December 2017

BROOKE ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

2017 Veterans Day Celebration
Honoring Past and Present
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BAMC FOCUS
DECEMBER 2017
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SAMHS
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Proud Partner
Earlier this month, I was thrilled to see so many members of our team enjoying the BAMC Holiday Ball - from the ceremony and entertainment to the venue and great service. I hope you enjoyed the evening as much as CSM Hough and I. I’d like to extend a special thank you to the Holiday Ball committee and all who volunteered for putting together this tremendous event.

For those of you who were not able to attend, it is my sincere hope that you will join in the fun and camaraderie next year. For photos from the Holiday Ball, please visit: https://portal.bamc.amedd.army.mil/SiteDirectory/Photography/BAMC%20Holiday%20Ball%202017/Forms/AllItems.aspx

As we move through the season, please take time to rest and recharge. Practice sound judgement - don’t drink and drive, be aware of your surroundings and be mindful of the fire dangers and road hazards which accompany the holidays. We care about you and your family and want you to have a joyous, memorable holiday.

During this season of hope and friendship, we must remember those serving in uniform, many who remain deployed in harm’s way throughout the world. Please keep each of them and their families in your thoughts and prayers. Remind them their sacrifice and dedication to duty are greatly appreciated by our Nation.

On behalf of the Command Team, we want to thank every member of our team -- military, GS civilians, contractors, volunteers and Family members -- for your dedication and service. We are honored to serve with you. We also send sincerest wishes for a peaceful and safe holiday season to our patients, families and visitors of the Brooke Army Medical Center community.

Some of our team recorded a special rendition of “Jingle Bells.” Please take a moment to watch this fun and festive video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MX223l6Ot0U

From CSM Hough and I, have a safe and restful holiday season!

A Team of Teams … Creating Tomorrows Today
By Elaine Sanchez
BAMC Public Affairs

The community teamwork and medical response the afternoon of the Sutherland Springs shooting was “extremely heartwarming,” noted Brooke Army Medical Center’s trauma chief.

“When people heard about the shooting, we didn’t have to do a recall; people came in immediately and pitched in … not to watch but to help,” said Army Col. (Dr.) Kurt Edwards, who received patients and directed care that night.

“We ended up with more medical staff in the operating rooms, emergency department and ICUs [intensive care units] than we needed,” he said.

BAMC received eight victims -- six adults and two minors -- from the mass shooting Nov. 5 in the small community church in Sutherland Springs, about 30 miles east of San Antonio. One adult patient remains in BAMC’s care.

Air Force Maj. Belinda Kelley, the shift leader that night in the ER, received the initial call. “We were told we were possibly getting quite a few patients after a shooting at a church,” Kelley recalled. “We weren’t sure how many were coming here, but were told there were potentially 30 shot.” Kelley later learned that 26 people had been killed and 20 injured that Sunday afternoon.

The situation was well controlled at BAMC, Edwards noted. “We had about a 30-minute warning. We started prepping for any eventuality to ensure adequate coverage. We opened up 15 trauma bays in preparation.”

BAMC received four patients at first, then an additional four not long after. “It was disheartening to see that the injuries were not dissimilar to those in combat,” said Edwards, who has deployed multiple times to Iraq and Afghanistan. “To see people who had been sitting in a church having similar injuries to those in a combat zone … not something you want to see.”

Edwards praised the first responders and the trauma partnership within the city that led to an effective response. BAMC and University Health System are the only Level I trauma centers in the San Antonio region, caring for civilian trauma patients over a 23,000 square mile radius. On average, BAMC cares for more than 4,000 trauma patients each year.

Both BAMC and University provide the highest level of trauma care together and we do it every day,” he noted. “It’s an amazing partnership, especially when we are working together to care for people after a devastating tragedy.”

“The staff response has been professional, efficient and caring,” said Army Col. Michael Ludwig, deputy commander for inpatient services. “I could not be more proud of the staff -- everyone from housekeeping to the technicians to our senior leaders.”

Kelley said she’s proud to work at the military’s only Level I trauma center.

“As a nurse it’s a very emotional place,” she said, “especially when I pick up the phone and someone is looking for a loved one.

