

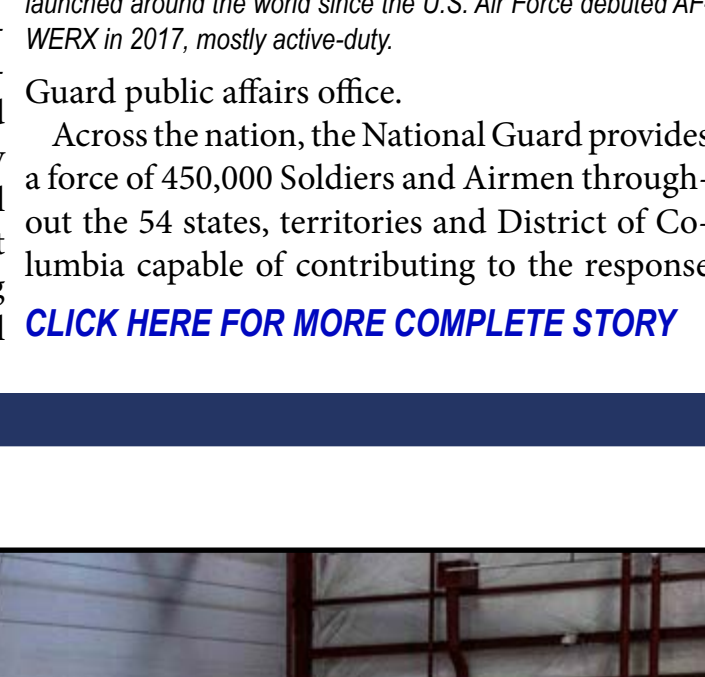
### SPECIAL EDITION: NEVADA NATIONAL GUARD RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

## Nevada Guard largest activation in history

**Story and photo by 2nd Lt. Emerson Marcus 152nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs**

Nevada National Guard activated the largest number of Guardsmen on military orders in its history when about 800 Nevada National Guard Soldiers and Airmen entered the fight against COVID-19. Gov. Steve Sisolak announced on April 14, 2020.

This is the second activation during the COVID-19 response. Sisolak called 106 Soldiers and Airmen on state military orders April 6, two days after President Donald Trump approved the state's major disaster declaration and additional federal funding. Those Guardsmen stood up donation management and supply distribution operations.



The 152nd Airlift Wing, Nevada Air National Guard, became the newest unit to develop an AFWERX spark cell with the creation of "Silver State Spark" in February 2020. About 70 spark cells launched around the world since the U.S. Air Force debuted AFWERX in 2017, mostly active-duty.

Nevada Guardsmen most recently called into service will provide medical support, food bank and warehouse logistics, transportation of supplies and set up of alternate care facilities. A majority are set to report in Las Vegas, where most

