

# DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

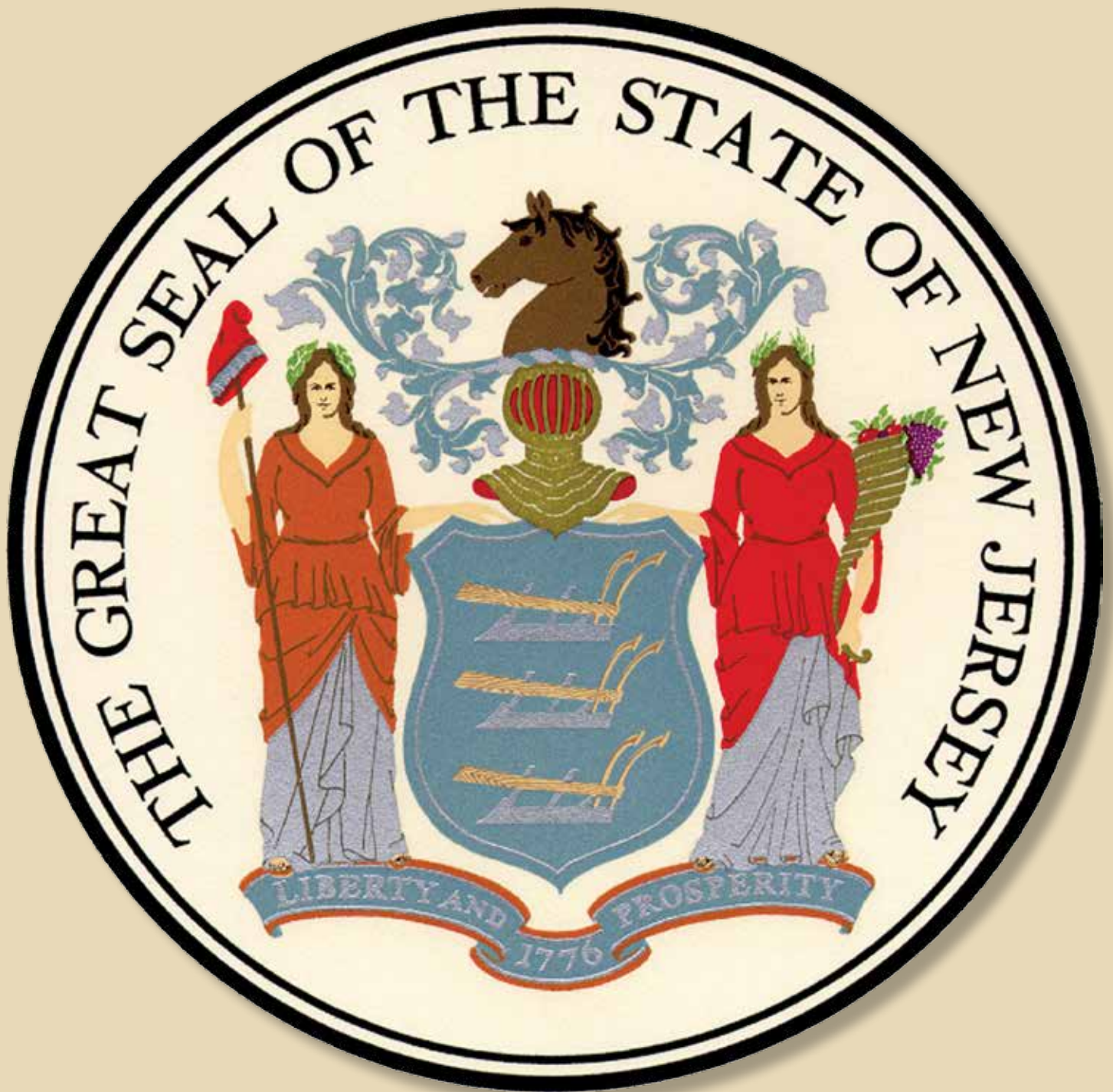


## BUDGET HEARING

BRIG GEN MICHAEL L. CUNIFF  
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