“If I walk out of here and can’t cry then I can’t come back,” she said, “because that means I don’t care anymore. Caring is what I do.”
U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley presents his military coin to Marine Cpl. Alexander Cruz while visiting Brooke Army Medical Center in honor of Veterans Day Nov. 11. Cruz has been undergoing physical therapy with the BAMC Burn Rehabilitation team. (Photo by Robert Shields)

Brooke Army Medical Center Commanding General Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Johnson (right) discusses the BAMC trauma mission with U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley Nov. 11 as Col. Michael Ludwig, deputy commander for inpatient services, looks on. Milley spent Veterans Day visiting with patients and staff at BAMC. (Photo by Robert Shields)

U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley presents his military coin to Marine Lance Cpl. Mathew Maddux while visiting Brooke Army Medical Center in honor of Veterans Day Nov. 11. (Photo by Robert Shields)

U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley poses for a photo with Brooke Army Medical Center staff members Nov. 11 in honor of Veterans Day. (Photo by Robert Shields)
Safeguarding against workplace violence

By Elaine Sanchez
BAMC Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO, Texas – Army Capt. Katie Ann Blanchard ran into trouble with her civilian employee from the start. He was combative, defiant and at times, explosive.

“I kept telling myself it will get better,” the Army nurse said.

Instead, it got worse. Clifford Currie grew erratic and aggressive to the point where Blanchard feared for her life. Today, she bears the scars of his final violent act, when he doused her with gasoline and lit her face on fire while standing by her desk at work.

Blanchard is just one of the over 2 million victims of workplace violence reported each year, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration website. The Department of Defense defines workplace violence as “any act of physical violence, threats of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, bullying, verbal or non-verbal threat, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at or outside the work site.”

A downward spiral

Blanchard never expected her life would so quickly derail after becoming a first-time supervisor of 15 military and civilian employees at Munson Army Health Center in Kansas. After identifying issues, she encouraged Currie to improve his work performance to ensure the best care of his patients. However, in time, the young lieutenant became alarmed by Currie’s defiance of authority and lack of willingness to improve on the job.

“One day he lost his temper, cornered me and started shouting,” she said. “I was fortunate I was able to call for help.”

Blanchard consulted with civilian personnel and her leadership and started keeping copious notes and records about Currie’s behavior. She placed him on a performance improvement plan but the situation continued to worsen. “He was blowing up twice a day or not coming into work,” she said.

Various events in the workplace can trigger workplace violence including “anger over disciplinary actions, loss of a job, or disagreement with policy or practices,” according to the newly released Regional Health Command-Central Workplace Violence Guide.

Warning signs

Warning signs of potential workplace violence can include aggressive behavior, conflicts with co-workers or supervisors, statements showing fascination with workplace violence incidents, statements indicating desperation over finances or family issues to the point of suicide, direct or veiled threats of harm, substance abuse, and extreme changes in normal behavior. It can be difficult to determine whether or not a situation will escalate; however, it’s better to “err on the side of safety,” the guide notes.

If there’s any suspicion a situation will escalate, people should notify the employee’s supervisor or other leader as soon as possible, the guide advises. Supervisors should take these concerns seriously and consult with experts, to include the threat assessment team and the human resources department.

“One common thread exists in preventing workplace violence: strong leadership,” the guide notes.

“Supervisors play a key role in recognizing potentially violent situations and taking proactive measures to reduce the negative impact of such incidents.”

Best course is prevention

Overall, the best method to end workplace violence is early prevention. To start, agencies should implement a “sound” prevention plan, the guide recommends. This should include required training for employees and supervisors on the signs of and reporting methods for workplace violence, the role of the multidisciplinary threat assessment team, and resources such as Alternative Dispute Resolution and the Employee Assistance Program.

While she’d seen and reported the warning signs for months, Blanchard didn’t have time to react the afternoon Currie approached her at work. She had just texted her husband that she was heading home for family time with her three young sons when he walked into her office.

She saw the plastic bottle filled with a brownish-tinged liquid in his hand and felt a sudden rush of fear. As she stood up to run, he threw the liquid in her face and tossed two lit matches at her. All she saw was flames. “I thought I was going to die,” said Blanchard.

Currie continued his attack, stabbing at her with scissors, until Blanchard’s colleagues were able to subdue him.

Road to recovery

A year later, Blanchard continues to recover, cherishing her time with her family. She has become an advocate for workplace violence prevention, especially the need for education and awareness among supervisors. She’s a key member of the newly formed RHC-C Workplace Violence Working Group, which is taking swift action within the Region to add more security to military healthcare facilities and working to institute workplace violence prevention education for supervisors and employees.

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Blanchard shares her message every chance she gets alongside fellow victim Army Capt. John Arroyo.

