



MARCH 2012

March is Women's History Month. American women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways.

They have played and continue to play a critical economic, cultural, and social role in every sphere of life by constituting a significant portion of the labor force, working inside and outside of the home, and by providing the majority of the volunteer labor force.

Against the odds, women have earned respect and admiration from our nation.

WINNING WARRIORS

Col. Mike Tarvin, Army Medicine's command chaplain, is the guest speaker for the annual Prayer Breakfast at Tripler Army Medical Center.

See page 4

LEARNING THE ROPES

Tripler's 68W sustainment program brings combat experience to students.

See page 6

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Courtesy of MEDDAC-Japan

Across the region, 61 Soldiers took the Oath of Re-enlistment as part of the March Madness Mass Re-enlistment, March 2.

Pacific region's best, families re-enlist en masse on CG's lanai

STEPHANIE BRYANT

*Tripler Army Medical Center
Public Affairs*

HONOLULU — Thirty-two of Pacific Regional Medical Command's Soldiers gathered on Tripler Army Medical Center's Commanding General's lanai to participate in the March Madness Mass Re-enlistment, March 2, here.

The Soldiers came from Tripler Army Medical Center, Schofield Barracks Health Clinic and U.S. Army Public Health Command-Hawaii to

take the Re-enlistment Oath administered by Brig. Gen. Keith Gallagher, commanding general, PRMC and TAMC.

Gallagher welcomed the families to stand with their Soldiers as they took the oath.

"We know (re-enlisting) is a family decision," Gallagher explained. "It's a tough decision, especially with deployments and moving. I want to thank you because you are here today."

-See RE-ENLIST, page 6

Region TBI program to hold open house 3/14

**PACIFIC REGIONAL
MEDICAL COMMAND**
News Release

HONOLULU — In an effort to help educate beneficiaries on what brain injury services and support are available, a Brain Injury Awareness Open House will be held March 14, 1-3 p.m., in Room 9B114 at Tripler Army Medical Center, here.

The Pacific Regional Medical Command's Traumatic Brain Injury Program, a comprehensive program which provides a continuum of integrated care and services for active duty service members and other beneficiaries with traumatic brain injuries, or TBI, will sponsor the open house.

Traumatic brain injuries are a disruption of function in the brain resulting from a blow or jolt to the head or penetrating head injury. Not all blows or jolts to the head result in

-See TBI, page 8

Medical staff at Tripler, Schofield Barracks Health Clinic hold Safety Stand-down Day

STEPHANIE RUSH

*Pacific Regional Medical
Command Public Affairs*

HONOLULU — Soldiers and civilian employees at Tripler Army Medical Center and Schofield Barracks Health Clinic, here, met for a Soldier and patient safety stand-down, Feb. 17.

According to the U.S.

Army Medical Department, per the Army's patient safety regulation, patient safety programs are in place at each military medical treatment facility.

The safety stand-down day provided the opportunity to share a wide range of information among all the staff and help augment the safety programs already

in place at the MTFs.

Patient safety topics discussed included pharmacy rules and regulations, medication safety, trauma assessment for non-licensed staff, vital signs monitoring and activation of the Rapid Response Team, training on electronic medical record systems, safety event reporting, and other gener-

al safety issues such as dealing with an active shooter or infant abduction.

Each topic was presented by an employee or expert in the field, and helped reinforce the safe care each area aspires to provide. When a patient knows the staff treating them are confident

-See SAFETY, page 8

CG: Patients, staff benefit from commitment to safety

BRIG. GEN. KEITH GALLAGHER
Commanding General,

*Pacific Regional Medical Command and
Tripler Army Medical Center*

Aloha, Pacific teammates. I wanted to share with you the tremendous success of our Tripler Patient and Soldier Safety Stand-down day held Feb. 17.



Gallagher

Your active involvement as well as the contributions by our MEDCOM and OSD-Health Affairs speakers helps us continue to build a culture of patient safety. Remember, a culture of patient safety resides in each one of us.

Our patients count on us to demonstrate that culture through our deeds, actions, communications, training, education, and attitudes. Many of our clinical products lines have completed one of the first steps in committing to a culture of patient safety and that being TEAMSTEPSS. Active communications without any fear of reprisal or reprimand is our standard.

Our Perioperative Services have also committed to training through Crew Resource Management (CRM), which is exactly what pilots on any airline do today. This innovation and design training helps the entire team work collectively, more cooperatively and obviously more safely. CRM works.

