



INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING



The Premier Military Training Platform for a Secure and Prosperous America

NOVEMBER 2019 | NEWSLETTER

Annual Workshop for Operational Mission Planners Provides Crucial Joint Training

Preparation for this year's missions kicked off during the annual IRT Joint Workshop for Operational Mission Planners, held in Tysons, VA, September 17-19. The workshop offered training to 75 FY20 mission participants and planners, a mix of Active, Reserve, and Guard members across the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force. Participants met with their program managers, networked across Service



Workshop Breakout Session Run by Captain Kelly Machado

components, and gained valuable knowledge as they built their teams in preparation for upcoming missions throughout the United States and its territories. During the 3-day workshop, these participants—along with more than 105 total workshop attendees—celebrated a successful FY19 mission year while learning about tools and resources that further operational excellence in FY20. Training activities comprised 26 hours of contact time, distributed across more than 13 unique sessions, including breakout sessions, lessons-learned panels, planning briefings, and team-building exercises.



Joint Workshop Community Panel

Community and military workshop attendees enjoyed an insightful community panel discussion, learning what makes an IRT partnership successful. Four panelists discussed their experience on IRT missions,

including what went well, challenges, and recommendations for future training opportunities. IRT Operations Officer Captain Jennifer Ryan moderated the panel. She facilitated an interactive discussion between the audience and community partners, which reflected on the previous year while imparting essential advice for future year missions. (Learn more about these eminent panelists in a special “Thank You” section on page 2.)

Three distinguished speakers elevated this year's workshop by delivering objective perspectives from effective military and DoD leaders. Brigadier General Wendy Wenke, Commander of the Delaware Air National Guard, served as the inaugural speaker. She articulated the value of IRT, reflecting on her personal experience with a multiyear IRT partnership in Alaska, and passed along knowledge to upcoming mission participants about to embark on the 18-month service journey. Addressing newcomers, Brig Gen Wenke remarked on how IRT “impacts training along with sense of community within the lines of effort within IRT.” She then described the power of partnerships, variety of tasks on different types of missions, importance of planning, and benefits of participating in a joint training planning.



Brig Gen Wendy Wenke

ENHANCE MILITARY READINESS

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

STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS

IRT builds and strengthens civil-military partnerships, 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

IRT TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

JOINT WORKSHOP FOR OPERATIONAL MISSION PLANNERS

Joint Planning, IRT Fundamentals for Newcomers, Huddle Training, Project Lifecycle, Mission Breakout Groups, Distinguished Guest Speakers

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Mary Kitchens, the founder and executive director of Mississippi's Toughest Kids Foundation, received the IRT 2019 Champion of the Year Award



Pictured above, from left to right, Col Jay Scott, Mary Kitchens, and Judd Lyons

“We were so excited to learn about the IRT program because not only did it bring the military in, but it gave us that push to believe that we really could build this facility (Camp Kamassa) in the poorest state of the United States.”

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





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Colonel Krista Soria, IRT Department Responsible Officer (DRO) for the Army, remarked on why IRT matters and how it fulfills strategic priorities in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Notably, she explained the multidomain challenges of today's military and how the joint nature of IRT brings value in preparing service members to address these challenges.

She then described the power of partnerships, variety of tasks on different types of missions, importance of planning, and benefits of participating in a joint training environment.

COL Krista Soria

Keynote speaker, Mr. Judd Lyons, Deputy Assistance Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (Reserve Integration), emphasized the critical importance of community partnerships and the valuable link they forge between the military and civilian partners. He noted, "IRT is a shining example of what can be accomplished. It provides valuable expertise and operational execution of meaningful missions for units and initiatives for our communities while simultaneously increasing readiness."



Mr. Judd Lyons

The final day of the workshop featured the FY19 IRT Awards Ceremony, which celebrates individual IRT contributions over the past year while promoting continued success in training and civil-military partnerships in the year to come. Award categories included Leader of the Year, Participant of the Year, Civil-Military Partnership of the Year, Champion of the Year, and Program Manager of the Year. Learn more about the recipients of these awards in upcoming IRT newsletters in the Community Partner and Service Member Spotlight sections. This begins on page 1 of this month's newsletter, where we highlight Mary Kitchens, and continues on page 2, where we honor Master Sergeant Mitch Sisco, Air National Guard.

SERVICE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MSGT MITCH SISCO
AIR NATIONAL GUARD
CAMP PAUMALU PROJECT PLANNER
IRT PARTICIPANT OF THE YEAR



"I can say without hesitation that my time with IRT has been the most rewarding aspect of my 17 years in the military. The impact our projects have on the communities we partner with will never be accurately captured in an AAR, it is something that needs to actually be seen to be believed. We leave communities better than we found them and make friends along the way, all the while increasing our preparedness and proficiency to do our job if called upon to deploy."

A Big "IRT Thank You" to Our 2019 Workshop Community Panelists!

Andy Crosson

Director of the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) Regional Commission, East Central Georgia

Carol Juett

Office of the Commissioner Kentucky Department for Local Government, Operation Coal Country

Joel Evans

President and CEO of the Community Action Agency, Delta Area Economic Opportunity Corporation

Mary Kitchens

Mississippi's Toughest Kids Foundation, Camp Kamasssa

2019 IRT PROGRAM MANAGERS

First Lieutenant Jessica Brownlow, *Army Reserve*

Major Morgan Shepard-Vierra, *Air National Guard*

Major Andrew Chrestman, *Marine Corps Reserve*

Lieutenant Commander Joshua Strubeck, *Navy Reserve*

Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Adamich, *Air National Guard*

Major Michael McDonald, *Air Force Reserve*

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