A fellow survivor

Arroyo was blindsided by a workplace incident in 2014 at Fort Hood, Texas. The Green Beret, who weathered three deployments unscathed, had just stepped out of his car at brigade headquarters when Army Spc. Ivan Lopez pulled up and shot Arroyo in the neck from about 15 yards away. Driven by thoughts of his family, Arroyo held his neck to staunch the bleeding, pulled himself to his feet and began searching for help. At that moment, Lopez walked right by Arroyo without seeing him, an act the Green Beret credits to God.

Lopez killed three people and wounded 15 others that day before turning the gun on himself.

Arroyo was told he’d never speak again, but he overcame the odds and today uses his voice to encourage others who are dealing with adversity and the aftermath of violence.

While he is healing physically, Arroyo said the tougher part was the emotional healing, which is tied to his faith and ability to forgive.

“I love the man who shot me and I love his family,” he said. “People are surprised to hear that but I mean it. God picked me up off the ground that day and restored my life for a reason.

“Both Katie and I plan to use our second chances for good.”

A message of hope

Earlier this month, Blanchard’s attacker was sentenced to 20 years in prison without chance of parole. But this news did not signal an end to Blanchard’s journey. She and Arroyo hope to team up to share their stories and message of hope across the military and civilian sectors.

“If I can help prevent even one workplace violence incident from happening,” she said, “then my pain will have been worth it.”

(Note: This is the second in a two-part series on the prevention of workplace violence.)

Changes to TRICARE disenrollment coming in 2018

As part of the changes coming to TRICARE on Jan. 1, 2018, there will be new rules affecting disenrollment. Beginning in 2018, if you’re eligible for TRICARE and enrolled in a health plan, there are three ways you can be disenrolled:

- If you no longer wish to continue TRICARE coverage, you can voluntarily disenroll.
- If you fail to pay enrollment or premium fees.
- If you or your sponsor lose TRICARE eligibility.

On Jan. 1, 2018, TRICARE Standard will transition to TRICARE Select. Under TRICARE Select, beneficiaries will need to be enrolled if they wish to use the program, and disenroll if they no longer wish to use this health plan. In order to disenroll from TRICARE Select, you will need to fill out a change form.

This is different from the current disenrollment process. Currently, you can disenroll or be disenrolled from TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Premium Based Plans (TRICARE Young Adult, TRICARE Retired Reserve, TRICARE Reserve Select, US Family Health Plan), but you can’t be disenrolled from TRICARE Standard. Today, if you disenroll or are disenrolled from TRICARE Prime, then you’re still automatically covered by TRICARE Standard. Once TRICARE Standard transitions to TRICARE Select, you will not have this automatic coverage -- you must actively enroll.

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BAMC honors veterans for their ‘tremendous sacrifice’

By Elaine Sanchez
BAMC Public Affairs

A retired Soldier sat riveted, tears streaming, as a USO Show Troupe singer belted out “American Soldier” from center stage. A few rows up, three World War II and Korean War veterans sat side by side, in wheelchairs or with walkers, but still strong and proud decades after they served in war.

These were just a few of the community veterans honored Nov. 4 during Brooke Army Medical Center’s Veterans Day celebration. More than 3,500 veterans, BAMC staff and families attended the event, which featured patriotic songs by the USO Troupe, high school drill teams, a marching band, and health information and screenings.

“We put this special event together for you,” said BAMC Commander Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Johnson as he looked out at the many veterans in the crowd. “I am humbled by the number of years of service and the breadth of sacrifice you represent.

“I would like to personally thank you for the sacrifices you have made, whether you have served or are currently serving in the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force or Coast Guard – you are all brothers and sisters in arms,” he said.

The commander welcomed guest speaker retired Chief Warrant Officer 3 Mike Gonzalez to the stage. Gonzalez, a 21-year Army veteran, deployed multiple times to Iraq and Afghanistan. He sustained injuries to his eyes while deployed, which worsened after a car accident at home. He’s undergone 21 eye surgeries at BAMC, including two corneal transplants.

“It’s fitting this event is occurring on the grounds here by BAMC,” Gonzalez noted. “This is a world class facility where day in and day out through those doors enter thousands of veterans of multiple eras. You, our veterans, have given us the wonderful gift of freedom. We are here solely to remind you how important you are to us.”

Gonzalez pointed out the many veterans in the crowd from conflicts such as World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and the most recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“We live in a place that needs more goodness and light … more kindness, more smiles, more unity,” he said. “I believe in this field right here and right now are the greatest veterans in this world who can be that light.