## FISCAL YEAR 2018





## COVER PHOTOS

*Top: The daughter of Maj. Ben Robbins, 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, sets an American flag on a headstone at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery, Wrightstown, N.J., May 28, 2016. Veterans, veterans' service organizations along with New Jersey National Guard Soldiers and Airmen honor the fallen during the annual State Memorial Day ceremony at the Cemetery. (Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released) Middle: Soldiers from C Company, 1-114 Infantry, assault a building during a training exercise at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Jan. 9, 2017. The unit, which is part of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, is participating in a series of training events that will culminate this summer at an eXportable Combat Training Capability exercise on Fort Pickett, Va. (New Jersey Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Woolley/Released) Bottom: Capt. Arnold Lucchesi, left, and Capt. Brian Bradke, F-16 fighter pilots with the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing, step to their jets before taking part in a training exercise during Red Flag 16-3, July 10, 2016, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. Red Flag is a realistic combat training exercise involving air, space, and cyberforces of the United States and its allies. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Shane Karp/Released)*



*Two F-16 Fighting Falcons assigned to the 119th Fighter Squadron from the New Jersey Air National Guard taxi off of the runway at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, Feb. 9, 2017. Pilots, maintainers, and support personnel with the 177th Fighter Wing deployed to Osan as*

*part of a Theater Security Package to help bolster the strength of allied air forces on the Korea peninsula. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Victor J. Caputo/Released)*

DMAVA's Fiscal Year 2018 proposed budget of \$95.7 million is \$776 thousand less than the budgeted appropriation for Fiscal Year 2017. This reduction, which will not impact missions or services provided to our veterans, was accomplished through spending efficiencies and increased utilization of program revenues.

Although we are a relatively small department, our financial impact on the Garden State is not.

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs brings nearly a half a billion dollars a year in federal funds to New Jersey through reimbursement of operating expenses of the National Guard and from the federal Veterans Administration entitlements the Department obtains on behalf of our Veterans.

And that doesn't count the additional millions that flow into the state as a result of federally-funded construction and maintenance at National Guard and DMAVA facilities.

The Army and Air National Guard continues the practice of a being cost effective way to maintain military strength. Only 22 percent of the New Jersey Guard is full-time. They sustain the more than 6,500 traditional drilling Guard members and keep our units mission-ready every day.

That superior support from the fulltime staff keeps our ranks at or above authorized manning with our Air National Guard currently at 108 percent strength – the second highest in the nation -- and the Army Guard is at 99 percent.

The Army Guard is scheduled to receive \$127.7 million budget for the current Fiscal Year 2017, a four-percent decline

***The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs brings nearly a half a billion dollars a year in federal funds to New Jersey through reimbursement of operating expenses of the National Guard and from the federal Veterans Administration entitlements the Department obtains on behalf of our Veterans.***



from the previous year. The Air Guard Fiscal 2017 budget is \$104 million, a four million dollar increase from the previous year.

We will adjust Guard expenditures if there are any substantial changes in Federal FY18 military budget that starts on October 1.



**A UH-60 Black Hawk with the 1-150th Aviation Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, patrols over the devastated World Trade Center the afternoon of Sept. 11, 2001. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen/Released)**

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, more than 20,000 New Jersey National Guard members have been mobilized in support of overseas contingency operations. Many of the Soldiers and Airmen have deployed multiple times.

The National Guard's mandate to provide combat-ready troops on the orders of the President and military first responders on the orders of the governor to support our civil authorities means that our focus remains on providing our members the best training possible.

At this moment, more than 2,500 Army Guard Soldiers from our 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team are preparing for a major training operation that will begin with the movement of more than 1,000 pieces of equipment by rail to Fort Pickett, Va.



**Soldiers with C Company, 1-114 Infantry, assault a building during a training exercise on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Jan. 9, 2017. The unit, which is part of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, is participating in a series of training events that will culminate this summer at an eXportable Combat Training Capability exercise on Fort Pickett, Va. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Woolley/Released)**

The massive logistical undertaking will be the first widespread rail movement for the force in nearly 20 years and a first step for a three-week exercise. The Brigade's participation in this endeavor is a demonstration that the New Jersey National Guard remains a key piece of Department of Defense plans for future operations.

