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DMA Military Newsletter

February 18, 2026



Military

NJ Department of
Military Affairs

Ready to serve ★ military.nj.gov

Commissioner's Corner



From Community Investment to Global Impact

Over the past two weeks, we marked several important moments for the New Jersey National Guard. Though very different, each highlight how we prepare and support our Soldiers and Airmen for the missions ahead.

We recently bid farewell to Soldiers of the 350th Finance Company as they prepare to deploy to the Central Command Area of Responsibility in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. Their mission ensures commanders and units operating forward have the financial support and accountability needed to sustain operations. Their training, discipline, and teamwork will deliver support to units deployed throughout the Middle East.

Just days earlier, we broke ground on a new Vehicle Maintenance Shop in Vineland, a project that will directly support units across New Jersey. Modern facilities and skilled technicians ensure our equipment remains mission capable, allowing Soldiers and Airmen to respond whenever called, whether overseas or here at home.

This past week also brought national recognition to one of our own. Lt. Col. Eric “Rebel” Emerson of the 177th Fighter Wing became the first Air National Guard member to receive the prestigious Anthony C. Shine Award, honoring excellence in fighter aviation, leadership, and service. His achievement highlights the professionalism and operational impact our Airmen deliver every day, both at home station and while supporting operations around the globe.

Taken together, these events show that mission success begins long before deployment or activation. It is built through investment in our people, our infrastructure, and the partnerships we share with communities across New Jersey and the United States.

Families, employers, and partners all contribute to the strength of our force.

Whether deploying abroad, supporting operations here at home, or earning distinction on the national stage, our service members continue to demonstrate dedication and service to our state and country. I remain incredibly proud of the Soldiers, Airmen, and civilian employees who make this organization strong every day.

As always, thank you for staying connected to DMA.

We invite you to share ideas, events and feedback. Please email our team at outreach@dma.nj.gov.

Brigadier General Yvonne L. Mays
Adjutant General & Commissioner



Events



Carol Murphy
NEW JERSEY ASSEMBLY

Assemblywoman Carol Murphy's

VETERAN ADVISORY GROUP

All veterans and services members are welcomed to ask questions and discuss solutions with Assemblywoman Murphy to benefit all service members, veterans, and their families.



MARCH 3, 2026 10 AM - 12 PM
750 Centerton Rd
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054



Contact us at (856) 242-2018
or AswMurphy@njleg.org





MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR MILITARY, VETERANS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

So many people are out there wishing for something better, hoping that help will show up. That's what Mental Health First Aid is – it is help to get people connected to care and ultimately to get them to a better place."

– Tousha Paxton-Barnes, U.S. Army Veteran

WHY MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

Mental Health First Aid for Military, Veterans, and their Families is an evidence-based and early intervention training program developed for adults to learn how to assist and support members of their community who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge.

This training specifically addresses the relevance of mental health to military culture, information on risk factors such as mental and physical trauma faced by many service members and their families, how to break down stigma and how to reach out to those who suffer in silence and are reluctant to seek help.

Nearly **1 IN 4*** active duty members showed signs of a mental health condition.

The suicide rate for veterans is **57% GREATER*** than non-veterans.

88%* of veterans' caregivers report increased stress or anxiety.

*the original research for the displayed statistic is linked

REGISTER TODAY!

Delivery Format:

7.5 hour live instructor-led training

Date and Time:

Friday, March 6, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Location:

Mercer County Connection, 957 Hwy 33, Hamilton, NJ 08690

Where to Register:

www.njha.com/njvetmhfa (or email MHFA@njha.com)

This course is provided in partnership with the Hamilton Township Mayor's Wellness Campaign and Mercer County Connection.

The course will teach you how to apply the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE):

- Assess for risk of suicide or harm.
- Listen nonjudgmentally.
- Give reassurance and information.
- Encourage appropriate professional help.
- Encourage self-help and other support strategies.

Community Calendar

New events are added to the calendar on a daily basis so please bookmark and check back often.

[View Full Calendar](#)

Black History Month



Officers of the 1st Separate Battalion, New Jersey State Militia in 1935.

Sanspeur "Without Fear"

Dr. (COL Ret) William C. Lowe | December 18, 2018

A scholarly work chronicling the segregated Army from the Civil War thru the post-WWII period. New Jersey's 1st Separate Battalion is featured.

[Read Article](#)

NJ National Guard



Vineland Armory

Brig. Gen. Arthur C. Roscoe Jr., Deputy Adjutant General of New Jersey, along with representatives from DRG Architects, Epic Management, and New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers, break ground for a Vehicle Maintenance Shop at the National Guard Armory in Vineland, NJ on February 5, 2026.

