



MARCH 7, 2013

# DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS



*Staff Sgt. Antonio Caster, kneeling center, an Army medic with the 508th Military Police Company, overseas medical training for Afghan police officers in Kabul.*

## NJ GUARDSMEN SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS OF AFGHANISTAN DEPLOYMENT

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CAPT. MARVIN BAKER, 136TH MANEUVER ENHANCEMENT BRIGADE

**KABUL, Afghanistan** — A group of once cautious and self-restrained Soldiers in Task Force Centurion, who kept an arm's-length distance from their Afghan police mentees, learned to close that space and to develop meaningful mentor-mentee relationships that will make a difference in their lives and the lives of the police they mentor.

"The first day of work, I was a little bit nervous because I heard of the green-on-blue incidents," said Sgt. Juan Rodriguez, a police mentor for the 508th Military Police Company, New Jersey National Guard. "Once we got boots-on-ground, day-by-day we grew our relationship and it got better. We became friends just by sharing stories. They showed us a different side of themselves than what we expected."

Rodriguez is one of nearly a dozen mentors assigned to Task Force Centurion's Police Advisory Team who are responsible

for mentoring Afghan Uniformed Police Quick Reaction Force members in Kabul. The mentoring program is accomplished through training the Afghan police in combat life-savings and military operations in urban terrain skills. While many of the mentors are from the 508th, who are stationed in Cherry Hill, N.J., the Police Advisory Team leaders are based in the 136th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, Texas Army National Guard. And they all came together last September to help increase the security and stability in Afghanistan's most populated city—Kabul.

The mentoring team initiated its training program last fall during the height of the green-on-blue attacks in Afghanistan, which are attacks where insurgents infiltrate the ranks of the Afghan National Security Forces in order to get close to and kill coalition forces. Many members of the

team approached their new mission with prudence and cautious optimism.

"We felt comfortable with doing QRF because we have done it on previous deployments," said Rodriguez. "But we didn't know what to expect with teaching QRF to the Afghans."

Rodriguez's mentees, The Afghan Uniformed Police, may have also carried the same anxiousness at the start of the mentoring program. However, both, mentors and mentees knew that they had to overcome their fears. The success of their missions relied on it. The lives of the police officers, after completing the program, relied on it. Last year, more than 1,400 police officers were killed in action fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan and almost 50 U.S. service members died as a result of insider attacks

**SEE, SOLDIERS, ON PG. 2**



*Spc. Chaddy Cantona, right, 508th Military Police, poses for a photo next to an Afghan Uniformed Police Quick Reaction Forces officer after both participated in a recent graduation ceremony for the AUP.*

## SOLDIERS

*Continued from Pg. 1*

while training ANSF to take on the Taliban. Nearly a third of those green-on-blue casualties occurred the month before the Texas and New Jersey Army National Guard military police units started their mentoring in Kabul.

Now, nearly five months later, Task Force Centurion mentors have learned one way they can decrease the likelihood of green-on-blue attacks—greeting and treating each Afghan National Security Force member they work with respectfully. This creates a strong bond between the two, said Rodriguez and helps the mentors better notice negative changes in the officer's attitude toward the coalition, an indication that the officer may have been radicalized by the Taliban. Other methods to decrease the threats came from International Security Force Assistant initiatives, such as adding “guardian angels” to their coalition missions. Their specific assignment is to watch over the advisers as they conduct their training. More robust, Afghan-led screening processes for recruits also enhanced the safety of mentorship teams.

Now, Soldiers in the 508th Military Police Company conduct a two-month training program with the Afghan Uniformed Police Quick Reaction Force, with the mentors spending about 20 hours a week with the Afghan police officers. Although the group has many success stories in their training program, such as graduating their first group of almost 50 mentees last month, the group of young enlisted Soldiers remains diligent and enjoys the experience. They know that their current success does not guarantee future success.

One Soldier, Spc. Brittany Boyd, is on her second deployment and says she did a similar training mission in Iraq. She wanted to have the same experience in Afghanistan.

“In Iraq, we trained them on medical and battlefield movements every day,” said Boyd. “A lot of their district officers were getting killed in action, so they were especially interested in learning.”

Boyd noticed the Afghan police knew a lot of military techniques because of previous training and mentoring from the coalition.

“When we leave, we can feel comfortable that these police districts can handle it on their own,” Boyd said. “We are doing police-on-police training. I hope the knowledge I pass on will continue to be passed to future groups of police after we leave.”