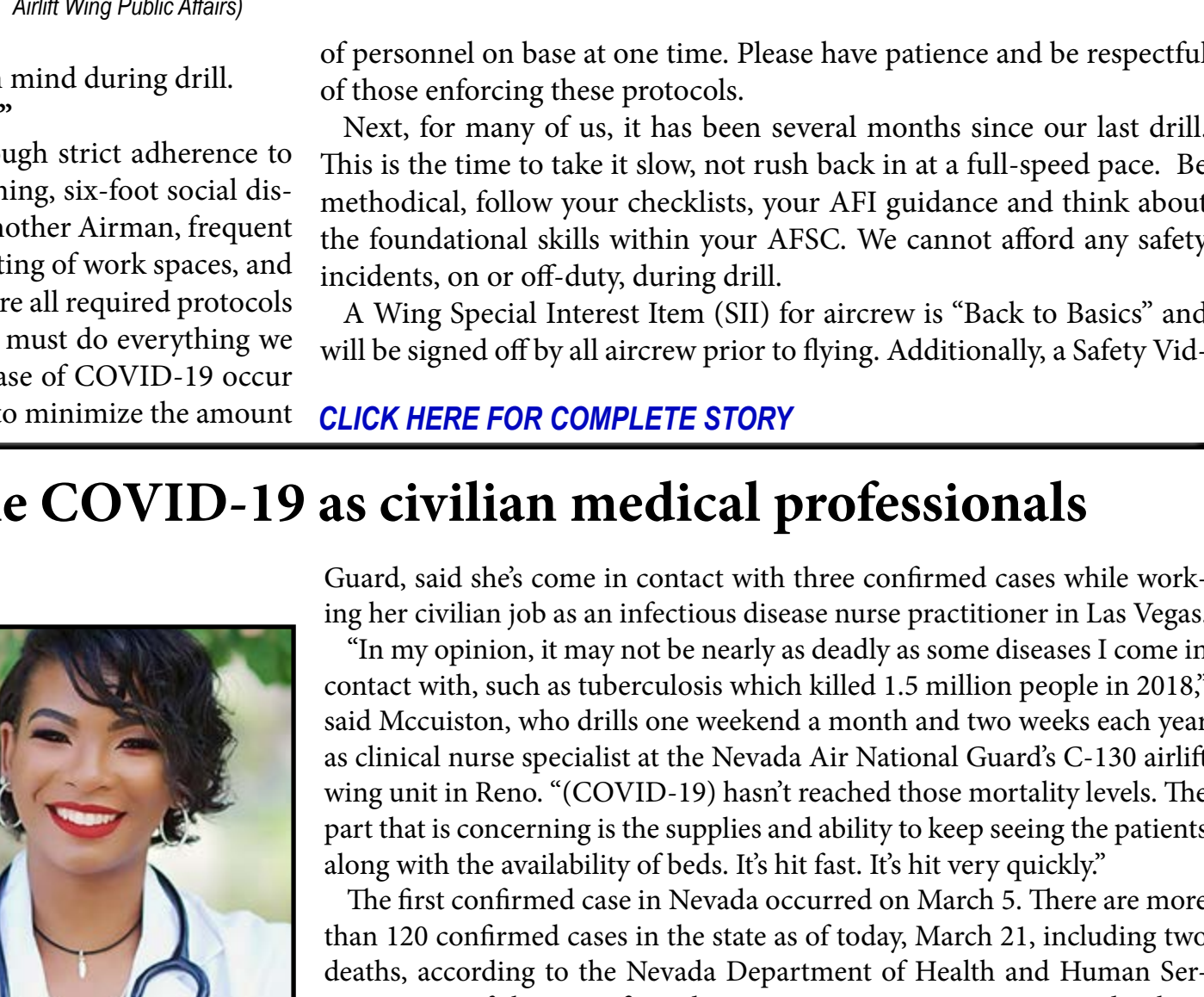
of the Silver State's confirmed cases and COVID-19 related deaths have occurred. Guard medical professionals already working COVID-19 response in their civilian professions will not be asked to report and will remain working their critically important full-time jobs. The Federal Emergency Management Agency will approve all mission requests of the Nevada Guard for federally-funded requests pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic response.

The state of Nevada has requested large numbers of the Nevada National Guard force in the past for state activation, including about 400 Guardsmen during the post-Rodney King verdict riots in Las Vegas in 1992, at least 200 during the northern Nevada floods of 1997, and 140 in response to flooding in Lemmon Valley in 2017. The announcement of an additional 700 Guardsmen today would mark the largest state activation in Nevada's history, according to research conducted by the Nevada National

## Col. Hammons' NOTAM

### The High Roller "New Normal"

**By Col. Jacob Hammons Commander, 152nd Airlift Wing**



The 152nd Airlift Wing Commander, Col. Jacob L. Hammons, held his commander's call in front of an audience of 100 (plus Public Affairs) on May 26, 2020. The event was recorded and packaged into a video that will be played during each unit's roll call at the first unit training assembly since the 2019 Coronavirus pandemic was declared. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Lee Greiner, 152nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs)

Since March, the 152nd Airlift Wing has been working with the Joint Task Force in support of COVID-19 response. While this support is ongoing, our mandate to maintain readiness within the Wing is also required. We must balance the risk to our mission readiness with our risk to the force. Through a deliberate planning process, we made the difficult decisions to postpone April drill, conduct a virtual May drill, and proceed with a modified Super Drill in June. Throughout this process, commanders and senior enlisted leaders, with the consult of healthcare professionals, have made judicious risk calculations to ensure operational safety and health protection.

of personnel on base at one time. Please have patience and be respectful of those enforcing these protocols.

