, Internet data, calendar data, data about the device's location, the device's unique ID, and information about how you use the app itself. If you're providing information when you're using the device,

someone may be collecting it.

Passwords protect all devices. The time to safeguard the information on your portable electronic device is not after it has been lost or stolen. Ensure all portable electronic devices are properly password protected, especially any device with personal communications account information (email, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.).

"Brick" a stolen device. In recent years, roughly 40 percent of all robberies now involve smart phones and/or tablet computers (iPad, Kindle Fire, etc.). Thus endangering the security of the personal information on the stolen devices. If a person's smart phone is lost or stolen, they may now contact the carrier and ask to have that device remotely disabled. These "bricked" phones are of little or no use to thieves because they can't be reactivated after being sold on the black market.

## Where to go for help:

If you are a victim of an online scam where the likeness of a Soldier was utilized (false social media/dating profiles, photographs, etc.) with no further personally identifiable information disclosed, the following actions should be completed as soon as possible to assist law enforcement:

Report the theft to the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) (FBI-NW3C Partnership) at <http://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx>

If you suspect you are a victim of identity theft, you should report the crime to the FBI IC3, as well as report the theft to the Federal Trade Commission. Your report helps law enforcement officials across the United States in their investigations. Reports can be submitted online at <http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft>; by telephone at 1-877-ID-THEFT (438-4338) or TTY at 1-866-653-4261; and by postal mail at Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, D.C. 20580.

CID strongly recommends that Soldiers, civilians and family members who have information of any known crime committed by a Soldier or a crime that occurred on their respective post, camp or station to report the incident to their local CID office.

# Contracting Soldier helps bolster USASAC workforce

By Paul J. Stevenson

U.S. Army Security Assistance Command

The U.S. Army Security Assistance Command, executing security assistance programs and foreign military sales cases in more than 140 nations around the world requires a dedicated workforce, committed to the mission of building partner capacity, supporting geographic combatant command engagement strategies and strengthening U.S. global partnerships.

The workforce was bolstered recently with the arrival of a team of reservists from the Army Reserve Sustainment Command for their two-week annual training. The seven-member team, led by Lt. Col. Ken Tavares, is part of Army Materiel Command's Army Reserve Element, based out of Huntsville, Ala.

"The detachment focuses on being an enduring Reserve force of available, trained and deployable officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted Soldiers that is integrated into the AMC structure for the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of the AMC mission," Tavares said. "This detachment also focuses on providing a strategic partnership arrangement with USASAC for their world-wide mission as well as providing a 'force multiplier' in an organized, ready and trained unit of highly skilled and professional Soldiers."

Designated to provide direct support to USASAC, the team will integrate with the command's full-time staff providing support to various staff involved in foreign military sales as well as supporting command staff directorates.

The integration process figures to be a smooth one as all the team members currently either work on Redstone Arsenal or in the surrounding community.

"My civilian job as a contract specialist at Army Contracting Command absolutely helps me out performing my duties here at USASAC," Maj. Rosemary Holley-LaQuaresu, assigned to support the Performance Management Office, said. "Contracting is a big part of FMS and, by working with USASAC I have a better understanding of the (FMS) customer's needs and time constraints."

John Neil, director of USASAC's Performance Management Office, says



(Photo by Melody Sandin)

**Members of the Army Materiel Command - Army Reserve Element Sustainment Brigade recently became part of the "Army's face to the world" supporting the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command during their two weeks annual training. The team included, from left Capt. Pedro Pacheco, Maj. Rosemary Holley-LaQuaresu, Lt. Col. Ken Tavares, Lt. Col. Chris Cannon and Lt. Col. Bill Lamar.**

he is extremely pleased to have her as part of the USASAC team where her civilian skills can be used to help refine the Security Assistance Enterprise common operating picture.

"The PMO is using Maj. LaQuaresu's contracting expertise to validate the contracting milestone data we are receiving nightly from the ACC and their Virtual Contracting Enterprise-Contract Management tool," said Neil. "She is also helping us to help us build views in the COP (command operating picture) that will enable the ACC to use our COP to review FMS requirements and priorities."

Besides Tavares and LaQuaresu, the other team members supporting

USASAC directorates are Lt. Col. Chris Cannon in the U.S. Central Command Regional Operations directorate, Lt. Col. Bill Lamar in U.S. Pacific Command/ U.S. Southern Command Regional Operations directorate, Maj. Crystal McCarter in G-8 and Capt. Pedro Pacheco in U.S. European Command/U.S. Africa Command Regional Operations directorate.

"We are always looking for a few good men and women to fill vacancies for the Reserve team on Redstone Arsenal," Tavares said. For more information on joining the AMC-ARE Sustainment Brigade, call 256-535-6203 or email [randall.r.southerland.mil@mail.mil](mailto:randall.r.southerland.mil@mail.mil).



*(Courtesy photo)*

## Commander attends benefit for wounded warriors

Brig. Gen. Ted Harrison, commanding general, Expeditionary Contracting Command, and his wife, Wendy, got an opportunity to meet famed country singer, Charlie Daniels, during a dinner and performance fundraiser in Nashville, Tenn., Sept. 11. Noted for his support of the military, Daniels hosted the event as part of his Scholarships for Heroes charity. Proceeds from the event also helped benefit the Task Force Dagger Foundation which assists military members who have been wounded or injured in service to the nation.



