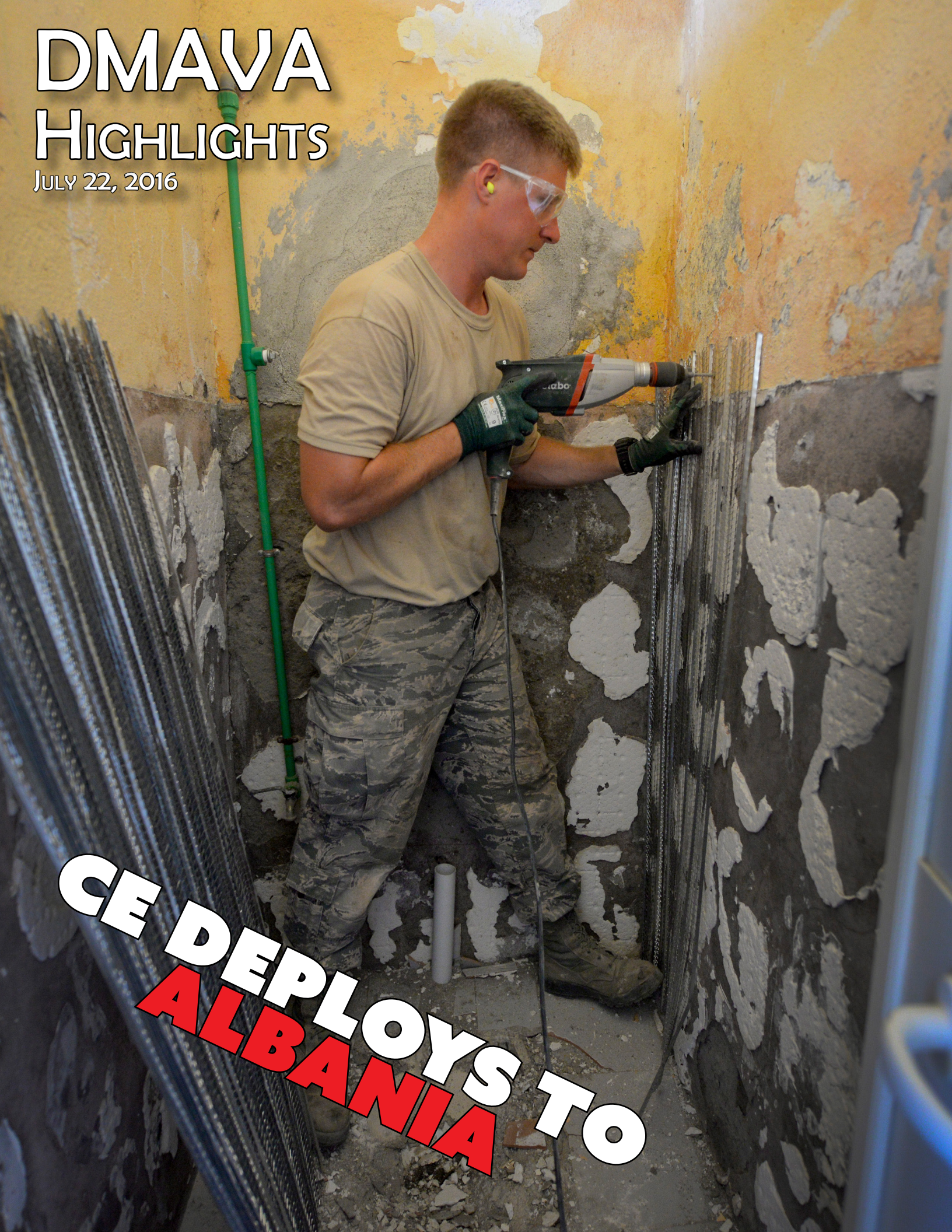


DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS

JULY 22, 2016



**CE DEPLOYS TO
ALBANIA**



Top left: A first through twelfth grade school in Mjede, Albania is prepared for exterior painting as part of humanitarian and civic assistance renovation project performed by the 177th Fighter Wing Civil Engineer Squadron, New Jersey Air National Guard, during their training deployment to Vau i Dejës, Albania July 6, 2016. The project includes plumbing, electrical, ceramic tile, roofing, and door and frame maintenance at a local medical clinic as well. Top right: Airmen 1st Class Nick Skibinski, left, and Derrick Donkor, water and fuel systems maintainers with the New Jersey Air National Guard, prepare the plumbing fittings of a water supply line for permanent attachment. Left: Senior Airman Laura Bello, water and fuel systems maintainer, removes attachment hardware from previous bathroom fixtures. Bottom right: Senior Master Sgt. Todd Butcher, civil engineer holds a level while soldiers from the 1st Infantry Battalion of the Albanian Land Forces erect a basketball hoop. Bottom left: Distinguished visitors, U.S. Air Force, Army and Navy and Albanian Army land forces military leaders pose for a group photo after an inauguration ceremony marking the completion of school's renovation. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley/Released)