Guard public affairs office. Across the nation, the National Guard provides a force of 450,000 Soldiers and Airmen throughout the 54 states, Territories and District of Columbia capable of contributing to the response

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We have implemented DoD and CDC protocols for HPCON-C, telework policies and process improvements to work shift scheduling in order to minimize large gatherings of Airmen within our work centers. We need to remain cognizant of our operational imperatives for readiness, with our MAFFS Spring Training later in June and heading into MAFFS season. That is why it is important that we conduct June drill - to get hands-on training. However, I recognize that we will all be a little "rusty" so I get back into our AFSC-specific skills training, so I am asking each of you to keep two focus areas in mind during drill.

Next, for many of us, it has been several months since our last drill. This is the time to take it slow, not rush back in at a full-speed pace. Be methodical, follow your checklists, your AFJ guidance and think about the foundational skills within your AFSC. We cannot afford any safety incidents, on or off-duty, during drill.

A Wing Special Interest Item (SI) for aircrew is "Back to Basics" and will be signed off by all aircrew prior to flying. Additionally, a Safety Vid-

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### June Drill Focus #1: Safety -- "Back to Basics"

First, we can ensure a safer environment through strict adherence to the HPCON protocols. Pre-entry medical screenings, six-foot social distancing, mask wearing when within six-feet of another Airmen, frequent sanitization through hand-washing and disinfecting of work spaces, and minimization of group gatherings to ten or less are all required protocols that each of you must follow while on base. We must do everything we can as individuals to ensure we do not have a case of COVID-19 occur during drill. Many of you will be working shifts to minimize the amount

of those enforcing these protocols.

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## Nevada Guardsmen battle COVID-19 as civilian medical professionals

**Story and photo by 2nd Lt. Emerson Marcus 152nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs**



Photo by 2nd Lt. Emerson Marcus | 1st Lt. Sparkle McCustion, 152nd Medical Group, Nevada Air National Guard, left, stands in her U.S. Air Force service dress uniform; on right, McCustion poses for a photo in scrubs she wears as a civilian infectious disease nurse practitioner in Las Vegas. McCustion she's come in contact with three confirmed cases while working her civilian job (Courtesy photo).

While the Nevada National Guard has not been activated, some members of the state's military force are among those already on the front line battling COVID-19.

Guard, said she's come in contact with three confirmed cases while working her civilian job as an infectious disease nurse practitioner in Las Vegas.

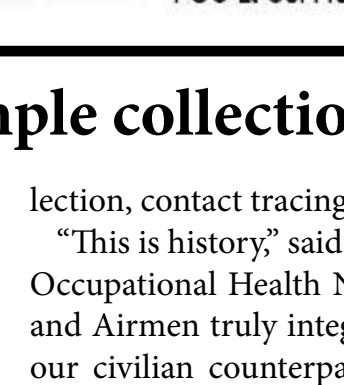
"In my opinion, it may not be nearly as deadly as some diseases I come in contact with, such as tuberculosis which killed 1.5 million people in 2018," said McCustion, who drills one weekend a month and two weeks each year as a clinical nurse specialist at the Nevada Air National Guard's C-130 airlift wing unit in Reno. "COVID-19 hasn't reached those mortality levels. The part that is concerning is the supplies and ability to keep seeing the patients along with the availability of beds. It's hit fast. It's hit very quickly!"

1st Lt. Sparkle McCustion, 152nd Medical Group, Nevada Air National

of those enforcing these protocols.