As we continue to grow and learn, we are applying greater rigor to understanding the data that we report. I ask that any error be reported. It is the only way we can learn and change our design or processes. We learn how our systems and processes don't work because of these errors. Nobody is perfect, but individual commitment and

greater teamwork will help us strive for perfection.

A culture of patient safety also hones in on rehearsals and even formulating checklists. I know that many of you do this in our recently certified "Simulation Center" up on the 11th floor (congratulations! Well done.) and I am looking forward to seeing many more of you there along with the entire team as you prepare to do complex cases that warrant the attention and active participation of everyone on the team.

Know that everyone counts when it comes to patient and Soldier safety. I ask that you continue this momentum that we all started just a few weeks ago. Our goals are to build knowledge and intellect, strive for perfection through rehearsal and acquiring skills from the nation's experts, and actively communicate with one another and to always welcome comments in the procedure room, operating room, wards, and clinics/ER.

Your insights and observations may save a life one day. Your fervor and commitment to patient safety are what make the Pacific Regional Medical Command's medical treatment facilities centers of excellence for patient safety as well as world-class care. Your actions everyday will make the patient experience absolutely the best in the world. Your work resonates with me and this community and is most evident by the positive and evidence based outcomes. These successes are paramount to the tremendous reputation that we enjoy.

Let me know how I can help you and/or your section, department or product line become better in delivering world-class healthcare and inculcating a culture of patient safety. I am always in awe at your work and honored to be your commander.

PRMC 6

Operations SGM asks, aims for commitment to pride, excellence

SGT. MAJ. TIMOTHY SLOAN
*Pacific Regional Medical
Command Operations*

are some organizations that only require their members to have a pulse.

If you don't demand your Soldiers maintain high excellent performance to remain on your team, why should they be proud of the organization?

Demanding standards builds pride, because the people who survive them know they are among a select few.

Do you take pride in your appearance? Do you leave no doubt that you are part of an organization committed to maintaining a high level of professional appearance?

When you arrive to work do you feel a sense of pride because of who you are, where you work and what you do? Are you making the organization stronger?

Do you demand high standards of performance from your Soldiers? Do you maintain that same high standard of performance?

Are you committed to excellence?

Pacific Regional Medical Command is committed to excellence. We require and expect excellence from every member of our organization.

Whenever I watch someone go about their business, I ask myself, "Are they committed to excellence?"

You can tell if an organization is committed to excellence by the way it is maintained.

Is the environment clean? Look through an organization and you'll find all the clues you need to measure the height of its standards.

Observe, and then ask yourself, "Is this an organization with pride? Is it committed to excellence?"

Building pride in an organization is integral to its success. It has been my experience that you cannot build pride and esprit de corps if you allow anybody to be part of your organization without requiring them to make sacrifices.

Think of an Army Ranger. Every Ranger I have come in contact with conducted himself as a member of an elite organization. Rangers demand excellence and its members meet that demand.

On the other hand, there



Sloan

Pulse of the Pacific

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ARMY MEDICINE
Serving To Heal...Honored To Serve

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Nat'l Nutrition Month: Get your plate in shape

LT. COL. SANDRA KEELIN
Registered Dietitian
U.S. Army
Public Health Command

March is National Nutrition Month. This annual campaign, sponsored by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly the American Dietetic Association), reinforces the importance of good nutrition and physical activity.

The academy also helps consumers understand how to implement the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The theme for this year, "Get Your Plate in Shape," encourages Americans to return to the basics of healthy eating by consuming the recommended amounts of food essential for performance and health.

This year's theme coincides with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's MyPlate, which replaced MyPyramid in June 2011.

MyPlate is the government's primary food

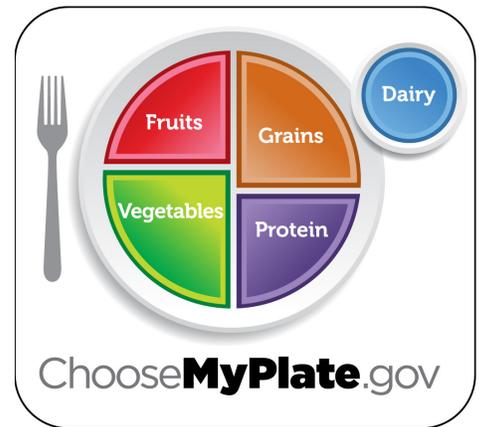
group symbol and is an easy-to-understand visual cue used to show Americans how to incorporate the recommendations of 2010 Dietary Guidelines into every meal.