Creating realistic training opportunities that prepare our Soldiers and Airmen for what they face on missions protecting our citizens is a focus of all of our people.

In one case, a New Jersey Air Guardsman created more realistic training scenarios on the Warren Grove Bombing Range in Burlington County – and managed to save tax dollars at the same time.



**Master Sgt. Bryan O'Neill, range section chief, Warren Grove Gunnery Range, 177th Fighter Wing stands beside a decommissioned M88 armored recovery vehicle March 2, 2017. The M88 armored recovery vehicle was acquired from the Defense Logistics Agency. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley/Released)**

Master Sgt. Bryan O'Neill developed a partnership with the Defense Logistics Agency that furnishes the range with decommissioned military equipment for use as aerial targets, pieces of equipment that would otherwise have to be destroyed at taxpayer expense. O'Neill's initiative brought the New Jersey Air National Guard into a program that has saved taxpayers more than \$28 million during the past five years.

The New Jersey National Guard leadership team understands that one of the keys to maintaining a highly-trained force lies with our ability to provide the infrastructure that allows them to train.

One of the recent success stories on that front is the Regional Training Institute at National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt. Ground was broken for the \$34 million facility in 2014 and it scheduled for completion this summer. The federally-funded facility covers 86,000 square feet and will allow New Jersey's 254th Training Regiment, which is one of the premiere training units in the Northeastern United States, to train Soldiers from around the region to become better leaders and more proficient in their military occupational specialties. The prime contractor for the project is DOBCO Industries of Wayne.

A host of other federally-funded projects at the Nation-





**The Regional Training Institute at the National Guard Training Center, Sea Girt, N.J., April 3, 2017. The nearly \$31-million dollar military construction project includes 10 state-of-the-art classrooms, an auditorium with seating for 225 students and 72 lodging rooms in the 86,000 square foot building. (NJDMAVA photo by Mark C. Olsen/Released)**

al Guard Training Center in Sea Girt are underway. Ground has been broken on a \$9 million medical clinic and instruction building to replace a World War II era clinic that was decimated by Superstorm Sandy. Construction has begun on a \$2 million power plant building that will ultimately allow



**The nearly complete foundation for the \$9 million Medical Clinic and instruction building to replace a World War II era clinic at the National Guard Training Center at Sea Girt April 3, 2017. (NJDMAVA photo by Mark C. Olsen/Released)**

the National Guard Training Center to operate independently from the electrical grid. In addition, a \$6 million contract has been awarded for a field and engineering maintenance facility on the installation.

An influx of federal funds has also benefited the armories that are critical to providing the daily administrative, training, and logistical support our organization needs to function. A \$4.9 million project repaired the roof; and the heating and cooling system at the National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. A \$5.3 million project to repair the brick exterior and roof of the historic Jersey City armory is nearing completion. And work has just begun on a \$3.6 million project to restore the roof; and heat-

ing and cooling system at the Cherry Hill armory.

These repairs are critical. The average age of the New Jersey National Guard's armories is 43 years.

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs continues to be a leader in the use of alternative energy to reduce costs and create a healthier planet.



**Aerial photo of the photovoltaic project at the National Guard Training Center at Sea Girt, N.J., Sept. 3, 2015. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)**

Alternative energy and conservation has allowed DMAVA to avoid nearly \$1.5 million in electrical utility costs since 2009. In Fiscal Year 2016, the Department's alternative energy projects generated 2.4 million kilowatt hours of electricity for a cost avoidance of \$300,000.

This work has not gone unnoticed. The Department has been awarded five Secretary of the Army Energy and Water Management Awards and earlier this year was honored by the U.S. Department of Energy for its use of alternative energy.

In addition to the eight current solar arrays across the state, DMAVA has received Department of Defense and National Guard Bureau approval for additional photovoltaic projects in Lawrenceville, Somerset, and Sea Girt as well as for a solar thermal system at a facility within Picatinny Arsenal.

One of the biggest energy initiatives will be a MICRO-GRID system that will allow electrical independence at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt. In addition to anticipated cost savings, the system will allow the installation to maintain power even if a natural or man-made disaster interrupts power to surrounding communities. In addition, the National Guard will partner with the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority for a MICRO-GRID system at the Cape May armory.