Cover: Finishing touch

Airman 1st Class Robert O'Brien, a structures civil engineer with the 177th Civil Engineer Squadron, New Jersey Air National Guard, uses a hammer drill to mount corrugated steel mesh to a bathroom wall at a school near Vau i Dejës, Albania, July 11, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley/Released)

Making a difference, one fire truck at a time

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 108th Wing Public Affairs

It takes a lot of work to donate a fire truck to another country.

Specifically, it takes the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserve and the active-duty Air Force, as well as a host of government agencies.

Case in point, Master Sgt. Jorge A. Narvaez, a traditional New Jersey Air National Guardsman with the 108th Security Forces Squadron, is in the process of getting a fire truck sent to Nicaragua.

Narvaez, who is originally from Nicaragua, came to the United States in 1981 and has served with the Princeton Police Department as a patrolman for 22 years. He joined the 108th Wing in October 1992 and in 1999, he transferred to Security Forces, where he serves on the Commander's Support Staff.

"I've always felt compelled to help, it fulfills me as a human being, trying to make a difference," Narvaez said.

In 2014, Narvaez travelled to Nicaragua. While he was there, he visited the headquarters of the Benemerito Cuerpo de Bomberos – a group of volunteer firefighters located in Managua, the capital of Nicaragua.

"I saw that they were in dire need of serviceable fire trucks and equipment," said Narvaez. "I offered to help and get them assistance in the United States. I explained to them that I couldn't make any promises, but that I would try to do my best."

Narvaez talked to Ray Wadsworth, the former Fire Chief of Mercer Engine No. 3 in Princeton, N.J., and was able to get some coats, boots and hoses that had been slated for replacement. Like their counterparts in Nicaragua, the Princeton firefighters are also volunteers.

The Nicaraguan firefighters were grateful for the donated gear, but their need for a new truck remained.

In 2015, an opportunity presented itself.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration informed Mercer Engine No. 3 that they would have to replace two of their fire trucks. One of them, a 1982 Mack 1250 GPM pumper truck, could no longer be used because the open cab was considered a safety hazard.

"Mr. Wadsworth felt that one of the trucks could be donated," Narvaez said. "We began to work together and doing all that was required to get the truck from the city."

To get the ball rolling, Narvaez sent a letter to Robert Gregory, Princeton's director of emergency services, explaining how the retired truck could be put to good use in Latin America. Princeton responded by putting the truck up for a symbolic auction.

"They sold it to me for a dollar," Wadsworth said.



Master Sgt. Jorge A. Narvaez, left, 108th Wing Security Forces, New Jersey Air National Guard, listens as Chief Master Sgt. Juan Claudio, a loadmaster with the 514th Air Mobility Wing, Air Force Reserve, reviews the final list of measurements for a 1982 Mack 1250 GPM pumper fire truck at Mercer Engine No. 3 fire department in Princeton, N.J., July 13, 2016.

In addition to the truck, 13 sets of boots, six jackets, and 1,200 feet of two and a half inch hose were included.

"The truck is fully equipped, all it needs is for the tank to be filled with water," Wadsworth said.

"I also took a video of the truck, how to start it up; giving directions on how to operate it," Narvaez said.

Now you can't just donate a fire truck to another country, there's a process for it and it involves the Denton Program.

The Denton Program, which is jointly administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Department of State and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, allows U.S. citizens and organizations to use space available on military cargo aircraft to transport humanitarian goods to countries in need. U.S. Sen. Jeremiah Denton created the program as an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. The amendment states "the Secretary of Defense may transport to any country, without charge, supplies which have been furnished by a non-governmental source and which are intended for humanitarian assistance. Such supplies may be transported only on a space available basis." Since 1998, more than 5.6 million pounds of humanitarian supplies have been sent to more than 50 countries.