“Let us always thank our veterans, let us always remember our veterans for their tremendous service to our country.”

The ceremony was followed by a lunch donated by Hard Eight BBQ during which members of the Spurs Silver Dancers and the USO Troupe mingled with the crowd and posed for photos with veterans as the Steve Griggs Band entertained the crowd.

World War II veteran Jim Calvert, who served in the Army Air Corps, said he greatly enjoyed the Veterans Day event. He took a moment to recall his service, which included a year in China and Burma. “It was worthwhile and a little bit exciting too,” he said. “It’s always meaningful when you have these events honoring veterans,” he said.
Memorable moments

A USO Show Troupe sings patriotic tunes during the Veterans Day celebration at Brooke Army Medical Center Nov. 3. (Photo by Corey Toye)

World War II veteran Jim Calvert (center) greets a Korean War veteran before the Veterans Day celebration begins Nov. 3 at Brooke Army Medical Center. (Photo by Robert Shields)

Brooke Army Medical Center Commanding General Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Johnson speaks with a Korean War veteran Nov. 3 at the Veterans Day celebration. World War II and Korean War veterans, in wheelchairs or with walkers, attended the ceremony still strong and proud decades after they served in war. (Photo by Robert Shields)

The Steve Griggs Band entertains the crowd Nov. 3 as part of the Veterans Day celebration at Brooke Army Medical Center. (Photo by Robert Shields)

Brooke Army Medical Center Commanding General Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Johnson unveils a plaque dedicating a tree in honor of veterans past and present during a ceremony Nov. 3 at Brooke Army Medical Center. (Photo by Corey Toye)
Thanksgiving brings joy to patients, staff

Brooke Army Medical Center kicked off Thanksgiving festivities with food and fellowship for Warrior Transition Battalion Soldiers and their families. Leaders from BAMC and Joint Base San Antonio served a meal Nov. 17 at the Warrior and Family Support Center. Each year this event is a focal point for Warrior Care Month, which is celebrated in November.

BAMC command staff and their families helped bring the spirit of the holiday to inpatients and their families by delivering fruit baskets and words of encouragement.

The Dining Room at BAMC was a buzz of activity this Thanksgiving as more than 1,000 people came to the hospital to partake in a plethora of food served by the BAMC commanding general, command sergeant major and command staff.

Army Master Sgt. Kenneth Carey, Army Capt. Melissa Kottke, Army Col. Shawn Nessen and Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Ernesto Otero prepare to deliver fruit baskets to inpatients Nov. 23 at Brooke Army Medical Center. (Photo by Maj. Thomas Clifford)

Brooke Army Medical Center command staff and their families get ready to deliver holiday cheer to inpatients and their families on Thanksgiving day. (Photo by Maj. Thomas Clifford)
BAMC Command staff show their holiday spirit


Members of the command staff serve Thanksgiving dinner to more than 1,000 guests Nov. 23 in the Brooke Army Medical Center Dining Room. (Photo by Maj. Thomas Clifford)

Brooke Army Medical Center Commanding General Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Johnson and Command Sgt. Maj. Diamond Hough help serve Thanksgiving dinner to more than 1,000 guests Nov. 23 in the BAMC Dining Room. (Photo by Maj. Thomas Clifford)

Brooke Army Medical Center Deputy Commanding Officer Col. Traci Crawford and Command Sgt. Maj. Diamond Hough serve a Thanksgiving-style feast to Warrior Transition Battalion Soldiers and their families Nov. 17 at the Warrior and Family Support Center. (Photo by Robert Shields)
By Robert A. Whetstone
BAMC Public Affairs

If you are looking for a show of strength in south Texas, you don’t have to look any further than the Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Battalion-East detachment, nestled on the Brooke Army Medical Center campus. Inside the small building, Sgt. Ivan Sears works tirelessly behind the scenes, educating service members on the benefits of the programs offered within adaptive reconditioning.

Sears is part of a long line of Marines. In fact, the lineage can be traced to his birthplace of Twentynine Palms, California. “My dad Robert Sears helped me decide (to become a Marine) because he was in the Marine Corps for the majority of my life,” he said. “Also, the Marine Corps tradition is part of our family history from my grandpa Sears to my uncle Bill.”

Like many young post 9/11 men and women, Sears wanted to serve his country and do his part. After graduating from East Central High School in San Antonio, Texas, he joined the Marine Corps in 2008. In 2010, while on a patrol in Marjah, Afghanistan, Sears was injured by an improvised explosive device.