The facility will include six work bays; an inspection bay; a warmup bay; dedicated bulk petroleum, oils, and lubricants storage; flammable material storage; battery storage; unheated storage; inspection library; classroom; break room, and latrines.

The \$22.9 million, 46,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility will support New Jersey Army National Guard units located in southern New Jersey.

[View Images](#)



350th Finance Company

The 350th Finance Company, 42nd Regional Support Group, New Jersey Army National Guard, invited their families and friends to attend their farewell ceremony on February 7, 2026 in Franklin Township, NJ.

The 350th is an essential unit that plays a crucial role in financial operations and will be deploying in support of [Operation Inherent Resolve](#) in 2026.

[View Images](#)



177th Fighter Wing

On Superbowl Sunday, firefighters with the [177th Fighter Wing](#) answered the call to provide critical mutual aid at a structure fire in Galloway Township.

Working for over eight hours in freezing temperatures, our crew's quick thinking and professionalism were on full display. They assisted with initial fire suppression, helped another company establish a vital water supply, and their actions on scene were crucial in the rescue of a family's pet.

When conditions became unsafe, they evacuated the structure just three minutes before a roof collapse, demonstrating their commitment to safety and teamwork.

Many hours after the fire, Bayview's fire chief reached out to thank us for our efforts throughout the night.

We are proud of our Airmen who worked in extremely challenging conditions alongside our community partners to protect our

neighbors.

This is what it means to be "Always Ready, Always There."



State Partnership Program

Two Republic of Cyprus National Guard cyber warfare officers recently spent a week with the New Jersey National Guard.

The [State Partnership Program](#) visit focused on integrated intelligence for network defense, development of specialized incident response capabilities, and expanded participation in multinational exercises.

Join Our Team

Service to Community and Country

100% Free College Tuition

Bonuses | GI Bill

Student Loan Repayment



Servicemember Spotlight



Lt. Col. Eric Emerson

Congratulations to our very own Lieutenant Colonel Eric “Rebel” Emerson, commander of the 119th Fighter Squadron, who received the “Lt. Col. Anthony C. Shine Award”, becoming the first Air National Guard pilot to earn the honor.

The Shine Award is a prestigious Air Force-level honor that recognizes one outstanding fighter pilot annually for their superior

leadership, exceptional flying skills, and community involvement. It honors Lt. Col. Anthony C. Shine, an A-7 Corsair pilot who went missing in action during the Vietnam War in 1972.

According to the award citation, Lt. Col. Emerson was honored for an "exceptional year" leading the squadron through critical missions, including a "no-notice" mobilization supporting coalition forces in the Red Sea.

Beyond his operational excellence, he dedicated hundreds of hours to the community as a youth baseball coach and mentor and spearheaded the distribution of canned goods to those in need in his community.

“It always feels special to be a ‘first,’ but more importantly it highlights the hard-working men and women of the Air National Guard and their contributions to the fight,” said Emerson. “Without these amazing Airmen, nothing we do in the air would be possible. I dedicate this award to the men and women of the [177th Fighter Wing](#).”

Congrats to Lt. Col. Emerson for this historic and well-deserved achievement!

Learn more at [Air & Space Forces Magazine](#).



SPC Brandon Ramos

Specialist Brandon Ramos grew up in Woodbridge, NJ where he graduated from Woodbridge High School in 2018.

Looking to better himself and provide for his family, he decided to join the New Jersey Army National Guard in March 2022. That decision allowed him to continue his education, and he is currently majoring in criminal justice at Thomas Edison State University.

On the civilian side, Ramos is a police officer with the Irvington Police Department.

Currently, Ramos is deployed to the U.S. CENTCOM area of responsibility in support of [Operation Inherent Resolve](#). His current duties as a DEERS operator keeps him busy interacting with other U.S. military personnel, coalition partners, and contractors by verifying their eligibility to be issued a common access card, update records, ensure accuracy of data, answer inquiries, and manage walk-ins or appointments.

His long-term goals in the military are to be the best leader he can be and continue to help shape the military's vision in the future.

“Patience is a virtue and when you dedicate more time towards your goals and you meet it with maximum effort, they are achievable,” says Ramos.



1LT Tyasia Harris

1st Lieutenant Tyasia Harris, a resident of Bayonne, NJ, joined the military to gain access to education that would otherwise have been financially out of her reach.

As a first-generation college student who attended Seton Hall University, she did not have the same financial resources or generational guidance as many of her peers.

Thus, the military provided a path for her to pursue higher education without placing an overwhelming burden on her family or herself. Through Seton Hall's ROTC program, Harris joined the New Jersey Army National Guard in 2019.

“Through hard work I was able to secure a two-year scholarship which got me through the remaining years of college,” said Harris.

Currently, Harris is deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility in support of [Operation Inherent Resolve](#). She is in charge of the facilities management office for OIR and is the liaison between the building tenants and the Directorate of Public Works.

