



Command Message

COLORADO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

March 2021



We have remained laser-focused on maintaining the highest levels of **readiness** and we continue to provide a credible and capable force for combat and domestic operations to prevent conflict and shape the environment. Today, the U.S. military faces a dynamically changing security environment characterized by great power competition, rapid technology advances and new challenges in all warfighting domains. We must continue to develop highly trained, disciplined and fit teams with the skills and equipment to meet current operational requirements. I am proud of the cohesive teams that you built and continue to strengthen to ensure we are highly trained, disciplined and fit to win on any battlefield.

You are the COARNG's most important asset and providing you with the resources and incentives to maintain readiness is crucial. We have valuable benefits for you to gain education and training to support the progression of your career. Communicate with your leadership your career objectives and they can provide you with information on tuition assistance to support you getting your degree or unique training opportunities. One benefit to take advantage of is the *Electronic-Based Distance Learning Compensation (EBDL) program* and **get paid** to take EBDL courses online. Another way to add more **money** in your pocket is to take advantage of the *IDT travel incentive*. If you are a M-Day Service Member that travels more than 150 miles to get to drill, you can be reimbursed for meals, lodging, and mileage. Talk to your readiness NCO to learn more about these benefits. Do not waste any opportunity to improve yourself.

During National Women's History Month in March, the Army joins the nation to celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of women. The 2021 **Women's History Month** theme is "Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to be Silenced." This theme honors the brave women who fought to win suffrage rights for women and for the women who continue to fight for the voting rights of others. Women have played vital roles in our force since the Revolutionary War. Today women are Soldiers, Civilians, Veterans and family members who are critical members of our team. Women make our force stronger.

The COARNG honors the service and legacy of our **Desert Shield Veterans**. The valuable lesson of a quick and decisive response by U.S. forces to defend Saudi Arabia and liberate Kuwait 30 years ago is relevant today with the Army's Ready to Fight Tonight policy. Operation Desert Shield required the largest call-up of Army Reserve and Army National Guard units and individual Soldiers since the Korean War.

The honorable John Whitley, Acting Secretary of the Army reminded the force that "Corrosive behavior such as discrimination, extremism, and sexual harassment or assault have no place in our formations and tear at the fabric of the Army. To maintain our combat effectiveness and remain the best Army in the world, we must live the **Army values** each and every day." The essential characteristics of the Army Profession – trust, honorable service, expertise, esprit-de-corps and stewardship – go hand-in-hand with the Army values and our commitment to serve.

The [National Guard Association of the United States](#) is the Guard's primary advocate in Washington. They work to support us and modernize the Guard to keep pace with Active Duty so we can actually fight and win. NGACO is the best networking opportunity for all ranks to support career advancement.

Remember to support the Soldiers and families of **Attack Company** and **1-168th Aviation** as they depart for OCONUS this month to support Operation Spartan Shield and Operation Inherent Resolve.



Command Sergeant Major Edward C. Macias relinquishes responsibility as the State Command Sergeant Major for the Colorado Army National Guard to Command Sergeant Major John W. Assaad, during a change of responsibility ceremony held March 6 at Joint Force Headquarters - Colorado, Centennial, Colo. The change of responsibility ceremony is a traditional event enriched with symbolism and heritage.

(U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Ashley Low)

Mission First, Mountain Strong!