While Boyd and Rodriguez mentor the QRF on military movement techniques, another police mentor, Staff Sgt. Antonio Caster, an Army medic, regularly works with Afghan police non-commissioned officers. Caster works with the AUP NCO Academy program in Kabul. The Academy brings representatives from 30 police districts and guides NCOs through medical instruction ranging from CPR to intensive emergency medical response training. Some of the trainees move on to more thorough medical training, leading up to certification as a physician's assistant, Caster said. Caster, a native of Teaneck, N.J., came to Afghanistan about five months ago after leaving his home-town job as a bartender.

“There are no similarities in what I do as a civilian to what I do in the National Guard,” Caster said. “Often, as a bartender, I see people at their worst. But here, I've seen people just the opposite.”

Although Caster spent several weeks training for his mission, he agreed with the other mentors, saying, “the pre-deployment training helped me feel more confident, but you are never fully prepared until you get your feet on the ground here.”

Before Caster arrived, his idea of Afghanistan stemmed from what he saw on the news. He thought the Afghans didn't want the U.S. in their country and that he couldn't make a real difference in their lives.

“I was really nervous before I came here,” Caster said. “As we went along, I saw that I can make a difference. When I go to the police districts, I often get to treat their lingering wounds. They appreciate it and they say ‘thank you’ sincerely, which is different than our casual showing of gratitude in the U.S.”

Spc. Chaddy Cantona, another medic with the 508th, said he volunteered for the deployment in order to help and care for other people.

“As a civilian, I wasn't doing exactly what I felt I wanted to do in life,” said Cantona. “This is my first deployment and it has been an eye-opening experience.”

Cantona said he was surprised by the understanding attitudes of the people in Kabul, which, after a decade of living and working side-by-side with coalition forces, has helped the city become more urbanized in many aspects.

“Over the years, Afghans and Americans have learned from each other, socially and professionally,” Cantona said.

Back home, Cantona works in an emergency room as a technician. He said he is used to seeing and treating injuries—real and make believe. He grew up in the Philippines and as a child played a role-play game with his brother, where he always volunteered to be the medic.

“We role-played characters and I always wanted to play the medical character because he got to help ‘injured’ people during the game by reviving them” he said. “When I was a junior in high school, a recruiter told me about medical training, so I took the opportunity.”

Cantona's goal is to become a physician's assistant in the military and the civilian world.

“I want to take my health care skills and travel the world helping other people,” Cantona said. “The things I am learning on this deployment will get me where I want to be,” he said.



**2013 Hiring Our Heroes – Lawrenceville, NJ**  
**STUDENT RECREATION CENTER – RIDER UNIVERSITY**  
 2083 Lawrenceville Road  
 Lawrenceville, NJ 08648  
 March 21, 2013  
 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Join us Thursday, March 21, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for a job fair for veteran job seekers, active duty military, members of the National Guard and reserve components, and military spouses at the Rider University's Student Recreation Center. This event will be FREE for both employers and job seekers. From 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., this event will be open to the public.

#### EMPLOYERS

Must register for FREE at [HOH.GreatJob.net](http://HOH.GreatJob.net)

#### JOB SEEKERS

Register for FREE at [HOH.GreatJob.net](http://HOH.GreatJob.net) to guarantee admission. Walk-ins welcome but space not guaranteed.

This veteran career fair and military expo is sponsored by Rider University and the American Legion and conducted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; New Jersey Committee, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR); the Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL VETS); the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; NBC News, and other local partners.

**[rider.edu/veterancareerfair](http://rider.edu/veterancareerfair)**

**609-896-5033 or [ccs@rider.edu](mailto:ccs@rider.edu)**

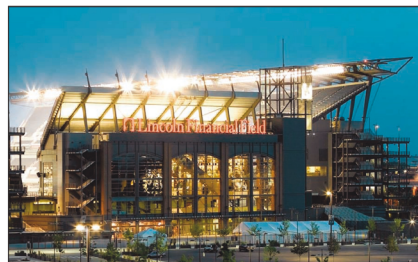


**RECRUIT MILITARY®**

## Job Fair for Veterans

THIS FREE HIRING EVENT IS FOR:

- ♦ men and women who are transitioning to civilian life
- ♦ veterans who already have civilian work experience
- ♦ members of the National Guard and reserve forces
- ♦ military spouses, other members of military families



**March 14, 2013**

FROM 11:00 A.M. UNTIL 3:00 P.M.

## Lincoln Financial Field

1020 PATTISON AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA



#### ♦ Job Opportunities -

**Companies are hiring!**

- ♦ Continuing-Education Opportunities
- ♦ Business-Ownership Opportunities



Produced by RecruitMilitary in cooperation with The American Legion  
 For details and directions, visit <https://events.recruitmilitary.com>



#### Open to Veterans & their Families

Employers from many industries are participating  
 (Note: employer list not available prior to event)

**Wednesday, March 27, 2013**  
 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**SEMINAR:**  
 How to Search for a Government Job

**Army National Guard Armory**  
 1200 Whitesville Road  
 Toms River, NJ 08753

Veterans pre-register online at  
<https://twd.state.nj.us/formsapp/form/94>

Employers pre-register online at  
<https://twd.state.nj.us/formsapp/form/76>

Click on link, complete form, submit, and print confirmation.