Harris' long-term goal is to become a physician assistant through the military's Interservice Physician Assistant Program. She is planning to apply to the program this year, with the intent of continuing her military service by providing high-quality medical care to Soldiers.

DMA Departments



NJ Service Medals

In accordance with New Jersey statute, the Adjutant General of New Jersey is the approving authority for the award of New Jersey state service medals.

The State of New Jersey awards medals to honorably discharged Veterans of the state who served during peacetime and in various conflicts and combat theaters.

State medals include the Distinguished Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Korean Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, POW/MIA Medal, Desert Storm Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Medal.

NEW JERSEY YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

DREAM. BELIEVE. ACHIEVE.




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FREE


Now accepting applications
for Class 62 - July 2026!

APPLY
NOW!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

 njyca.gov/admissions

 rpm@dma.nj.gov

 (732) 974-6500



REGISTRATION OPEN JANUARY 11 - MARCH 22

NEW JERSEY NATIONAL GUARD

YOUTH CAMP 2026



Camp Dates: July 5th - July 11th

A one week sleep away camp for NJ military youth. Daily activities include: Morning PT, Beach, Archery, Arts & Crafts, Sports & Night Activities.

- Open to ALL National Guard Youth ages 9+
- Counselors 16+ and Staff 18+
- Open until Mar 22nd or until full, acceptances sent by Mar 31st
- \$275/camper until Jan. 31st, or \$300 after that



Use the QR code to find ALL registrations and the FAQ page

COORDINATORS

kimberly.n.jordan2.ctr@army.mil

raymond.f.lapoint2.ctr@army.mil





NJ MILITARY FAMILY ASSISTANCE

* /njarngfac



NJNG Child & Youth Program

* /njngcyp

Employee Spotlight



Jayné J. Johnson, Esq.
Division Director for Administrative Services

Jayné J. Johnson recently joined the New Jersey Department of Military Affairs as Division Director for Administrative Services.

She brings extensive leadership experience from all three branches of state government, most recently serving as Cabinet Secretary and Director of the Office of Equity in the Governor’s Office, where she advanced initiatives in operational effectiveness, employee engagement, and organizational transformation.

Johnson earned her law degree from Rutgers University Law School and her undergraduate degree from Oakwood University. Her career spans public and nonprofit sectors, with expertise in operations, human resources, employee relations, and public policy.

In her current role, she oversees Administrative Services including human resources and employee relations and views her position as “Chief People Officer,” committed to equipping employees with resources to excel and strengthening workforce effectiveness.

Her vision includes fostering a high-performing, inclusive workplace through transparency, accessibility, and expanded professional development programs including interactive “lunch and learn”

sessions. Johnson also plans to visit DMA offices to connect with employees across our organization.

Her dedication to service is personal. She is the wife of a U.S. Navy Reserve Chaplain and the daughter of Air Force and Army veterans. As a military dependent, she lived overseas in Korea, Japan, and France.

These experiences helped shape her deep appreciation for military families and the importance of mission-driven service. Johnson encourages employees to bring their best selves, stay open to learning, and recognize the value each person contributes.

State Partners



NJ State Agencies

- [NJ Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicides among Service Members, Veterans & Their Families](#)
- [The New Jersey's Governor "We Value Our Veterans" Awards](#)

- [Bringing Veterans Home](#)
- [Vote For Valor](#)
- [Career Services for Veterans](#)
- [Tax Resources for Military/Veterans](#)
- [Educator Certification for Military Spouses and Veterans](#)
- [Civil Service Preference for Veterans](#)
- [NJ National Guard Hunting / Fishing Licenses](#)
- [NJ Special Hawker and Peddlers License](#)
- [Veterans Designation for Drivers License](#)
- [Military CDL Skills Waiver Program](#)
- [Disabled Veteran / Purple Heart Recipient Placards](#)
- [Disabled Veteran Hunting and Fishing Licenses](#)
- [Veteran and Disabled Veteran-Owned Business](#)
- [Division of Consumer Affairs Military Outreach & Support](#)
- [Professional & Occupational Licenses for Veterans and Spouses](#)
- [Military and Overseas Voting](#)
- [Veterans & Spouses Entering the Educator Workforce](#)
- [Journey Through Jersey](#)

Federal Partners



padlet

JB MDL Virtual Message Board



TUTOR.COM/MILITARY

**EXPERT
ONLINE
TUTORING**

24/7 | K-12 | College

Community Spotlight

PROJECT



HONOR

**GIVING AWAY
25 FREE ROOFS!**

East Coast Roofing, Siding & Windows is proud to launch Project Honor giving away 25 free roofs to active military members, veterans, and Survivors of veterans across South Jersey in honor of America's 250th anniversary in 2026.