“I suffered from bilateral above knee amputations, a broken hip, burns and also wounds to my right arm,” he explained. Despite his injuries, he was determined to remain on active duty.

“As a result (of modern combat), many of our wounded, ill, and injured service members have significant traumatic injuries to include multi-limb traumatic amputations,” said U.S. Army Col. Travis Richardson, attending physician, Internal Medicine, Department of Medicine, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland, and Internal Medicine Consultant to the Surgeon General. “Fortunately improvements and advancements in the military health system and in combat casualty care/medical evacuation processes have resulted in improved survival rates,” he explained.

Sears’ injuries led him to explore the Marine Corps Warrior Athlete Reconditioning Program (WAR-P). Warrior care encompasses full spectrum support through recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration back to duty or transition into the community. Sears, with the help of the Expanded Permanent Limited Duty Program and WAR-P, not only remains on active duty, but is excelling.

“I went to the Marine Corps Trials in 2013 and wanted to run on running legs but it didn’t really work out to well,” said Sears. “So, I was asked to give the racing wheelchair a try. The coach said I was a natural at it and I just kept with it.” Sears became a member of the 2013 Marine Corps DoD Warrior Games team. He went on to the national championships that year and participated in various other competitions.

To simply say “other competitions,” is somewhat of an understatement. After attending the Marine Corps trials and the DoD Warrior Games, Sears competed in Germany at the Conseil International du Sport Militaire (CISM), the Military World Games in Mungyeong, Korea, Paralympic championships and try-outs, and the 2016 Invictus Games.

Sears was a member and Co-Captain of Team US during the 2017 Invictus Games. “The reason Invictus Games is different from other events is because it’s not just about the medals,” he explained. “It is more about networking and competing with other athletes, and also challenging yourself past your normal.”

His favorite sports to compete in are a toss-up between track and sledge hockey. Sears said during wheelchair racing on the track he generates the power to get up to at 20 mph. “I like sledge hockey because you get the full contact and work as a team,” he said.

Richardson said the athletes at the Invictus Games demonstrated a tremendous will to recover and rehabilitate and get back to their new normal. “They have certainly shown us an incredible competitive spirit and what resiliency truly looks like.”

Continued on page 13
Richardson said the athletes at the Invictus Games demonstrated a tremendous will to recover and rehabilitate and get back to their new normal. “They have certainly shown us an incredible competitive spirit and what resiliency truly looks like.”

His story of resilience within the WAR-P, similar to the Army adaptive reconditioning program, is one that could be shared in not only the BAMC community, but among sister services as well. There are active duty service members and veterans currently in adaptive reconditioning, striving to compete in events similar to those Sears participated in. Sears offers some straightforward advice to those seeking to compete: “Once you keeping practicing and sticking with it, and figuring out what works for you, then you’ll be great at it.”

Adaptive reconditioning has helped Sears both personally and professionally. “It helps in both areas because personally it makes me feel good about myself and the opportunity to represent the Marine Corps and my country,” Sears explained. “Professionally it allows me to meet some of the best people in the world. I am making memories with them and showing even after being wounded, we can still do great things.”

Note: November was Warrior Care Month. It is an important Department of Defense-wide annual effort to increase awareness of programs and resources available to wounded, ill and injured service members, as well as their families, caregivers and others who support them, and to inspire dialogue and action to support 21st century warrior care priorities, including those supporting readiness and interagency collaboration. For additional information on Warrior Care Month and warrior care programs and resources, please visit http://warriorcare.dodlive.mil

You may elect to disenroll from any TRICARE plan at any time. During calendar year 2018 (Jan. 1-Dec. 31), you’ll have a full-year grace period to enroll or re-enroll in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select at any time, as long as you remain eligible. Special rules will apply in 2018 for beneficiaries who are eligible for TRICARE, but aren’t enrolled in a plan. These grace period rules include:

- Your first episode of care from a civilian network provider will be covered by TRICARE.
- You’ll have an opportunity to enroll or re-enroll.
- If you don’t enroll at that time, you’ll only be able to receive care at a military hospital or clinic on a space-available basis and use military pharmacies. You’ll be responsible for all subsequent costs for seeing a civilian provider. TRICARE won’t pay any other claims.

The grace period doesn’t apply to premium-based plans.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2019, once you voluntarily disenroll from TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select, you can only re-enroll if you experience a qualifying life event or during the next annual open enrollment season (and receive coverage beginning Jan. 1).