What followed was a flurry of activity as Narvaez made contact with officials at the U.S. Embassy in Managua and Air Force officials

who would arrange for the truck's 3,700-mile journey. The sign things were moving along came when he was put in touch with Chief Master Sgt. Juan Claudio of the 514th Air Mobility Wing, Air Force Reserve, at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., who went to Princeton to get the truck's measurements and provide guidance on getting it ready for flight.

The only thing left was the letter of approval – the airlift certification letter.

It came on June 3.

The letter assigned the 439th Airlift Wing – an Air Force Reserve unit based at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., with airlifting the fire truck on one of their C-5 Galaxy's.

At this point, most people would think that the C-5 lands at the Joint Base, the front end opens up, the ramp gets lowered and you drive the fire truck onto the aircraft, strap it down and fly off to Managua.

Not exactly.

A C-5's ramp is designed for high wheel base trucks or tracked vehicles, all of which can easily climb up the C-5's steep ramp. A fire truck's lower wheelbase makes the climb up the ramp impossible. Instead, a shoring kit, which is basically an extension to the C-5's ramp has to be built. No two shoring kits are the same, so they have to be hand built based on the vehicle's weight. In this particular case the shoring ramp has to accommodate a fire engine that weighs 33,000 pounds.

That's where Master Sgt. Patrick J.

Continued on Page 5

253rd gets “back to basics”

Master Sgt. David Moore, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs; Capt. Samuel Waltzer, 253rd Transportation Company



CAMP EDWARDS, Mass. – If the Army’s mission is to provide a ready force on short notice, Soldiers of the New Jersey Army National Guard’s 253rd Transportation Company appear to have met the training objective this year.

From July 9-23, the Soldiers of the Cape May-based unit logged more than 17,000 miles as part of a training exercise that took them from their home station to Cape Cod.

Part of the miles travelled, they set up for a six-day tactical field training experience using their own equipment at Forward Operating Base Kelly here at Camp Edwards. They also provided transportation support for the installation. Additionally, the Soldiers tackled various leadership reaction courses to work on their team building skills.

The entire unit trained together during their annual training period. It all began with the real-world experience for the Soldiers with the convoy moving about 400 miles from their Cape May Armory with their 2.5 ton Light Medium Tactical Vehicles and 5-ton Medium Tactical Vehicles.

During the field training operations, the unit set up a tactical operations center as the base to move personnel and conduct missions as if they were deployed in an austere environment during an overseas contingency operation.

Drivers had to go through all the processes such as getting their dispatch, as well as preparing and executing their mission.

“This would be the start of their lane tactical driving training experience that included reacting to fire and reactions to IEDs,” said 1st Lt. Robert Rehill, operations officer and unit executive officer.

The drivers training included day and night time missions that required the use of night-vision devices to navigate through the soft and often hilly terrain at the military reservation.

“Three years ago was the last time the unit was together. So, Soldiers may not be completely working together on the first day, but by the third or fourth day everything falls together. All the training and experiences the Soldiers have comes back. That is what a major part of this training was set for,” Rehill said.

According to 1st Sgt. Luis Unba, the back to basics approach to develop unit cohesion was excellent. “The officers gave us a great plan.”

“The NCOs executed it with not only back-to-basics-type training, but they let us execute challenging training that Soldiers

are satisfied they are doing the job they are trained to do.”

Spc. Amanda McGinnis, the only signal support and communications Soldier for the 253rd, was recognized by fellow Soldiers and unit leaders who led operations to assist the team.

McGinnis was responsible for all unit communications to include installing radios in the vehicle and the tactical operations center. But when installing radios, for example, vehicle operators are responsible for installing the radio mounts. Instead, McGinnis with help from Spc. Robert Creamer, undertook the entire installation process.

“Installing radios can be a tedious process. I didn’t want to take people from their other jobs,” McGinnis said. “So I knew by doing the entire job from start to finish I could work issues until they were right.”

In addition to training, aviators from the Massachusetts Army National Guard’s Army Aviation Support Facility #1 provided UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter flights to the 253rd Soldiers for morale and aviation familiarization purposes around the Cape Cod area.

Capt. Samuel Waltzer, company commander, said Camp Edwards was a choice training area for the 253rd’s training this year since it offered an environment that was focused on the needs of transportation units.

“It has been great training,” Waltzer said. “We are able to do the things we need to do that we necessarily can’t get done at home station during a weekend and even at some other training locations.”



VA INVITES WOMEN VETERANS TO CHAT ONLINE

By Krista L. Stephenson
RN, MSN, Director,
Women Veterans Call Center

Women veterans! VA has a new, online, one-for you.