DMAVA's environmental efforts have led to a fruitful partnership with one of New Jersey's great higher education institutions, Rowan University. Seven years ago, the Department and Rowan created an internship program for students studying Geographic Information Systems and environmental sciences. Energy audits done by these students have identified nearly \$400,000 in energy savings at DMAVA facilities





**Representatives of the New Jersey Army National Guard, the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and Rowan University receive the 2016 Army-Community Partnership at a ceremony Dec. 6, 2016, at the Pentagon. The award recognized the five best Army community partnerships in the nation. From left, Lt. Gen. Gwen Bingham, Army Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management; Vernon Hicks, NJDMAVA; Maj. Jeanne Falchek, NJARNG; Christopher Moore, NJDMAVA; William Riddell and Sam Valentine, Rowan University and Chief Warrant Officer 5 Tom Comyack, NJARNG. (Courtesy photo)**

– \$70,000 in Fiscal 2016 alone. The work done by the Geographic Information Systems interns also led to a \$1.4 million increase in Department of Defense reimbursements for facilities upkeep since 2010 because it allowed us to present a more accurate picture of the size of our facilities. A number of these students have landed jobs in their fields based on their real world experience working on National Guard facilities. It's been a great program that has helped keep DMAVA green and led to good jobs for bright students.

Partnerships are a key to many of DMAVA's most vital initiatives.

The Department's partnership with our state's Veterans community, which is one of the most vibrant and active in the nation, has comforted the residents of our three Veterans Memorial Homes in Paramus, Menlo Park, and Vineland and given strength to the residents of Veterans Haven-North and Veterans Haven-South, the Department's transitional housing programs.

Veterans have logged more than 70,000 volunteer hours at the Homes and have served their fellow Veterans by doing everything from organizing bus trips to running bingo games to career counseling to just being there to lend an ear to someone who also wore our nation's uniform.

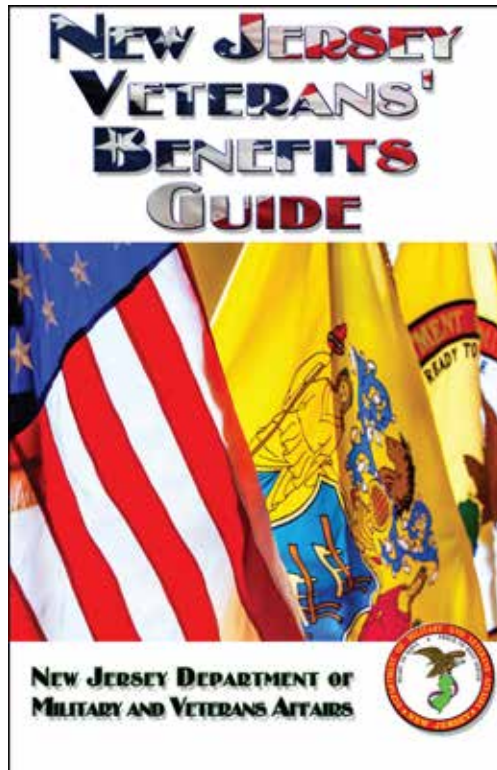
These volunteer hours help DMAVA do more – and do



**Walter Nall, superintendent, Veterans Haven South, stands beside a new 15-passenger van donated by the Department of New Jersey American Legion at the state American Legion convention in Wildwood June 9, 2016. (NJDMAVA photo by Kryn P. Westhoven)**

better – with less. These volunteer hours equal a staff manpower savings of \$1.8 million in salaries. On top of that, these volunteers have also donated more than \$251,000 worth of goods and services.

As mentioned earlier, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is small, but it has an outsized impact on the Garden State economy.



**The New Jersey Veterans' Benefits Guide highlights services and programs offered by DMAVA, the federal government and private organizations. (NJDMAVA design by Mark C. Olsen)**

For evidence of this, look no further than DMAVA's Veterans Service Officers. From 16 offices covering every New Jersey county, the VSO's primary job is to ensure that every Veteran in our state gets all the fed-

***The DMAVA Veterans Service Officers have steadily increased the amount of federal Veterans Administration benefits received by New Jersey Veterans in each of the past seven years, from \$72 million in Fiscal 2009 to \$173 million in Fiscal Year 2016. That is a 140 percent increase.***

eral entitlements he or she has earned through their service.