Chris Christie, Governor  
 Harold J. Wirths, Commissioner

**Bring Your Resume and Dress For Success!**

**FREE**  
 Resume Writing  
 seminar  
 and critiques



**2013 Hiring Our Heroes Job Fair – Camden, NJ**

Susquehanna Bank Center

1 Harbour Boulevard, Camden, NJ 08103

April 25, 2013

**HIRING FAIR: 11:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.**

**MILITARY TRANSITION WORKSHOP: 8:30 A.M.**

This American Legion- and ESGR-sponsored hiring event is being hosted by the Susquehanna Bank Center and conducted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation; Camden County, Board of Freeholders; the Camden County Office of Veterans Affairs; the American Legion Camden County Executive Committee; the Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL VETS); New Jersey Committee, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR); the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; the NJ State Parole Board; NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development; NBC News, and other local partners.

#### EMPLOYERS

Must have available jobs.  
 Register for FREE at [HOH.GreatJob.net](http://HOH.GreatJob.net)

#### JOB SEEKERS

Veterans, Active Duty Military, Members Of Guard And Reserve Components, Military Spouses  
 Register for FREE at [HOH.GreatJob.net](http://HOH.GreatJob.net)  
 WALK-INS WELCOME

A workshop for veterans and military that focuses on resume writing, tips for successfully navigating hiring fairs, military skill translation, and interviewing will start at 8:30 A.M.

For registration questions, please contact [hiringourheroes@uschamber.com](mailto:hiringourheroes@uschamber.com) or call 202463-5807.



**[WWW.HIRINGOURHEROES.ORG](http://WWW.HIRINGOURHEROES.ORG)**

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## NEW JERSEY MVC ANNOUNCES CDL SKILL TEST WAIVER FOR CERTAIN SERVICE MEMBERS

Story and photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA



Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, The Adjutant General, while sitting in a New Jersey National Guard's Light Medium Tactical Vehicle (LMTV) talked to Raymond P. Martinez, New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) Chairman and Chief Administrator March 6, at the Lawrenceville Armory regarding some recent rules changes that would benefit some military members.

Martinez visited the Lawrenceville maintenance shop to announce a rule change to waive CDL skills test for certain applicants with military experience operating commercial motor vehicles.

An individual may substitute two years of safe commercial motor vehicle military driving experience for the required driving skills test needed to qualify for a New Jersey Commercial Driver's License Class A or Class B.

Last month, Governor Chris Christie signed two bills into law allowing for the transfer of certain military commercial driver licenses to NJ commercial driver license for vehicles that have a gross weight rating of 26,001 or more pounds, or display a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 or more pounds, or a vehicle that has a gross combination weight rating of 26,001 or more pounds inclusive of a towed unit with a gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds. Applicants for a commercial driver license to operate school busses or vehicles used to transport hazardous material will not be given a waiver under these bills.

The service member needs to provide the MVC with satisfactory proof the applicant is a member of a branch of the active or reserve component of the military within the last 90 days in a military position requiring the operation of a military motor vehicle equivalent to a Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV).

A Military CDL Skills Test Waiver Form certified by the service member's commanding officer's is another requirement. For more information visit the nearest MVC office or call 609-292-6500.



Photo above, Tom Lamaine, former Navy pilot and longtime Philadelphia area broadcaster, was the guest speaker at the Joint Training and Training Development Center's annual "Hail and Farewell" March 2, 2013. Top left, Brig. Gen. James J. Grant, left, presents an award to retiring Sgt. 1st Class Christian Dimeo at the "Hail and Farewell" ceremony. Bottom left, proud retirees Maj. Paul Tavarone, left, Army Master Sgt. Charles Gulyas, center, and Sgt. 1st Class Christian Dimeo, right, hold their certificates of retirement. (Photos by Army Staff Sgt. Nick Young/NJDMAVA/PA)

## CARLINI TO RETIRE APRIL FIRST

*His dedicated services extended through several decades and various positions*

By Staff Sgt. Wayne Woolley, NJDMAVA/PA

When Frank Carlini took over the job as NJDMAVA's Director of Healthcare Services eight years ago, he knew he'd have no trouble managing, or leading.

He'd spent a year commanding an Army infantry platoon in Vietnam and nearly two decades in key leadership positions in the New Jersey Army National Guard, retiring in 2004 as a brigadier general.