APPLY NOW

<https://www.eastcoastroofing.com/projecthonor/>



The New Jersey VFW recoups \$169
Million in VA benefits annually for
New Jersey's veterans

**VFW ACCREDITED
SERVICE OFFICERS ARE
WITH AMERICA'S
VETERANS EVERY STEP
OF THE WAY ONCE
THEY ARE READY TO
FILE A CLAIM. THIS IS A
SERVICE THE VFW IS
PROUD TO OFFER
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TO ANYONE SEEKING
ASSISTANCE WITH THE
CLAIMS PROCESS.**

We assist all veterans, service members,
their families, and survivors.

Call us today

(609) 393-1929 or claims@njvfw.com

History



Essex Troop in Washington, D.C. in 1913

February 25, 1966

Marine Staff Sergeant Peter S. Connor of South Orange was mortally wounded in Vietnam when he threw himself on a hand grenade to save his men from injury. Connor's self-sacrifice was posthumously recognized when he was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism.

February 28, 1844

Princeton-born United States navy captain Robert Stockton took his ship, the USS Princeton, for a pleasure cruise on the Potomac River, with President John Tyler, his cabinet and 200 guests aboard. A cannon designed by Stockton was fired and exploded,

February 29, 1780

Continental Army Quartermaster General Nathanael Greene wrote from Morristown: "Our provisions are in a manner, gone. We have not a ton of hay at command, nor magazine [supply point] to draw from. Money is extremely scarce, and worth little when we get it. We have been so poor in camp for a fortnight, (two weeks) that we could not forward the public dispatches, for want of cash to support the expresses."

March 2, 1902

Morris "Moe" Berg was born in New York City. Raised in Newark's Roseville section, Berg became the best baseball player the city ever

killing six people, including Secretary of State Abel Upshur, Secretary of the Navy Thomas Gilmer and the president's soon to be father-in-law as well as his personal valet. A quickly held court of inquiry absolved the captain, a personal friend of Tyler.

February 28, 1942

A German submarine torpedoed the SS R.P. Resor eighteen miles east of Lavallette on a bright moonlit night. The explosion and "spectacular, towering fire" was so great that it could be seen from shore, and the Shark River Lifeboat Station was the first to report the incident. Only two men survived. The following morning, the World War I-era destroyer USS Jacob Jones was torpedoed while searching for more survivors. There were only twelve survivors of the sinking of the Jones.

produced, with a brilliant mind to boot, graduating from Princeton University and Columbia University Law School. He became a major league baseball player and coach, World War II OSS agent and legendary eccentric Roseville character. Berg died in Belleville on May 29, 1972. His last words were "how did the Mets do today?"

March 2, 1933

President Herbert Hoover signed legislation making George Washington's headquarters and his Army's winter camp at Morristown the first National Historical Park in the United States.

March 4, 1913

New Jersey Governor Woodrow Wilson was inaugurated as President of the United States. Wilson's inaugural parade was led by the Essex Troop, a New Jersey National Guard cavalry unit from Newark wearing British-influenced full dress uniforms custom tailored by Brooks Brothers in New York City.



444th MPAD

On September 28, 2012, members of the 444th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment were reunited with their families after a year-long deployment to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The unit, which is comprised of writers, photographers, videographers and media-relations experts served as a key component of the Joint Task Force Guantanamo public affairs operation.

The unit oversaw publication of The Wire, a print and online base newsmagazine, assisted civilian media covering military tribunals on the base and advised the command staff of public affairs implications of policy decisions.

Resources

NEW JERSEY VETERANS BENEFITS GUIDE



A Resource Guide
for New Jersey's
Military,
Veterans,
and Families



NJ VETERANS TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM



THIS PROGRAM OFFERS RIDES TO:

VA MEDICAL CENTERS
CLINICS
OTHER HOSPITALS

PRIVATE PHYSICIANS
VA REGIONAL OFFICES
VETERAN SERVICE OFFICES

GUARDLIFE

JANUARY - JUNE 2025



24 hour support to
NJ National Guard, Military,
Veterans Families, and caregivers
statewide.

Veterans Crisis Line



DIAL 988 then
PRESS 1

DMA Careers



We Are Hiring!

At the New Jersey Department of Military Affairs we take our work in support of Servicemembers and their families very seriously. The Department provides valuable services and can offer rewarding career opportunities to members of the public.

In addition, we have job openings for members of our military to serve in AGR and Federal Technician roles.

Subscribe to the [MilVets Jobs Bulletin](#) to stay updated on job openings.

Vacancies

Stay Connected



We hope you enjoy receiving our newsletter and find it both educational and engaging. If you have questions about our department, please visit our website at military.nj.gov to get contact information.

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