If you disenroll or are disenrolled from a premium-based plan like TRR, TRS or TYA, you must wait 12 months and requalify for TRICARE if you want to purchase coverage again. If you disenroll from the Continued Health Care Benefit Plan, you can’t enroll in another TRICARE plan unless you become eligible for TRICARE again. Specific procedures and disenrollment forms are available online.

In cases of disenrollment due to loss of sponsor eligibility, you may be eligible for temporary coverage through the Transitional Assistance Management Program.

This is Your Benefit! Are You Ready?

The best way to prepare is to update your information in DEERS, sign up for TRICARE benefit updates and visit the TRICARE Changes page at https://tricare.mil/changes.
By Lori Newman
BAMC Public Affairs

Brooke Army Medical Center celebrated Native American Heritage Month Nov. 29 with a ceremony in the Medical Mall.

Many people may not realize that Native American Heritage Month is celebrated in November because it’s the end of the harvest season; it wasn’t based on Thanksgiving, explained Erwin De Luna, the guest speaker for the event.

De Luna is the president of the board of directors for the United San Antonio Pow Wow, Inc. and has served in the San Antonio community for more than 40 years through various organizations.

BAMC Deputy Commanding Officer Army Col. Traci Crawford provided opening remarks for the event.

Crawford said this year’s theme, “Standing Together,” fits well within the military culture and our country.

“Native Americans have fought in every war since America’s founding and have taken their rightful place as heroes in our nation’s history,” she said. “Historically, American Indians have the highest record of military service per capita as compared to other ethnic groups.”

Today there are more than 15,000 active duty service members who are of American Indian or Alaska Native descent serving in our military and over 6,400 Department of Defense civilians.

Crawford spoke to the audience about the American Indian code talkers who served during World War I and WWII, highlighting Clarence Wolf Guts who enlisted in the Army in 1942 at the age of 18. Wolf Guts was fluent in Lakota, a dialect of Sioux. He developed a phonetic alphabet based on the Lakota language, which was later developed into code.

“These code talkers saved countless American lives by stopping the enemy from gaining valuable information that could have been used to harm our troops,” Crawford said.

De Luna’s presentation emphasized the accomplishments of several Native Americans and Alaska Natives in American history. He also discussed the long lineage of military service within his own family.

“Many tribal names that you hear across the country translate into ‘the people,’” De Luna said. “That’s who we believe we are -- the people of this land.

“Many of the foods we eat and the medicines we use were introduced to us by Indians,” De Luna added. “Indians have made contributions in every area of America.”

After his remarks, De Luna and his wife, Rose Mary, led the audience in a traditional Native American dance.

“I have participated in American Indian dance and heritage since I was 12 years old,” he said. “Now my family continues that tradition.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Diamond Hough closed the event, thanking De Luna for his remarks and continued contributions to the San Antonio community.

“Please remember, no matter your religion, ethnicity, gender or ancestry -- we are all brothers and sisters on the battlefield,” Hough said. “America’s diversity has always been one of our great strengths as people from different backgrounds and cultures offer their unique talents and perspectives. That’s what makes us strong and who we are.”
Other Happenings ...

at Brooke Army Medical Center

Brooke Army Medical Center Troop Command Commander Lt. Col. Lee Freeman (right) and Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick Batiste (left) award the honor of Soldier of the Year to Sgt. Gregorio G. Sanchez, Bravo Company, during a ceremony Nov. 17 in the BAMC auditorium. (Photo by James Camillocci)

Brooke Army Medical Center Troop Command Commander Lt. Col. Lee Freeman (right) and Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick Batiste (left) award the honor of BAMC Noncommissioned Officer of the Year to Staff Sgt. Justin R. Montoya, Charlie Company, during a ceremony Nov. 17 in the BAMC auditorium. (Photo by James Camillocci)

Col. Kurt Edwards, Brooke Army Medical Center chief of trauma, discusses BAMC’s trauma mission with United States Attorney General Jefferson Beauregard Sessions III and his wife Mary Blackshear Sessions during a visit Nov. 8. (Photo by Robert Shields)


Col. Margaret Nava, Brooke Army Medical Center chief nursing officer, presents Karriemah Munson, Intensive Care Unit nurse, the Daisy Award Nov. 8. Munson was recognized by a family member for her quick actions while responding to a Rapid Respond Team call. The Daisy Award recognizes nurses who provide extraordinary care for their patients. (Photo by Robert Shields)
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