

INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING



May 2018 | NEWSLETTER

Mississippi's Camp Kamassa Military Training Mission Builds Camp for Children with Special Needs



The Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program began construction of Camp Kamassa in April. During this multi-year mission, the IRT program will build the first special needs camp in Crystal Springs, Mississippi, for the Mississippi's Toughest Kids (MTK) Foundation. The IRT mission brings together service members from the Air Force Reserve and Air Guard to train on mission-essential tasks,

including construction, dirt work, engineering, plumbing, and pest management. Building Camp Kamassa provides the military hands-on, multi-trade construction experience, while simultaneously creating an opportunity for children with special needs to experience summer camp.

The myriad of construction training opportunities at Camp Kamassa makes it an ideal mission for IRT. Military engineers develop a variety of skills, including the ability to manufacture structures from wilderness environments during overseas contingency operations. "We like to get projects that cover all components of construction," said Chief Master Sergeant Todd Jones, IRT Project Manager assigned to Air Force Reserve Command, "and IRT will be involved in all aspects of constructing Camp Kamassa from cradle to grave." Service members began the dirt work—clearing land and building roads—for the first phase of the project, and by the end of the summer will install water and sewage lines, dig a well, and build eight cabins. During this project, scheduled to last three years, service members will build a cafeteria, covered sidewalk, and an infirmary capable of providing care for the campers' unique health concerns.

Kamassa, a Choctaw word meaning "tough and perseverant," describes the ones the camp serves—children living with disabilities, life-threatening illnesses, or other hardships. "We envisioned a year-round camp facility with activities like horseback riding, a ropes course, and canoeing that would be handicap-accessible," said Mrs. Mary Kitchens, MTK's co-founder and director. Kitchens wanted to build a permanent camp that was accessible to her target audience and had specialized medical facilities. "Without the IRT program, we could not afford to build the camp," said Mrs. Kitchens, "thanks to the IRT program, thousands of children will have a camp designed to meet their unique medical needs while giving them a camp experience filled with fun, adventure, and discovery."

KEY TRAINING ELEMENT OF THIS MISSION:
MULTI-TRADE PROJECTS



<http://irt.defense.gov/>



IRT: Bringing Value to DoD

RESTORE MILITARY READINESS

IRT provides hands-on, real-world training to improve readiness and survivability in contingency environments

STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS

IRT builds and strengthens partnerships with culturally complex populations, often in remote areas

BRING BUSINESS REFORMS

IRT is a collaborative program that leverages military contributions and community resources to multiply value and cost savings for participants

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

**Mrs. Mary Kitchens, Co-Founder and
Director, Mississippi's Toughest Kids
Foundation**



"With the wonderful help of the men and women of the Air Force Reserve and National Guard, through the IRT program, children in Mississippi with special needs will soon have a great place to attend camp. We are so very thankful to the IRT for their invaluable assistance."

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COMMUNITY UPDATE

FY 2019 STRATEGIC PLANNING

IRT Program Managers met in May to discuss ways to build service member capabilities and leverage service training cycles to enhance military readiness. The group focused on incorporating entrepreneurship to increase value and cost-savings for the military.

IRT'S NEW WEBSITE

Interested in applying to IRT for FY2020? Check out IRT's online submissions portal that makes it easier to apply to the IRT program. The new website also includes information for military members and non-DoD entities. FY2020 applications are due September 30, 2018. For more information, or to apply for a FY 2020 project, visit <http://irt.defense.gov/>



IRT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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SERVICE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**SMSGT STACY GILMAN, 439TH CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON
SENIOR NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER IN CHARGE, CAMP KAMASSA**

"They key to air power is flexibility and IRT projects are good for learning and experience" says SMSgt Gilman. He ensures those under his command build new skills during each construction phase and encourages them to train outside their primary trade. SMSgt Gilman and military engineers are building strong partnerships with the community, attending community events and serving food at a soup kitchen.



SMSgt Gilman with Aly, a child blind since birth, participating in MTK activities.



2018 IRT PROGRAM MANAGERS

Captain Zachary West, Army National Guard

Major Cletis Derek Butler, Army Reserve

Major Lisbeth Andriessen, Marine Corps Reserve

LCDR Joshua Strubeck, Navy Reserve

Captain Jennifer Fagan, Air National Guard

Major Michael McDonald, Air Force Reserve



IRT CALENDAR

May 1 – Aug. 6, Old Harbor, Alaska

May 1 – July 8, Aloha Gardens Project, Hawaii

May 10-18, Operation Empower Health, Georgia

May 29 – August 5, WV Schools for the Deaf and Blind Facilities Project, West Virginia

Sept. 18-20, Annual Training Workshop, Virginia

We accept Notification of Intent to Train (NIT) applications all year! <http://irt.defense.gov/FAQs/>

Read about last year's IRT projects!

<http://irt.defense.gov/Projects/>

Want to learn more about IRT? Check out our latest YouTube video!

<https://youtu.be/UV6zngxr1nA>

<http://irt.defense.gov/>