The first confirmed case in Nevada occurred on March 5. There are more than 120 confirmed cases in the state as of today, March 21, including two deaths, according to the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services. Most of those confirmed cases are in Las Vegas. Nationwide, there have been more than 15,000 confirmed cases with more than 200 deaths, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website reported Friday.

Private First Class Franklin Kamen served with the 58th Armored Infantry Battalion in Europe. When he returned home from the war, he completed a Doctorate in Astronomy and worked at the Army Map Service, but was later fired for being gay and was barred from ever working at the Federal Government again. He sued the federal government in a case that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. While he didn't win his case, it was just the beginning. He dedicated his life to fighting for gay rights, helping to pave the way for other LGBT Americans to work for the federal Government. He is considered one of the Founding Fathers of the Gay Rights Movement.



Christine Jorgensen, one of the most famous transgender veterans, was drafted into the Army in 1945 as George Jorgensen. After the War, George traveled to Denmark and underwent surgery starting in 1951. Christine later returned to the US in the 1950s and her transition made the front page of the New York Daily News. She worked as an advocate for transgender people and as an actress.

McCustion, 30, said she's worked at several hospitals in the past week, including Desert Springs, Southern Hills, Spring Valley and the Kindred long-term care facility. She regularly works at multiple hospitals each day.

Given her close contact with the virus, McCustion said one of her biggest fears is passing COVID-19 to other people, especially the elderly. She has quarantined herself at home when not at work and avoids shopping for groceries. Her boyfriend leaves the house to purchase essential items.

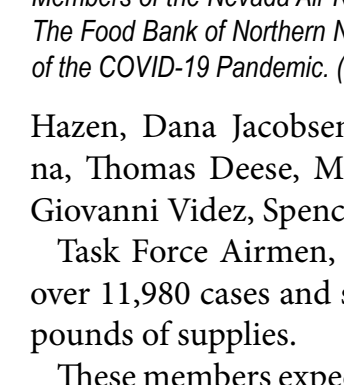
"I am trying to limit my exposure to everybody," McCustion said. "I have not exposed myself to anybody outside our home and only come into contact with people outside when I'm at work. Nurses are getting COVID-19. It's definitely spreading in the community faster than many expected."

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## UNCLASSIFIED LGBT PRIDE MONTH

This year we are commemorating the 75th Anniversary of World War II by recognizing the contributions and sacrifices made by Service members as well as those who served on the home front. This month, we pay tribute to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Service members and their vital contributions to the American Story. There is not a lot known about LGBT service member during WWII due to regulations that effectively banned openly LGBT people in the military. However, the ban didn't stop hundreds of thousands of LGBT Americans from serving their country during WWII. Here are a few of those service members who not only battled American enemies abroad, but also made a difference in the fight for LGBT equality.

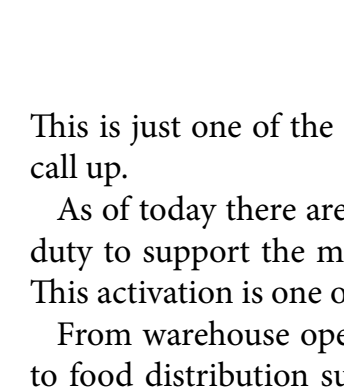
2Lt Rupert Starr, served in Europe with the U.S. Army's 42nd Infantry Regiment of the 108th Infantry Division. After a few near misses, Lt Starr was captured by the Germans and spent time as a POW enduring forced marches in subzero weather and an eight day transfer via burlap sack, often without food or water. He returned home with a Bronze Star for heroism. In the early 2000s, when he was in his mid-80s, Lt Starr began speaking out against Don't Ask, Don't Tell.



Blaine Beatty, a former member of the U.S. Air Force, was one of the first openly gay military members. He was discharged in 1954 for being gay and later became a prominent advocate for LGBT rights in the military.

Patricia Childers joined in the WACs as a nurse in 1945. After the war, the hunt for gay men and lesbians intensified. The Army was hunting down and dishonorably discharging these members. In 1947, to gain an honorable discharge, Pat married a gay man and became Pat Bond. She went on to become an actress and did a one woman show in NYC in 1982 called, "Murder in the WAC" which tells her story and the story of other lesbians during their time in the WAC.