The new service enables women veterans to go online and anonymously chat via real-time text with a trained representative. All the representatives at the Women Veterans Call Center are women, and many are veterans themselves.

The new feature provides women veterans with another avenue to ask general questions about benefits, eligibility and services specifically for women veterans.

These questions include, but are not limited to: Do you know your veteran status? Do you have a Veteran ID card? Should you receive any benefits from VA, like the GI Bill? Do you know what health care benefits you have earned?

If you do not know the answer to even one of these questions, the Call Center is just for you.

The WVCC staff is trained to provide women veterans, their families, and caregivers about VA services and resources. We are ready to respond to your concerns. The call is free, and you can call as often as you like until you have the answers to your questions.

The Call Center is available Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 10 p.m. ET, and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. ET.

WVCC chat is available by visiting the Women Veterans Health Care web page at www.womenshealth.va.gov and clicking the “Chat with the Women Veterans Call Center” icon. The chat function is anonymous — please do not use personally identifiable information such as social security numbers. WVCC Chat is available Monday through Friday 8 AM – 10 PM ET, and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. ET.



Hours of Operation:
Mon–Fri 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET
Sat. 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. ET

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**Call 1-855-VA-WOMEN
(1-855-829-6636)**

**Anonymous Chat at
www.womenshealth.va.gov**



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

All the representatives at the Women Veterans Call Center are women, and many are Veterans themselves. In addition to linking women Veterans to information, the Women Veterans Call Center makes direct referrals to Women Veteran Program Managers (WVPM) located at every VA medical center. The Women Veteran Program Manager helps women Veterans coordinate services.

What will happen when I call the WVCC?

You will be connected to a trained VA woman staff member.

Call center staff will conduct a brief screening to assess your needs.

Women Veterans will be provided personalized information regarding health care services, VA benefits and services, and a package of information will be sent to their home.

You can call for yourself or for a women veteran you know.

Contact information will be requested so staff may follow-up.

The VA has found that women veterans underutilize VA care, largely due to a lack of knowledge about VA benefits and available services and their eligibility for them. In response, the Call Center contacts women veterans to let them know about the services they have earned.

Since April 2013, the WVCC has reached out to more than 310,000 women veterans

and has received calls from more than 35,000 women veterans. The WVCC receives, on average, 80 calls per day and makes on average, 1,000 calls per day.

FAQs

Can I call the Women Veterans Call Center if I am not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care?

Yes, any women veteran can use the Women Veterans Call Center, even if you are not registered with the VA or enrolled in VA health care.

How do I know when I should call the Women Veterans Call Center?

You should call the Women Veterans Call Center if you have any questions about VA services or health care available to women veterans. You may also call the Women Veterans Call Center if you have concerns about your current VA health care services.

How would I know if I am considered a veteran?

You may be considered a Veteran If you served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. You do not need to have wartime or combat experience to be considered a Veteran.

Can I contact the Women Veterans Call Center if I am already receiving care in the VA?

Yes. If you prefer, the Women Veterans Call Center representative can help coordinate care with your regular health care providers by connecting you with the Women Veteran Program Manager at the VA Medical Center closest to you.

Zissimos to head Cyber Squadron

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 108th Wing Public Affairs

In a classroom in a hanger that used to house Vietnam-era F-4 Phantom fighters, Lt. Col. Anthony Zissimos assumed command of the 140th Cyber Operations Squadron July 17, 2016.

The 140th, the New Jersey Air National Guard's newest squadron, is charged with monitoring cyber-attacks to the nation's computer networks, stopping the attacks, identifying the hackers, and repairing the damage.

It is also in a unique position because like the realm it is guarding, it is evolving.

"That's the beauty of cyber, we can influence it," Zissimos said.

With the ever present threat of cyber-attacks to military computer networks, cybersecurity operations has taken on a critical role in the nation's defense. When the 108th Wing stood up the 140th in July 2015, the 108th was one of only 12 units chosen for this mission.

"The book for how to operate in cyber hasn't been completed yet," Zissimos said. "The analogy we use is flying an airplane while it is still being built."

Zissimos comes to the 140th with a wealth of command experience. In 2003, he helped stand up the first eight Air National Guard information operations squadrons. Five years later, he served as a network warfare tactics development officer with the 273rd Information Operations Squadron, Texas Air National Guard. His last assignment was as the Chief, Air National Guard Cyber Warfare Division, Air Force Space Command, Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., in 2012.

That knowledge is important, because not only is this a brand new squadron, this is a brand new mission for the NJANG.