MyPlate uses the familiar image of a place setting for a meal to illustrate the five food groups. The plate is divided into four sections (fruits, vegetables, grains and proteins) and includes a glass representing dairy products.

Simple key messages of MyPlate include:

Balance your calories by managing calories in with calories out. Enjoy your food, but eat less. Eating fast or when distracted may cause you to eat more calories than you need. Take the time to fully enjoy your meal by eating slowly. Downsize your portion sizes by using a smaller plate, bowl or cup. When eating out, choose smaller-sized options, share with a buddy or save part of the meal for later. Include physical activity into your daily routine; this too helps you balance calories.

Know what foods to eat more often. Eat



U.S. Department of Agriculture

foods that are nutrient-rich more often, and make them the basis for meals and snacks. These foods contain health-promoting nutrients such

-See PLATE, page 8

Behavioral health chief receives top civilian award

PACIFIC REGIONAL MEDICAL COMMAND
News Release

HONOLULU — Dr. David Brown, chief, Behavioral Health, Pacific Regional Medical Command, was recently awarded with an Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service.

It is the OSD's highest level career award and only medaled award.

The award was signed by Dr. Clifford Stanley, former Undersecretary of Personnel and Readiness, and was presented by Dr. Lura Junor, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Readiness.

The award was for Brown's work with the Defense Centers of Excellence and OSD Readiness.

At the Defense Centers of Excellence, Brown was the lead over Recovery

Care Support and Reintegration and the lead for a \$2.7 million research project evaluating select Resilience and Prevention programs across all the services.

At OSD Readiness, Brown was the clinical subject matter expert for suicide and the director of the DOD Suicide Prevention and Risk Reduction Office.



Courtesy Photo

Dr. David Brown, chief, Behavioral Health, Pacific Regional Medical Command, was recently awarded with an Exceptional Civilian Service Award.

Ask the Dietitian

LT. COL. CHAD KOENIG
Tripler Army Medical
Center
Nutrition Care Division

"I keep hearing about this new Paleo Diet. Is it a nutrition revolution or dangerous fad?"

New diets seem to appear and become popular on a daily basis. Each one professes it is the answer to all our health concerns. The Paleo Diet is no different.

The Paleo Diet is a low-carbohydrate (22-40 percent of energy), high protein (19-35 percent of energy), and high fat (28-47 percent of energy) diet, that emphasizes consumption of non-processed foods that have a low energy density but are high in nutrients when compared to a typical Western diet.

Paleo diet supporters claim that by following this eating pattern it will mitigate an entire series of modern health issues from metabolic syndrome to diabetes to heart disease. They will tell you that humans were

built to be hunter-gatherers like our ancestors, and that the agricultural revolution was the beginning of all our modern medical problems.

The Paleo Diet, just like most other recent "miracle diets," has some very positive points aimed at addressing failings in the typical American eating pattern, but also has a few rather large holes. Most experts in the field of nutrition will agree that eating a diet lower in sugar, salt and heavily-refined grains has some definite health benefits.

They will also tell you that whole grains, legumes and dairy products play an essential role in a balanced healthy diet. We know that foods eliminated by the Paleo Diet are key sources of calcium, vitamin D, and B vitamins and without these nutrients, deficiencies can become problematic.

We also know the amount and timing of dietary carbohydrates has been well established as an essential component to providing the energy source needed for endurance and resistance

exercise and mental agility.

If you are a Soldier, Sailor, Marine or Airman whose job places a high value on physical and cognitive performance, the Paleo Diet may not be the best approach for you.

People and society has evolved over the last 10,000 years and so has our diet. While some changes are not for the better, it would be naïve to believe what worked then is ideal today.

Individuals living in the Paleolithic Era simply ate what was available to them. It is impossible to know what medical problems they experienced or would have experienced; their life expectancy is less than half of what ours is today.

A balanced diet, including all food groups, emphasizing whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat protein and dairy is the best advice for the average person.



Submit a question for "Ask the Dietitian," email joy.metevier@us.army.mil

AMEDD chaplain speaks about winning warrior spirit at prayer breakfast

STEPHANIE BRYANT

Tripler Army Medical Center
Public Affairs

TRIPLER ARMY MEDICAL CENTER, Hawaii — An annual National Prayer Breakfast was held, here, Feb. 28, and Tripler was honored to host the Army Medicine Chaplain, Col. Mike Tarvin, as the keynote speaker.

