



Command Message

COLORADO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

February 2021



We have hit the ground running in 2021 and I am honored to be leading an organization that is making such a positive impact at both the local and national level. We continue to support the COVID-19 response, and the Army National Guard is a critical element in the distribution of the vaccine to Colorado citizens. Simultaneously, we also sent a short-notice deployment contingent to our nation's capital to support the presidential inauguration. It was critical that the National Guard, and not active Divisions, support this particular mission. The way in which we supported both of these missions highlights the focus we have maintained on our **readiness** as a force. As we move forward, we need to maintain this focus on beating the virus and protecting our force, our families and our communities. In support of this, I encourage all of you to get the vaccine in order to ensure we maintain our readiness.

Also on the topic of readiness, Attack Company from the 157th Infantry Regiment deployed this month to support Operation Spartan Shield in the Middle East, while Soldiers from the 1st Battalion 168th Aviation Regiment are also deploying to support that same operation in addition to Operation Inherent Resolve. I am confident the Soldiers of Attack Company and 1-168th Aviation will proudly represent the Colorado Army National Guard and demonstrate what it means to be **Mountain Strong**. This will be 1-157th IN first combat deployment after many years of ramp up and off. As for our Aviation, this is nothing new to them as their unit legacy precedes them with constant post 9/11 rotations and support to both conventional and special operations over the years.

Today, our force and our nation face many challenges that threaten our safety, security and peace of mind. Amidst all of this, it was all the more poignant to celebrate **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day** last month to reflect on the remarkable life he led and the principles he stood for, as well as to rededicate ourselves to realizing his dream of unity and equality in our nation.

This month, we celebrate **African American History Month** to commemorate the immense contributions of African Americans to our nation, society, and especially the military.

Our people will always be the centerpiece of the Colorado Army National Guard, and therefore the **resiliency** of all of our Soldiers, civilians and family members is critical. This resilience is dependent on a balance of physical, mental and emotional fitness which prepares individuals to bounce back and overcome the inevitable adversities we all face in life. Think about this quote from Nelson Mandela and remember to take advantage of all our resources to become a resilient leader; "Do not judge me by my success, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again." Take the time to build up resiliency for both yourselves and those you lead so that you will be ready get back up again after one of those falls.



A Soldier from Company A, 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, Colorado Army National Guard provides security over watch during a training scenario in Guernsey, Wyoming, in preparation for a deployment, Oct. 20, 2020.

(U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Joseph K. VonNida)

Mission First, Mountain Strong!