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POC Lt Col Fletcher

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## Nevada Guard begins COVID-19 sample collection support

**Story by 2nd Lt. Emerson Marcus 152nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs**

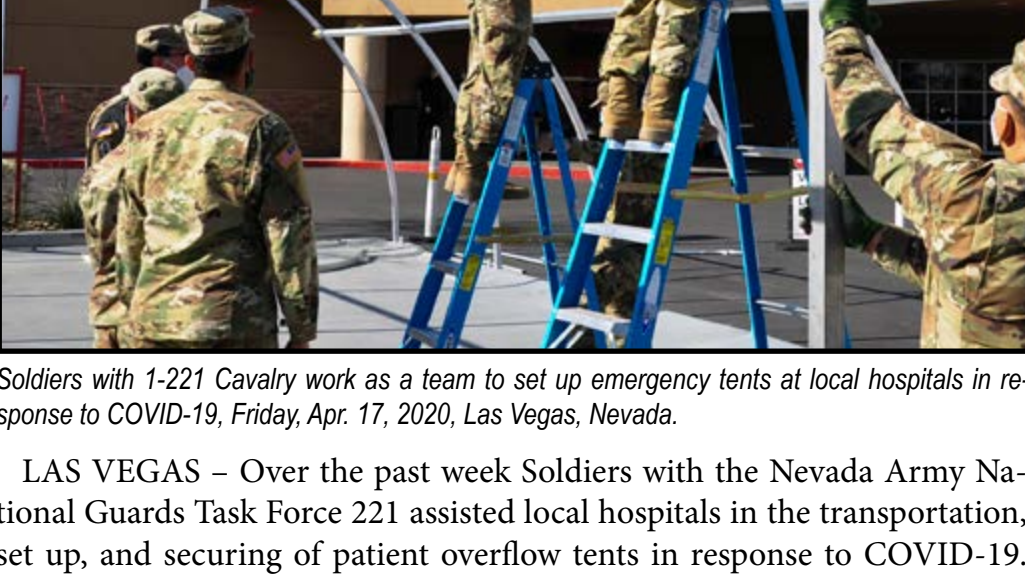


Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Paul Hinen, 152nd Medical Group, Nevada Air National Guard, Senior Airman Mia Carney takes a sample to be sent out for testing for COVID-19 at the Fenley High School in Fenley, Nev.

The Nevada National Guard began assisting Washoe County Health District COVID-19 sample collection capability April 20, 2020, at the Reno-Sparks Livestock Events Center with about 30 medical support personnel. Nevada National Guard duty assignments at the site include sample col-

lection, contact tracing along with call center and administrative support.

"This is history," said Maj. Laurie MacAfee, Nevada National Guard State Occupational Health Nurse. "This is the first time I've ever seen Soldiers and Airmen truly integrate as one in this kind of scenario and work with our civilian counterparts. It's incredible. The relationship we built with Washoe County has been fantastic."

MacAfee, along with other Guardsmen at the Joint Operations Center in Carson City, developed the plan last week to integrate Guardsmen with health district personnel and members of the community emergency response team, or CERT. MacAfee is set to meet with the Southern Nevada Health District, regional hospitals and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas this week for plans to assist in their sample collection efforts.

MacAfee said, "The Washoe County Health District has done an incredible job. We are so impressed. We are supporting their process, which was already in place."

The Nevada Guard aids the health district in its efforts to meet Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak's directive to testing expansion, MacAfee said. The Reno-Sparks Livestock Events Center site collects about 250-300 samples each day and is operational four days each week: Monday, Wednesday

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## Task Force 152: Helping the Community

**By Senior Master Sgt. Joseph Puertos 152nd Logistics Readiness Squadron**

The Nevada Air National Guard has embraced the time this pandemic crisis has created. During their supporting role assisting the Nevada Health and Human Services Department and the Division of Emergency Management, the 152nd Task Force has been assisting The Food Bank of Northern Nevada.