The DMAVA Veterans Service Officers have steadily increased the amount of federal Veterans Administration benefits received by New Jersey Veterans in each of the past seven years, from \$72 million in Fiscal 2009 to \$173 million in Fiscal Year 2016. That is a 140 percent increase. The majority – 85 percent of that money went to New Jersey Veterans for compensation for service-connected ailments, which includes Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, Agent Orange Exposure and hearing loss.



*Residents of the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland unwrap their gifts during the Second Winds Dreams event Dec. 21, 2016. This is the sixth year that the Second Wind Dreams Organization and the Vineland Boscov's department store have treated the Home's residents to an early Christmas. Second Wind Dreams has been helping to make the residents' wishes and dreams become a reality since 1997. The Vineland Home was granted a lifetime scholarship to Second Wind Dreams through the generosity of the Harrah's Foundation. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released)*

The Departments three long term care Memorial Homes for Veterans and their spouses in Menlo Park, Paramus and Vineland provide quality, compassionate care to 948 residents annually. In addition to state appropriations of \$78 million, the Homes leverage nearly \$11 million in federal Medicare funds to offset operating costs.

Furthermore, collections of federal Veterans Administration per diem and resident contributions are deposited directly into the State's General Fund. Although not credited directly to the Homes, the receipts are considered as offsets to Direct State Aid. In the past few Fiscal Years, the Homes receipts have returned in excess of two thirds of state appropriations directly to the Treasury. A similar result is anticipated for Fiscal Year 2018.

Members of the Greatest Generation continue to decline with just 25,000 World War II veterans still living in the state. There are currently approximately 49,000 Korean War Veterans and 142,000 Vietnam Veterans in New Jersey. The challenge in coming years will be to keep our facilities full with smaller Veterans populations.

Services to our veterans extends beyond their daily lives. As our veterans pass on, many find their final resting place at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle cemetery.



*American flags placed by Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts mark the headstones at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery, North Hanover Township, N.J., May 28, 2016. Veterans' service organizations along with New Jersey National Guard Soldiers and Airmen honor the fallen during the annual State Memorial Day ceremony at the Cemetery. The ceremony culminated with the presentation of memorial wreaths by representatives of veteran service organizations. (Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released)*

The cemetery in North Hanover Township, has a rated capacity of 171,000 remains and continues to be the busiest state cemetery in the country with more than 3,000 interments in FY 2016. There have been 67,934 interments of Veterans and their spouses since the facility opened with more than 25,000 veterans already pre-registered.



*Veterans Haven-South in Winslow Township, Gloucester County. (NJDMAVA photo by Mark C. Olsen)*

Although it has been said that the words homeless and Veteran should never appear in the same sentence, the unfortunate reality is that some of New Jersey's homeless men and women have also served in the armed services. To address this issue, DMAVA has taken aggressive steps over the past three years to nearly triple the services provided to homeless Veterans through its time tested transitional housing programs.

The Department's two transitional housing facilities, Veterans Haven-North in Glen Gardner, Hunterdon County, and Veterans Haven-South in Winslow Township, Camden County, provide effective, long-term rehabilitation services



***Fiscal Year 2017 appropriated funds for operations at the Veterans Havens was unchanged from Fiscal Year 2016, but has been reduced by \$291,000 in the FY 2018 budget. Efficiency savings and additional reliance on federal grants will compensate for the reduction.***

and employment training for its residents.

Vets Haven-North currently has 72 residents and Vet Haven-South currently has 75.