As Navy Capt. Jose Acosta, Deputy Commander for Clinical Services, Pacific Regional Medical Command and Tripler Army Medical Center, welcomed the audience to the prayer breakfast, he thanked the 25th Infantry Division Band for playing at the event.

“(The annual prayer breakfast) is a time to come together and give thanks for all our blessings as we pray for the challenges facing our nation,” Acosta said.

Prior to Tarvin’s speech, prayers were said for our national leaders, Armed Forces personnel, deployed Soldiers and their families and TAMC patients and staff.

Also, Coast Guard Chaplain (Lt. Cmdr.) Carl Barnes, District 14 Command Chaplain, sang “His Eye is On the Sparrow” as part of the event.

Tarvin, who entered the Army as a chaplain in 1987, focused his energy on the defining characteristics of being a winning warrior.

“Success as a winning warrior

has a lot of elements but some of the key ones: have faith, act with goodness, persevere in your life, be kind, be an encourager and be a loyal member of the team,” Tarvin explained.

“In the new Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Program, spirituality is one of the pillars,” Tarvin explained. “The Army has recognized the need for faith, for a belief in something bigger than yourself ... A true winning warrior begins with having faith in something that is bigger than themselves; a higher standard of right and wrong.”

Tarvin explained that a key part of having faith and being a winning warrior is accepting help from others.

“A hospital is a great example of this,” Tarvin said. “Be part of a team ... the concept of ohana here in Hawaii is great. We are all interconnected and we all need each other. The Soldier’s Creed begins with ‘I am an American Soldier. I am a Warrior and a member of a team.’ The Army knows it ... to be a warrior you have to be a member of the team.”

As the breakfast wound down, Tarvin challenged the TAMC staff to make a commitment to be an encourager, not a discourager.

“True leaders, true winning warriors, exhibit acts of goodness and caring for those under them and those around them,” Tarvin said.



Courtesy Photo

Students promote breast cancer awareness at Tripler

TRIPLER ARMY MEDICAL CENTER, Hawaii — A breast cancer awareness display stood in the Oceanside lobby, here, Feb. 21-24.

Norma-Jean Driscoll (right) and Amanda Kerfoot (left), juniors at Kapolei High School and members of Kapolei High School Fine Arts Academy, were tasked with creating a research-based product for display as part of their junior class project.

“My mother’s sister passed away from breast cancer in 1996,” Driscoll said. “(Amanda) has had cancer in her family as well.”

Driscoll and Kerfoot chose to ask TAMC if they could display their project in the hospital because Driscoll’s father, Tim, is retired Air Force and has worked at Tripler in the past.

“We felt Tripler would be the perfect venue for the display to reach many people,” Driscoll explained.

Driscoll and Kerfoot wanted people to be excited about promoting awareness for breast cancer.

“We wanted to show, in our small community, that people from all walks of life have a shared concern,” Driscoll said. “Those who are going through treatment or who have families (who) are going through treatment are not alone and we all care about them.”



Tripler Army Medical Center Visual Information/CHRIS CHANG
Chaplain (Col.) Mike Tarvin, command chaplain, Army Medicine, speaks about what it takes to be a winning warrior during the National Prayer Breakfast, at Tripler Army Medical Center, Feb. 28.

In Brief

HEALTH OBSERVANCES

Check out information on upcoming health observances for March online:

- National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, www.preventcancer.org/colorectal
- National Endometriosis Awareness Month, www.endometriosisassn.org
- National Nutrition Month, www.eatright.org/nmm
- National Poison Prevention Week (March 18-24), www.poisonprevention.org

- Save Your Vision Month, www.aoa.org/x5072.xml
- Trisomy Awareness Month, www.trisomy.org

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Do you know of a Pacific Regional Medical Command employee who recently received an Army Commendation Medal or higher level award or a Commander’s Award for Civilian Service? Have a story idea or photos you want to share?

Send us an email at medcom.prmc.pao@us.army.mil.

New year brings awards to Japan

MEDDAC-JAPAN
News Release

CAMP ZAMA, Japan — To recognize MEDDAC-Japan's recent Level 3 Patient Centered Medical Home certification, Brig. Gen. Keith Gallagher, commander, Pacific Regional Medical Command, presented the readiness section with a check, Feb. 10.