"It means shaping a new capability for our country and our state," Zissimos said.

The squadron will consist of more than 70 personnel including full-time Airmen as well as traditional Guardsmen. Cyber operation officers and enlisted cyber operators will comprise the bulk of the squadron with support from intelligence personnel and other administrative specialties.

In the meantime, the squadron is literally being built from the ground up. Airmen from other units have transferred to the 140th. Airmen are also at school. Overseeing this requires having both the knowledge and the command experience to manage this creation.

"What does command mean? For me, it means being able to pass on my 32 years of military experience to a new generation of



Lt. Col. Anthony Zissimos, right, accepts the 108th Operations Group guidon from Col. Thomas L. Coppinger, commander, 108th Wing Operations Group, New Jersey Air National Guard, assuming command of the 140th Cyber Operations Squadron at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., July 17, 2016. Zissimos became the commander of the New Jersey Air National Guard's newest squadron, which is charged with monitoring cyber-attacks to the nation's computer networks, stopping the attacks, identifying the hackers, and repairing the damage.

Citizen-Airmen," Zissimos said. "It means helping mentor the future squadron commanders and senior NCOs...by letting them learn from my successes and my mistakes."

In October of 2017, the 140th Cyber Operations Squadron will become operational and will begin protecting the United States from cyber-attacks performing missions such as: defensive cyber operations, vulnerability assessments, and penetration testing in support of United States Cyber Command.

"In a couple of years from now, we will look back and say 'Wow, look what we did. We created something out of nothing,'" Zissimos said. "Make no mistake, we will succeed, because we will do it as a team."

Tech. Sgt. Armando Vasquez, 108th Wing Public Affairs, contributed to this article.

Making a difference, one fire truck at a time

Continued from Page 2

Applegate with the Logistics Distribution Shop, 108th Traffic Management Office, comes in.

Applegate built two ramps and six pedestals all made out of plywood. Each ramp is eight feet long by 40 inches wide and 13 inches tall and is made up of 18 pieces of plywood cut in diminishing lengths creating a series of steps.

The C-5's ramp is lowered to rest on the pedestals, which keep the ramp stable. The plywood ramps are placed at the end of the C-5's ramp, creating a gradual climb for the truck.

"As the front wheels of the fire truck get on to the aircraft, the rear wheels are going to come up so the bottom part of the engine doesn't scrape the ramp," Applegate said.

Sometime in August, all the work by USAID, the Department

of State, and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency will come together.

And on that day, the 108th Wing, the 514th Air Mobility Wing and the 439th Airlift Wing's efforts will be most visible aspect of that work.

The 439th's C-5 will land at Joint Base, Claudio and Applegate will work with the C-5's loadmasters and Narvaez will see the fire truck loaded.

"I want Airmen to see this and know that they can do this as well," Narvaez said. "There are many countries in the world that can use our help and there are always things you can do to help people. Now that I know about the Denton program, I want to do more."

"I believe when you come into this world you have a purpose. To me, my purpose is to help wherever I can."

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Vets visit Statue of Liberty and New York

By Jeremiah Mills

The Statue of Liberty has served as a beacon of hope to immigrants entering the United States ever since it's opening in 1886.

So it's only fitting that 30 Veterans Haven South veterans visited this iconic national landmark as well as New York City.

For some of the residents this was the first time they had seen the statue. For others, it was still an eye-opening experience.

"I enjoyed myself, from the museum on Ellis Island, to being able to visit the Statue of Liberty," Rafique Roebuck said. "It being my first time out here, I was really impressed and in awe of everything."

Located at the mouth of New York Harbor on Liberty Island, it was a gift from France to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The statue represents Libertas, the Roman goddess of freedom.

"It never gets old," Jennifer Salas said. "It's always a treat to come and visit the Statue of Liberty and New York City."

"I love the fact that we were able to come up to NYC and have a blast taking in the sights and really just having a ball."

The veterans also visited the 9/11 Memorial and saw the Freedom Tower. For the veterans, it was both somber and hopeful.

"No matter who you are, what service you were or are in, this memorial is why we did what we did," Julie Whipple said. "Being here makes this trip that much more special to me and everyone that came today."



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Raymond Zawacki – Deputy Commissioner for
Veterans Affairs

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Patrick Daugherty – Public
Affairs Officer

Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen – Layout, photographer
Kryn Westhoven – Writer, photographer

Staff Sgt. Wayne Woolley – Writer, photographer

Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht – Photographer, graphic artist