The operations costs for Vets Haven-South were \$2.3 million, of which \$963,000 was appropriated. The balance is provided by the U.S. Veterans Administration's Grant Per Diem Program (GPD). The operational costs for Vets Haven-North were \$1.9 million, of which \$1.1 million was appropriated. The balance was provided by the VA under the Shield Program to alleviate acute homelessness among Veterans. Fiscal Year 2017 appropriated funds for operations at the Veterans Havens was unchanged from Fiscal Year 2016, but has been reduced by \$291,000 in the FY 2018 budget. Efficiency savings and additional reliance on federal grants will compensate for the reduction. In addition, the VA has announced that the GPD program will be terminated at the end of this federal fiscal year. In its place, the VA intends to fund those beds at the same per diem rate under a number of treatment models under which the Veterans Havens will be eligible.



***More than 250 people attended the graduation of 81 New Jersey Youth ChalleNGe Academy Class 45 cadets March 11, 2017, at the War Memorial in Trenton. The cadets completed a 22-week quasi-military program, located at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, and sponsored by the New Jersey National Guard that provides 16-18 year-old high school dropouts the opportunity to earn a GED diploma. Through the program, cadets work to raise their math, social studies, science, and language arts skills by two grade levels and attend classes on resume building and life skills. In addition, the cadets perform community service and participate in a rigorous physical fitness program. (U.S. Army National Guard photo/Released)***

The New Jersey National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Academy, located on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, remains an innovative and cost-effective partnership between the state and federal governments.

The voluntary educational program provides 16 to 18 year-old high school dropouts the opportunity to undergo an intense 22-week structured residential program in a quasi-military environment. The educational goal is to raise math and reading scores a minimum of two grade levels and prepare cadets for the GED exam. The program has a return on investment unmatched among organizations that assist at-risk-youth. Two out of three high school dropouts who enroll in Youth ChalleNGe earn a high school diploma and are prepared for the job market, military service, or to continue their education.

Since 2008, there have been 1,717 Youth ChalleNGe graduates, who went on to continue their education, entered the workforce and joined the military. Those classes of Youth ChalleNGe cadets provided 103,655 hours of community service for government agencies and nonprofit organizations ranging from New Jersey Forestry Services to Monmouth Battlefield State Park to the New Jersey Community Food Bank of South Jersey. The monetary value of the services they provided exceeds \$2.2 million.

In Fiscal Year 2016, the federal government paid for 75 percent of the ChalleNGe program's operating costs, or \$2.7 million, and the state of New Jersey accounted for the remaining \$900,000 in program expenses.

It is incumbent upon the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to ensure that we take care of their needs and the needs of their families as our National Guard members mobilize, deploy, demobilize, and transition back to civilian life.

Through National Guard funding, DMAVA operates a statewide network of Family Assistance Centers. These centers support the families of deployed Soldiers and Airmen during unforeseen emergencies and financial hardships. Staff at the centers work in tandem with the dedicated volunteers at the 34 unit-affiliated Family Readiness Groups across the state. Our dedicated team of chaplains lends additional support.

From the moment they step off the plane after a deployment, Soldiers and Airmen are the focus of a reconstitution process designed to reconnect them with their families, smooth the return to their civilian jobs, address any financial concerns that have arisen during their absence, educate them about the benefits to which they are now entitled, and ensure that their physical, mental, and spiritual needs are being met.

The National Guard Bureau has recognized DMAVA's effort to assist Soldiers and Airmen as they transition from active duty mobilizations to part-time service as one of the nation's "best practices."



DMAVA continues to assist a number of Veterans seeking treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In Fiscal Year 2016, there were 10,670 individual counseling sessions and 7,436 group counseling sessions.

New Jersey is committed to providing them a helping hand to veterans and their families. A cornerstone of this effort is our toll free, 24-hour Veterans Helpline. Calls to the helpline have grown from 1,571 in 2006 when the program began, to 4,173 last year.

Based on the high volume of calls to the 24-hour helpline, the Vet2Vet Helpline has proven a positive and effective means to mitigate potentially life-



respond to a domestic crisis. They are DMAVA.

threatening issues for service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan as well as those suffering ill effects from service in earlier conflicts.