Since mid-April, 2020, Airmen of the 152nd Task Force have taken on an important mission assisting the Food Bank of Northern Nevada in collecting, sorting, and assisting food bank personnel and volunteers with distributing food to those who have difficulty purchasing enough to avoid hunger. These Airmen are proud of helping fellow Nevadans and their communities at large.

"We could not do it without the staffing power of the volunteers, we could not do it without our community partners that let us use their parking lots and spaces," Mike Escobar, Program Specialist of the Food Bank of Northern Nevada said, "and thank you to the National Guard for providing additional personnel, Air Guard in particular has been especially valuable at the warehouse in helping us pack all manner of products, as well as helping us coordinate what can sometimes be difficult traffic patterns here at the distribution sites."

"Making a difference" Talking with several Airmen involved had a common theme--helping out makes a difference in everyone's lives. "It makes me feel really good. I love the fact that we can be here and support the people in our community," Staff Sgt. Eric Terry said, "Even at the Food Bank, it's been backbreaking hard work, but I've enjoyed every second of it because I know I'm making a difference."

Members assisting the Food Bank included: Master Sgts. Loren Gaebe, Dominic Tanzi, Tech. Sgts. Douglas Quevedo, James Remington, Andrew Kapczynski, Cory Moffett, Staff Sgts. Eric Terry, Donovan Harrison, Ryan

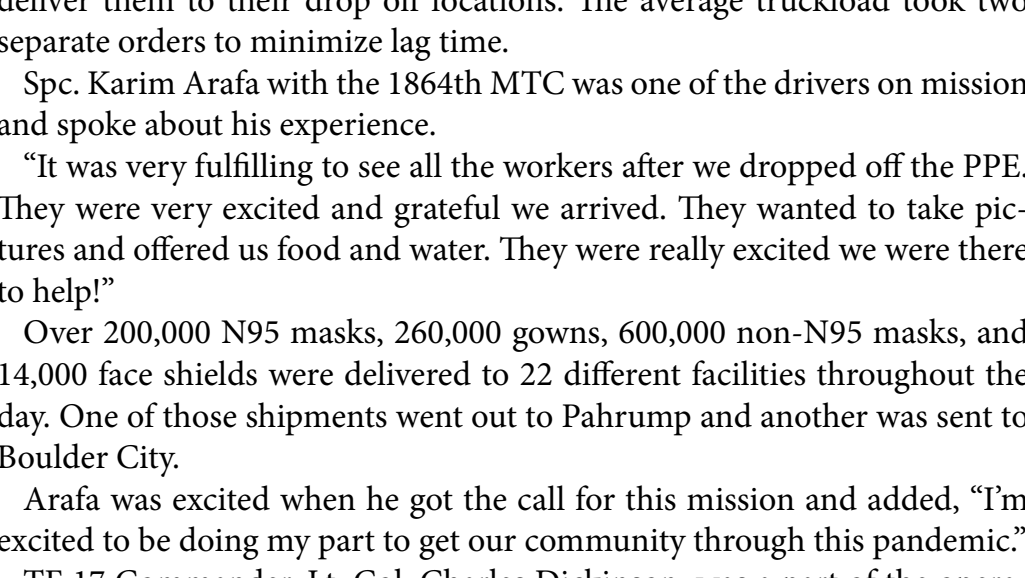
Hazen, Dana Jacobsen, Senior Airman Anderson, Marcus Medina, Thomas Deese, Marcus Johnson, Airmen 1st Class Jimmy Heinson, Giovanni Vitez, Spencer Furlong, and Airman 1st Class Chase.

Task Force Airmen, as of May 31, had inspected, sorted and packaged over 11,980 cases and served over 865,964 families and distributed 86,048 pounds of supplies.

"These members expect to be finished with their portion of the COVID-19 response some time in the near future."

## Task Force 221 Steps Up to Support Local Las Vegas Hospitals During the COVID-19 Pandemic

**Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Ryan Getsie 17th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Section**



Soldiers with 1-221 Cavalry work as a team to set up emergency tents at local hospitals in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Friday, April 17, 2020, Las Vegas, Nevada.