The Level 3 certification, which is the highest available, was granted by the National Center for Quality Assurance.

"This certification highlights our determination to provide ready access to high-quality, patient centered health care," explained Col. Craig Mears, Deputy Commander Clinical Services, Brig. Gen. Crawford F. Sams U.S. Army Health Clinic.

The College of American Pathologists awarded the MEDDAC-Japan laboratory another two-year certification, Jan. 24.

Joel Marcrum, the laboratory manager, and the lab staff, Spc.



MEDDAC-Japan/SGT. IVAN WOODARD

Brig. Gen. Keith Gallagher, commander, Pacific Regional Medical Command, presents MEDDAC-Japan's readiness section with a check, Feb. 10, to recognize their recent Level 3 Patient Centered Medical Home certification.

Monika Torres, Masanori Kitazumi and Yumiko Tanabe were recognized by the surveyor as being very professional. The results of the survey were exceptional thanks to their hard work.

MEDDAC-Japan received several U.S. Army Medical Command Awards from the Surgeon General,

Lt. Gen. Patricia Horoho, at the Military Health System Conference in Washington, D.C., Feb. 2 including:

- \$120K Readiness Excellence
- \$60K Evidenced Based Practice Performance
- \$60K Evidenced Based Practice Most Improved
- \$60K Access to Care Performance

mance

- \$30K Outpatient Service Growth

Readiness Excellence is a new award category and Camp Zama was ranked number one in MEDCOM for the readiness status of the Camp Zama and U.S. Army-Japan community.

MEDDAC-Korea command staff embrace 'Way Forward,' study history at staff ride

CHAPLAIN (MAJ.) CHRISTOPHER DEGN
*Brian Allgood Army Community Hospital
Department of Pastoral Care*

INCHEON, Korea — Command, staff and department heads of the 121st Combat Support Hospital/Brian Allgood Army Community Hospital conducted an off-site Commander's Conference at a well known Korean War site, here, Feb. 10-12.

The weekend command event, which included a staff ride to the Incheon Operation Memorial Hall and Freedom (MacArthur) Park, had the theme, "Establishing the Way Forward for the Organization."

The conference gave the hospital commander, Col. Bret Ackermann, the opportunity to share the vision from the Office of the Surgeon General down to the 65th Medical Brigade and tie it into his vision for the hospital's future.

Also tied into the "Way Forward" theme were two workshops conducted by the hospital's Department of Pastoral Care, on the use of the 65th Medical Brigade's "Prosperity Plan," and a psychometric-based team building exercise. These



Brian Allgood Army Community Hospital/LT. COL. EDWIN MANIULIT

Command, staff and department heads of the 121st Combat Support Hospital/Brian Allgood Army Community Hospital conducted an off-site Commander's Conference in Incheon, Korea, Feb. 10-12.

workshops promoted Way Forward thinking for individuals and small groups.

The staff ride focusing on the Incheon Landing U.S. forces, Sept. 15, 1950, acted as a tactical metaphor for the conference. Lessons learned and important considerations of the land-

ing, also known as Operation Chromite, were briefed by seven company grade officers to the staff. The briefers received support from regional command historians Ronney Miller, 8th Army Command, and Dr. Lewis Bernstein, U.S. Forces-Korea.

Medic training program merges lectures, combat experiences

STEPHANIE BRYANT

Tripler Army Medical Center Public Affairs

HONOLULU — Tripler Army Medical Center's Department of Health Education and Training, here, completed another iteration of their 68W Sustainment Program, Feb. 28.

Army posts and military medical treatment facilities all structure training for health care specialists, or combat medics, differently.

A combat medic provides emergency medical treatment, limited primary-care and health protection, and evacuation from a point of

injury or illness.

Instead of breaking up the training, TAMC's program focuses on a M.E.D.I.C. course, or Medical Education and Demonstration of Individual Competence course, and ropes training over the period of a week, which puts their students through numerous exercises, lectures and simulations.

"During the training period, the medics attend a six-day course, which combines a classroom setting with hands-on exercises as they practice techniques, which culminates in a final practical exercise," said Master Sgt. Isaac Day, noncommissioned officer-in-charge, DOHET. "Students practiced starting intravenous lines, treating fractured limbs, controlling bleeding, establishing and maintaining a patient's airway and breathing, and treatment of other injuries common to today's battlefields to include ropes rescue techniques in difficult and high altitude terrain.