*(Photo by Daniel P. Elkins)*

## Commander welcomes Military Affairs Committee

Brig. Gen. Kirk Vollmecke, commanding general, Mission and Installation Contracting Command, welcomes members of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Sept. 11. The committee conducted its monthly meeting at Long Barracks, which included a mission briefing on the economic impact of the command in San Antonio and across the country. The MAC promotes the city by engaging the greater San Antonio community and especially its business community to celebrate, support, maintain and grow the city's military presence.

# Army offers 24/7 suicide prevention help

By Lisa A. Ferdinando

*Army News Service*

WASHINGTON – Suicide prevention help is available 24 hours a day and that message was emphasized at the Army's Suicide Prevention Program health fair at the Pentagon Sept. 12.

"Soldiers, Army civilians and family members have options," said Sherry Simmons-Coleman, senior program analyst for the Army's Suicide Prevention Program.

Those options include talking to a member of their unit, visiting the chaplain or behavior health professional on the installation, or calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, which is available 24 hours a day at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), she said.

Simmons-Coleman, who spoke at the health fair, said the Army wants its members to know that support and counseling are available to help reduce the stresses that put people at risk for suicide.

"It's about bouncing back from adversities, tragedies and any setbacks that life presents to you," she said. "It's knowing that things will get better, that there is a light at the end of the tunnel."

The Army has marked September as National Suicide Prevention Month and National Suicide Prevention Week, Sept. 8-14, with the message that prevention is a 365-day effort.

The prevention efforts are part of the Army's Ready and Resilient Campaign that addresses the overall health – mental, physical and emotional – of Soldiers, Army civilians and family members to create a stronger, more resilient force.

Suicide is caused by multiple factors in many areas of a person's life, Simmons-Coleman said, and the Army is working to reduce the stigma associated with seeking help.

"Just like with any illness, if you are sick, get help," she said.

See **HELPLINE**, page 7.

# ACC-RI employees benefit from local training sessions

By Liz Adrian

ACC-Rock Island, Ill., Public Affairs  
Elizabeth.a.adrian.civ@mail.mil

## ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL, III. –

Approximately 60 Army Contracting Command-Rock Island employees received certification in a Contracting for Decision Makers (CON 360)-equivalent course during two sessions held here July 23-Aug. 1 and Aug. 13-22.

Holding these sessions locally not only enabled the students to move forth on obtaining their Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act Level III certifications, it also saved the command the equivalent of sending 60 people on temporary duty for two weeks. It also allowed students to keep up with workload during the summer furloughs, according to Rebecca Peterson, a program specialist in ACC-RI's training and workforce development office.

The office staff secured funding for the classes in late June, and received a couple

weeks of administrative coordination, said Peterson. She said students in the first session faced the challenge of addressing workload and pre-class requirements in the one-week turnaround between class sign-up and the start date.

"In addition to wrapping up their normal job duties and ensuring their work priorities were met before class, they also had to complete a pre-classwork writing project and reading assignment," said Peterson.

She added that the biggest challenge to the command was losing its employees to training during furlough in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year.

However, students said they were able to keep up with their workload more easily than they would have had the class been held elsewhere.

"I was grateful to still be able to work and check emails," said Nichole Segura, ACC-RI contract specialist. "Currently I am administering a contract performing in Afghanistan, and every day there is

an issue or 'fire' and two weeks without communication would have put myself and my customer in a crunch."

Segura said she has also benefitted by taking the class with other ACC-RI employees, including those she has never met.

"I loved taking class with more ACC-RI employees as this gave me the opportunity to network and socialize with folks I have never seen before," Segura said.

Peterson said that though the entire process of coordinating and executing the sessions was a "whirlwind experience," she is hopeful the training department will be able to hold more of these types of classes locally.

"With limited funding available for training, this was a fiscal win-win, plus it provides outstanding camaraderie and networking for the students," said Peterson. "As students complete their DAWIA training, they keep themselves on track to obtain their required certification levels."

## HELPLINE

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Also on hand at the wellness fair were members of the Army Reserve to talk about the resources available to address the unique stresses reservists face.

"They are balancing a regular day job, if they are employed, with the demands and obligations of their military service," said Maj. Larry Ray with the Employer Partnership Office at the Office of Chief Army Reserve.

The partnership office works to establish public and private partnerships to facilitate employment and training opportunities for veterans, reserve Soldiers and their families, to increase readiness.

Ray said Soldiers who are under-employed or unemployed may feel stressed and overwhelmed in trying to support and care for their family, putting them at risk for suicide.

"By identifying issues with our Soldiers in the financial arena, we feel that we can play a critical role in the prevention of suicide and also improve our units' readiness," he said.

"We do recognize those very specific reserve-component stressors and obstacles to maintaining that balance between family, employer and military obligation," he said.

Maj. Rebekah Montgomery, an Army Reserve chaplain, said chaplains are always available to offer counseling support and crisis intervention for anyone in the Army family.

"We serve all Soldiers, all family members, regardless of their faith. Our responsibility is to perform or provide, so if we can't provide the direct service, it is our responsibility to make sure we get someone who does," she said.

In addition to calling the crisis line or talking one-to-one with the individual, she noted that Soldiers and family members can use a new app, available on iTunes and on the Android system, called "Battle Buddy."

The app, said Montgomery, will take a person through crisis steps, provide information and allow the user to call the resource directly from the app.



(Photo by Larry D. McCaskill)

## ACC hosts fun run/bike ride

Soldiers and civilians with the Army Contracting Command joined members of the Expeditionary Contracting Command for a two mile fun run or 17.2 mile bike ride as part of the command's team-building exercise.

The Sept. 17 activity is part of the command's initiative to build esprit de corps in a physical activity outside the workplace.