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs makes New Jersey a stronger place. The Department cares for Veterans, our Troops, and our state in its times of need. This happens because of the dedication of our uniformed military force and our civilian employees. They come to work every day with the mission as their priority, whether their mission is helping an aging Veteran at one of our Homes, or making a last minute check of young Soldiers and Airmen as they re-

## BACK COVER PHOTOS

*Top row, left to right: New Jersey Air National Guard firefighters with the 177th Fighter Wing join Airmen from the Connecticut, Maine, Rhode Island and Vermont Air National Guard Fire Departments perform a live aircraft fire training exercise at the 165th Airlift Wing's Regional Fire Training Facility in Savannah, Ga. April 4, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Andrew J. Merlock/Released) A simulated injured Tactical Air Control Party Airman with the 227th Air Support Operations Squadron, New Jersey Air National Guard, is retrieved from a rooftop to a hovering New Jersey Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk MEDEVAC helicopter during exercise "I Am Ready" at Island Beach State Park, Seaside Park, N.J. Nov. 18, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released) Allyson Bailey, CEO, New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland is joined by Ray Zawacki, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs, New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; Russ Knapp, general manager, Northstar New Jersey Lottery Group and Carole Hedinger, Executive Director, New Jersey Lottery, joined residents, staff members, and local officials to cut the ribbon for a new sitting room at the Home March 9, 2017. Northstar provided the manpower and money to create a home-like area for residents, family members, and volunteers. (NJDMAVA photo by Kryn P. Westhoven/Released)*

*Second row, left to right: A Korean War veteran seeks out the name of a fallen comrade during the National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day ceremony at the New Jersey Korean War Memorial, Brighton Park, Atlantic City, N.J., July 27, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released) Airman 1st Class Robert O'Brien, structures civil engineer with the 177th Fighter Wing 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, Republic of Albania July 11, 2016. The 177th Fighter Wing civil engineers were working on humanitarian and civic assistance renovation projects at a local school during their two week deployment. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley/Released) Role-players acting as protesters join their arms to resist arrest by the New Jersey Army National Guard Response Force's 328th Military Police Company during civil disturbance and riot control training at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Nov. 12, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Young/Released)*

*Third row, left to right: Strike Team member Staff Sgt. Nicky Lam with*

*the New Jersey National Guard's 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team is decontaminated by Picatinny Arsenal firefighters during a training exercise at the New Jersey Homeland Defense Homeland Security Center at Picatinny Arsenal, N.J., Mar. 23, 2017. (New Jersey National Guard photo by Mark C. Olsen/Released) Marie, second from the right, holding a picture of her husband, World War II veteran Army Pfc. Henry W. Rittman, poses for a photo with her sons, left to right, Alan, Robert, and Gary holding photos of her uncle, World War I Army Pvt. Joseph J. Wegant, her father, World War I Army Cpl. Anthony F. Silzer, Sr., and her brother, World War II U.S. Army Air Force Staff Sgt. Anthony F. Silzer, Jr., during a New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs state medals ceremony at the Quaker Bridge Mall in Lawrenceville, N.J., Jan. 24, 2017. (NJDMAVA photo by Mark C. Olsen/Released) Engine mechanic Staff Sgt. Travis Laverne 108th Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, troubleshoots an F108 engine on a KC-135 Stratotanker at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Feb. 26, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)*

*Fourth row, left to right: Senior Airman Willie Cruz-Moya, 108th Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, along with Airmen from the 108th and the 177th Fighter Wing stand at attention after receiving the Humanitarian Service Medal at a ceremony at the National Guard Armory in Lawrenceville, N.J., May 3, 2016. More than 2,200 Soldiers and Airmen will receive the medal. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released) Volunteers assist homeless veterans with clothing and blankets at Stand Down 2016 at the National Guard Armory in Cherry Hill Sept. 23, 2016. The New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs along with New Jersey National Guard Soldiers and Airmen and the Stand Down of South Jersey Committee, Inc. co-hosted the Stand Down to provide more than 200 homeless veterans with access to healthcare, mental health screening, substance abuse counseling, social services - food stamps and unemployment, legal services, religious counseling, a hot meal, a haircut, and winter clothing. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released) Soldiers with C Company, 1-114 Infantry, New Jersey Army National Guard, provide cover fire during the assault on a building during a training exercise on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Jan. 9, 2017. The exercise is part of a series of training events that will culminate this summer at an eXportable Combat Training Capability exercise at Fort Pickett, Va. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)*