"At completion of the course, each student should feel confident that they possess the skills to treat major and minor injuries, and importantly to save lives," added Sgt. 1st Class Zella Gilkey, nursing education and operations NCOIC,



TAMC Public Affairs/STEPHANIE BRYANT

Sgt. 1st Class James Bernas (left), director, 68W Sustainment Program, Department of Health Education and Training, Tripler Army Medical Center, and Staff Sgt. Andre Williams (center right), instructor, 68W Sustainment Program, DOHET, demonstrate different techniques for ropes rescue training behind the hospital, Feb. 24, during TAMC's M.E.D.I.C. course.



Tripler/STEPHANIE BRYANT

Hawaii Air National Guard Master Sgt. Adam McGhee, emergency management, 93rd Civil Support Team, listens to the patient simulator mannequin's lungs during a mock assessment, Feb. 23, as part of Tripler Army Medical Center's M.E.D.I.C. course.

DOHET. "The fully trained 68W completes the same testing and certification or recertification requirements as civilian (Emergency Medical Technicians or) EMTs."

The program is not limited to only Army combat medics. Day said other branches of service and even other Soldiers with a variety of medical occupational specialties have taken the course.

"It has helped Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, Sailors and civilians sustain perishable and critical battlefield skills that are paramount to saving lives on and off the battlefield," Day said.

Hawaii Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Albert Zeller, aerospace medical technician, has served in the military for nine years and took the course to recertify his EMT credentials.

"I have taken a course similar to this, but this course was well-taught and student-driven," Zeller explained. "This course allowed others to share their experiences and educate members, like myself, to look at things in different ways. I hope all medics get a chance to take a course like this one."

Sgt. Hans Tan, combat medic and licensed practical nurse, Department of

Obstetrics and Gynecology, TAMC, agreed with Zeller and said the instructors made the course more dynamic because they brought all of their experience to the course.

"(TAMC's course) has diverse instructors with different backgrounds and experiences," Tan explained. "They focused on lessons learned from their time in theater of operations as opposed to (Army Medicine) doctrine, which isn't always very realistic."



For more information on the 68W Sustainment Program, call 808-433-5204.

RE-ENLIST

from page 1

Master Sgt. John Kiehl, career counselor, Retention Office, PRMC, who organized the event, said March Madness took place across the entire Pacific region.

"Mass re-enlistment ceremonies were held across the region today, with 61 Soldiers renewing their commitment to service," Kiehl said.

One of the Soldiers eager to recommit their service was Sgt. Jared Chumley, combat medic, Family Practice, SBHC.

Chumley, who has served in the Army for six

years, re-enlisted for an additional three years. He was unsure of the direction he wanted his life to take, so he joined the Army.

"When I joined, I knew this is what I want to do," Chumley explained. "(The Army) is great and I love to help people."

Being able to renew his service was not the only thing that made the re-enlistment ceremony special for Chumley. He was happy to have Gallagher administer the oath.

"He was my (commander) in Germany" Chumley said. "It's a rare opportunity to meet with Brig. Gen. Gallagher and all the brass up

here at the hospital and get together with everyone else."

Gallagher was proud that so many of his troops across the region are ready and willing to serve the nation.

"I want to congratulate each and every one of you because you are the best of the best," Gallagher said. "It is about retaining quality Soldiers in our Army to continue to lead and serve for the next 10-20 years. We want to thank you for re-enlisting in our Army because we need strong, effective leaders. Each and every one of you has demonstrated that"

MEDDAC-Japan earns Army Superior Unit Award for tsunami relief efforts

MEDDAC-JAPAN
News Release

CAMP ZAMA, Japan — U.S. Army Medical Activity-Japan, or MEDDAC-J, and other units within U.S. Army-Japan were recognized with the Army Superior Unit Award for their actions in support of Operation Tomodachi, Jan. 11.

MEDDAC-J's mission is to provide consistent high-quality and compassionate medical care to all people serving in Japan.

At 2:46, March 11, 2011, the Tohoku earthquake struck Japan with a 9.0 magnitude intensity. The earthquake triggered a massive tsunami, which destroyed many of the coastal towns in Northern Japan with waves that reached as high as 124 feet and traveled nearly 6 miles inland.

The earthquake and tsunami severely damaged the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power reactor causing a partial nuclear meltdown and a leak of radiation into the atmosphere.

As a result of the massive destruction and the danger posed by the crippled reactor, the State Department authorized a voluntary departure of U.S. citizens and the dependants of military service members, March 17.