"But I was an infantry guy and this was healthcare," Carlini said with a chuckle. "I learned a lot and it's a testament to an amazing staff. They taught me the trade with great forbearance and a sense of humor."

After eight years on the job, Carlini will retire April 1 from the position overseeing the department's three Veterans Memorial Homes.

"It was a good eight years," Carlini said. "With the hard work



PHOTO BY MARK C. OLSEN

*"The biggest things I will miss are the people and just the great atmosphere that exists here at DMAVA."*

**Frank Carlini**

of the staff, we've been able to accomplish a lot."

The list of improvements to the homes and their operations during Carlini's tenure is long indeed.

A new home was constructed in Vineland, the long-awaited multi-purpose room and ventilation system was completed in Paramus and all of the homes consistently received high ratings for resident care.

But Carlini said some of the biggest changes at the homes were transparent to a casual observer.

During Carlini's tenure, operations procedures for the homes were standardized, the application process was streamlined and the work to digitize all medical records was begun.

Carlini and his team also logged countless hours to establish evacuation procedures that involved cooperation between local, county officials and plans to temporarily shelter residents at National Guard armories in the event of a disaster.

Carlini said he's most proud that during his tenure, the high quality of care in the homes has been maintained.

"You go to other facilities, you see people in wheelchairs sitting in hallways," he said. "That doesn't happen at our homes. There are activities for the residents and that's because of our staff – and an amazing volunteer network."

At 66, Carlini has no firm plans for what he'll do next beyond relaxing and enjoying his grandchildren.

"The biggest things I will miss are the people and just the great atmosphere that exists here at DMAVA," he said. "When a problem comes up, people get together and figure out how to fix it."

If there is one day Carlini's absence will be most conspicuous, it will be Wassailing Day, an event where his leading the DMAVA staff in the singing of the "Hippopotamus Song" has become tradition. No worries. He's passed the mantle on to Ernie Razanno, the Division of Healthcare Services recruiter.



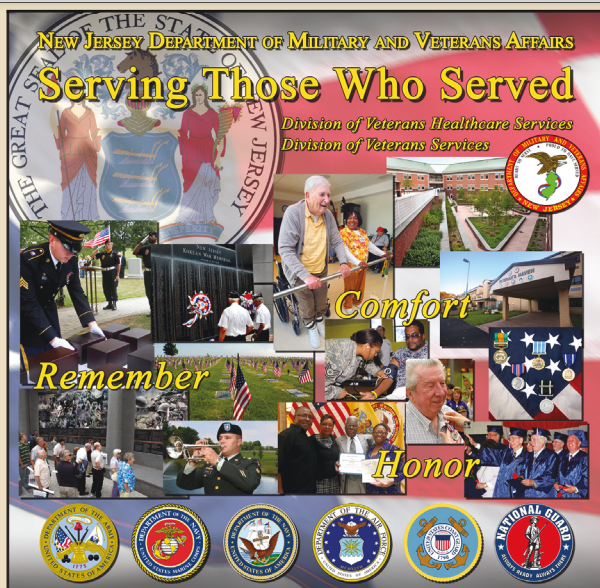
PHOTO BY MARK C. OLSEN



PHOTO BY MARK C. OLSEN



**CONGRATULATIONS COL. LYONS** - Among family and friends, Col. Michael Lyons, center, is pinned colonel rank by his sister, left, and his girlfriend, right, during a promotion ceremony at the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs' Lawrenceville headquarters March 7, 2013. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/NJDMAVA/PA)



## **NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS Veterans Outreach Campaign**

### **MONMOUTH MALL**

March \*19, 20 & 21

\* Medal Ceremony at 11:00a.m. on Tuesday, March 19  
Kiosk hours 10 a.m. – 8p.m.

180 Route 35 South, Eatontown, NJ 07724  
(Monmouth County)

### **LIVINGSTON MALL**

April \*9, 10 & 11

\* Medal Ceremony at 11:00a.m. on Tuesday, April 9  
Kiosk hours 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

112 Eisenhower Parkway, Livingston, NJ 07039  
(Essex County)

**DMAVA Highlights** is published weekly by the Public Affairs Office of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force, the National Guard, Veterans Affairs or the state of New Jersey. Letters may be sent to: NJDMAVA, DMAVA Highlights, Public Affairs Office, PO Box 340, Trenton NJ 08625-0340. e-mail at [pao@njdmava.state.nj.us](mailto:pao@njdmava.state.nj.us).

**New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs**  
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Brig. Gen. James J. Grant – Director, Joint Staff  
Raymond Zawacki – Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs  
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Patrick Daugherty – Public Affairs Officer  
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