LAS VEGAS - Over the past week Soldiers with the Nevada Army National Guards Task Force 221 assisted local hospitals in the transportation, set up, and securing of patient overflow tents in response to COVID-19.

This is just one of the many missions the 221 has been running since the call up.

As of today there are over 1,000 Nevada National Guard Soldiers and Airman on duty to support the many COVID-19 response missions across the state. This activation is one of the largest in this state's history.

"Our mission today was to deliver food to members of the Las Vegas community that are struggling from the COVID-19 situation," said 2nd Lt. Jason Lee.

From warehouse operations that distribute emergency medical supplies to food distribution support sites through the Clark County School District, the Soldiers of the 221 have taken off their armor in exchange for humanitarian assistance to Las Vegas in this time of need.

On April 17, 2020, 1st Lt. Benjamin Holden with the 1-221 Cavalry began to command roughly 17 Soldiers to help local hospitals with the transport and set up of emergency patient overflow tents.

"We could not do it without the staffing power of the volunteers, we could not do it without our community partners that let us use their parking lots and spaces," Mike Escobar, Program Specialist of the Food Bank of Northern Nevada said, "and thank you to the National Guard for providing additional personnel, Air Guard in particular has been especially valuable at the warehouse in helping us pack all manner of products, as well as helping us coordinate what can sometimes be difficult traffic patterns here at the distribution sites."

"Our mission is to set up tents for local hospitals so if they were to hit capacity during this COVID-19 crisis they would have an overflow area for patients," Holden said.

This shelter set up is a precaution if there was an up-tick in COVID-19 cases within the Las Vegas area. Each tent will roughly support 20 patients. One of the Soldiers ever had experience setting up these structures before, but none of that which Guard Soldiers bring to the table is a diverse civilian experience, Holden explained.

"One of the great assets we have as Guard Soldiers is being civilians in our everyday lives. I think that experience helped us coordinate and eventually set up these tents. Some of these Soldiers work construction and they're planners and engineers."

"I just think it's an amazing collaboration with the Guard. We learn more efficient ways of doing things together. We were doing about 250 patients per day, but with the National Guard here we've been able to do more," Palmer said.

Currently, the CBCS at UNLV runs operations from 8:30 - 4:30 everyday. Palmer just explaining that a person needs an appointment and that patients aren't just driving through at random.

"Anyone in Southern Nevada can essentially go online to get our phone [CLICK HERE FOR COMPLETE STORY](#)

## Nevada Guardsmen Help Distribute Food at Palace Station Casino

**Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Ryan Getsie 17th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Section**

LAS VEGAS - Soldiers with the Nevada Army National Guard Task Force 17 distributed much needed personal protective equipment to healthcare partners in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Thursday, Apr. 23, 2020 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The rumble of Guard trucks could be heard as they rolled out of the Las Vegas Readiness Center this past Thursday. The Soldier's mission was to pick up pallets of personal protective equipment (PPE) and deliver them to various healthcare partners.

The 1864th Motor Transportation Company (MTC) spearheaded this effort and they only had the morning to mobilize and kick into gear. Drivers were ordered to pick up the pallets at a specified location in town and then deliver them to their drop off locations. The average truckload took two separate carter to minimize lag time.

"It was very fulfilling to see all the workers after we dropped off the PPE. They were very excited and grateful we arrived. They wanted to take pictures and offered us food and water. They were really excited we were there to help!"

There are multiple missions across the Silver State with roughly 653 Guardsmen on three southern task forces. Roughly 431 have joined the fight in northern Nevada. These men and women have turned in their weapons and armor for masks and scrubs in the largest state activation in Nevada

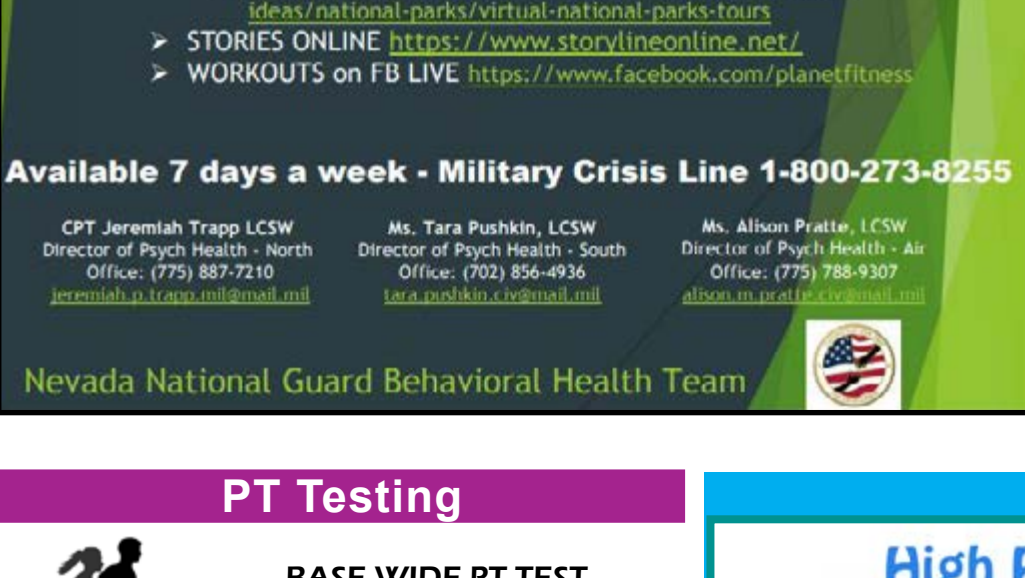
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Dickinson shared his enthusiasm and appreciation for everyone involved in this fight against COVID-19.

"We're happy to be on board and help our community. We do appreciate all our responders out there and the essential employees: the people that make sure our grocery stores and basic way of life continues on."

## Task Force 17 Supports COVID-19 Operations at Cushman Field

**Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Ryan Getsie 17th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Section**



Tech. Sgts. Dion Richardson with the 152nd Medical Group/supplier fill tests Soldiers of 240th Engineer Company before support operations in response to COVID-19, Friday, April 17, 2020, Las Vegas, Nevada

LAS VEGAS - Soldiers with the Nevada Army National Guard Task Force 17 began to run support operations at Las Vegas Cushman Field in response to COVID-19, Friday, April 17, 2020.

"Our mission is to support the civilian personnel who are short-staffed here. We do this by helping manage logistics and other operational support for displaced people at this facility," said 1st Lt. Christopher Banford with the 240th Engineer Company.

Mr. Rick Rozen with Team Rubicon briefly explains. "The training they're getting introduces them to what a blood-borne pathogen is and also what is an air-borne pathogen like COVID-19. In addition, they get educated on all the ways the pathogens are to protect them from the different types of environments that can be exposed to. They also get instruction on the use of proper protective equipment."

Rosen works with the incident management team and is no stranger to disaster relief efforts. He has helped manage incidents both nationally and internationally.

"Just like the Army, we have a posture of protection. If you look at the NBC with different MOPP levels, here we have the same thing. We go from green to yellow to red. Each color designates a different level of personal protection used," He explained.

As an example, the green zone will require a Soldier to wear a N95 mask, gloves, eye protection and apron, while the red zone has the strictest requirements that involve donning all the above, but adds head to toe coverings with a face shield. This protects the Soldier from any indirect contact with a displaced person who might have COVID-19 while working on site. Soldiers are required to maintain their 6 foot plus distance at all times and they are strictly there as support for operations.

There are also protocols in place for when personnel get ready to leave the facility and the strictest measures are taken to decontaminate all clothing before entering into the locker room and staff showers. For instance, Spc. Lawrence Jones with the 72nd Military Police Company will disinfect contact worker's shoes before they are allowed to proceed to further decontamination stations.

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Before Engineers began to don all their protective gear and head down

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