Simultaneously, U.S. Army-Japan engaged in Joint Operation Tomodachi (Japanese for 'friendship') as part of the relief and humanitarian aid efforts in the Sendai area in Northern Japan. During this time, MEDDAC-J played a vital role in the successful accomplishment of three major disaster relief and NEO operations conducted in response to the disaster.

Within 72 hours of the disaster, the first MEDDAC-J liaison officer, or LNO, was en route to Camp Sendai as part of the USAR-J Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) team. The LNO was able to provide relative and timely information about the situation at ground zero allowing the State Department and USAR-J command team to swiftly respond to the situation and needs of the Japanese government.

The LNO also laid the groundwork which supported the MEDDAC-J commander in pushing forward a small medical team to establish a Battalion Aid Station. This BAS operated for five weeks providing critical medical support to the Soldiers deployed North in support of Operation Tomodachi. The LNO, in concert with the entire HADR team, also provided a critical link to coordinate efforts between USAR-J forces and Marine Expeditionary Forces deployed in support of Operation Tomodachi.

Responding to the immediate threat posed by the Fukushima nuclear reactor, MEDDAC-J rapidly procured and distributed more than 30,513 potassium iodide tablets to Soldiers, civilians,

family members, and local national employees of the Camp Zama community. This was the largest Army distribution of potassium iodide on record and provided the community with immediate protective measures against possible radiation exposure.

More than 5,269 individuals were issued tablets and briefed on the safe use of potassium iodide with 90 percent completed within a short 48-hour window, fully meeting the U.S. Army-Pacific commander's potassium iodide distribution intent.

At the same time, a medical team supported the USAR-J effort to screen and complete all Non-combatant Evacuation and Repatriation Operations, or NEO, packets in preparation for a pending voluntary and possible involuntary NEO operation. This greatly contributed to the smooth and rapid execution of a voluntary departure of 268 family members and the preparation of 1,601 others for a possible future evacuation.

MEDDAC-J preventive medicine staff ensured the safety of all USAR-J personnel by establishing 24-hour monitoring of air, water and soil radiation levels, and conducting water and food safety inspections across USAR-J's area of responsibility. They were able to rapidly detect a radiation level spike in the Camp Zama water supply and sound a timely alarm to the community protecting hundreds of families from exposure.

While many of MEDDAC-J's Soldiers were engaged with military disaster relief, the civilian staff focused on seamless access to care for more

than 2,500 medical beneficiaries who remained at Camp Zama. Despite reduced staffing, access to care remained high. MEDDAC-J maintained the challenging standard of 60 percent of appointments with a patient's primary care manager, even during this turbulent time.

Camp Zama also became the power projection platform for military humanitarian assistance personnel deploying in support of relief efforts in Northern Japan. Medics and preventive medicine personnel from MEDDAC-J set up a medical screening Soldier Readiness Processing site ensuring that every Soldier was medically cleared and deemed fit before moving forward to the disaster area.

They also screened every Soldier redeploying, through Camp Zama and Atsugi Naval Air Station, measuring and recording any radiation exposure and screening for medical conditions that may have surfaced during the deployment. In all, more than 341 personnel deployed and redeployed through the SRP sites over the course of the operation.

The mission for MEDDAC-J closed with Operation Pacific Homecoming, which consisted of reintegrating all family members who had left during the voluntary departure upon their return to Japan. Once again, MEDDAC-J was effectively postured to receive and screen 100 percent of returning families and meet their medical needs.

(Editor's Note: Content for this article was taken from DA Form 7594, Unit Award Recommendation.)



Western Regional Medical Command/SHARON AYALA

Hundreds of military family members from Japan began arriving at Sea-Tac Airport in Washington State on March 19.

SAFETY

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and can handle different situations, they feel safer.

"It's important to hold events like this because it allows us to be all on the same page. We know what issues are being experienced and are reminded how important it is to report issues," said Justin Jenks, Red Team Floor Nurse and Triage Nurse, Family Practice, Schofield Barracks Health Clinic. "We are in an atmosphere that seeks to prevent safety issues."

Soldiers weren't left out of the day's events. Starting early in the morning and continuing through the afternoon, Troop Command's companies listened to guest speakers, watched demonstrations and often took the reins themselves, learning

first-hand about personal safety such as preventing and stopping fires, the importance of never driving while intoxicated, sexual assault awareness and prevention and how to be safe while enjoying the many outdoor and water-related activities Hawaii offers.

"I really enjoyed the stand-down, especially the fire safety and Army Substance Abuse Program portions," said Spc. Alexis-Michelle Duran, admin clerk, Company A, Troop Command.

"The fact that everything was hands-on and we learned exactly how fire extinguishers work was very helpful. The presentation on alcohol was really informative; it taught me a lot of things I didn't know like just how much alcohol is in different types of mixed drinks



Pacific Regional Medical Command Public Affairs/STEPHANIE RUSH

Pfc. Gregory Swindell, Department of Radiology, Tripler Army Medical Center, demonstrates the proper way to use a fire extinguisher at the Safety Stand Down Day, Feb. 17, after receiving instruction from Pat Allen, fire inspector, Federal Fire Department. The Federal Fire Department were just one of the many presenters on hand teaching Soldiers, civilians and contractors at TAMC and Schofield Barracks Health Clinic about patient and personal safety.

and why a Long Island iced tea typically affects someone completely differently than a soda mixed with just one type of alcohol."

This was the second pa-

tient safety stand-down the year.

held at TAMC and SBHC.

The event highlighted how seriously safety is taken by members of the facilities' leadership every day of



View more photos at www.flickr.com/triplerAMC.

TBI

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TBI. The severity of TBI can range from mild, more commonly known as a concussion, to severe involving an extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia. TBIs are a major health issue for the military. Unlike other injuries that change appearance, you cannot see a brain injury.

According to the U.S. Army's TBI Program, the majority of people with TBI recover with little or no specific medical intervention because most TBIs are mild, which are also known as mTBIs.

"The Defense Department maintains a traumatic brain injury database, which shows that 202,281 service members sustained a TBI between 2000-2010," explained Dr. Sarah Miyahira, director, Traumatic

Injury Program, Pacific Regional Medical Command. "Approximately 85 to 90 percent of combat exposed troops who sustain a mild TBI experience a complete resolution of symptoms within the first several days to weeks after the incident."

However, some people with TBI require specialty evaluation and intervention if they had a more severe injury or are not recovering quickly from a mild injury. Beneficiaries requiring extra care will work with a diverse team of healthcare professionals.

The medical team may vary depending on the type and severity of injury and the needs of the patient. The team may include a wide range of physicians, nurses, behavioral health specialists and rehabilitation specialists.

"We utilize a family-centered approach, to include educational and group treatment programs for both Wounded Warriors and their spouses," explained George Husky, liaison officer, Traumatic Injury Program, PRMC. "Our program provides state-of-the-art continuously improving care for Wounded Warriors with TBI and mTBI in order to optimize functional outcomes and facilitate a return to duty."

The Department of Defense's TBI research portfolio has grown, reflecting the department's understanding of these injuries, which will translate into improved clinical care and outcomes. TBI research continues to be fast tracked to assist our service members in improved care in collaboration with the line, medical and research communities. DOD will continue to provide

a continuum of TBI screening and care from in-theater to post-deployment, including transitions to Veterans Affairs, ensuring the military health system properly screens and cares for service members with TBI.

Prevention of TBI is the safest and most cost-efficient course of action. DOD and each of the branches of service are working diligently to improve today's helmet designs, reduce the risks of blunt impact, provide greater ballistic protection and guard against blast injury.

"Most TBIs occur in non-deployed settings," Husky said. "So the Defense Department has launched an aggressive TBI prevention campaign emphasizing the use of seat belts and protective eye wear and gear when service members are engaged in daily and recreational activities."

PLATE

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as potassium, calcium, vitamin D and fiber. Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1 percent) milk and dairy products. Fill half your plate with a variety of colorful fruits and veggies (to include beans and peas).

Make at least half your grains whole grains by substituting whole-grain foods for refined

(switching to whole-wheat bread from white bread or brown rice instead of white rice).

Know what foods to eat less often. Foods that are high in solid fats, added sugars and salt should be used as occasional treats, not everyday foods. To reduce salt in your diet, use the Nutrition Facts label to compare sodium in foods, and choose lower sodium versions of foods such as soup, bread, frozen and other convenient foods. Drink fewer sugar-sweetened beverages, such

as soda, energy drinks and sport drinks, which are a major source of added sugar and calories in the American diet. Consume smaller portions and substitute with water or other unsweetened beverages.



Find the Super Tracker and other resources online at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov.