



INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING

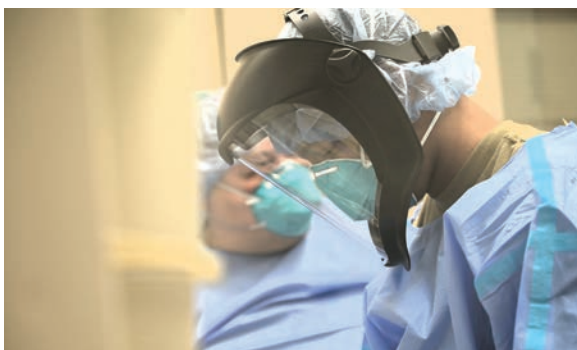
Premier Military Training for a
Secure and Prosperous America



MAY 2025 | NEWSLETTER

IRT Delivers Premier Training in Alaska

From April 5 to 19, the Army National Guard partnered with the Maniilaq Association to initiate Operation Arctic Care. This effort marks the first support activity funded by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to be completed in the FY25 Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) season. This training activity provided no-cost medical, dental, and veterinary services to residents of eleven villages across the region. Army Active Duty and Marine Corps Reserve personnel supported this joint activity. Additionally, the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) played a significant role by contributing a gastrointestinal team, a veterinary team, two pharmacists, and two environmental health officers.



U.S. Army Spc. Christopher Lee, 11th Airborne Division, sanitizes medical equipment at the Maniilaq Health Association April 8, 2025, in Kotzebue, Alaska as part of Operation Arctic Care 2025

Over the course of the support activity, 128 service members treated 460 dental and 392 medical patients, performing a total of 1,974 procedures estimated at over \$710,000 in fair market value. Pharmacists filled 1,386 prescriptions while veterinarians treated 274 animals, providing services estimated to be \$25,000 and \$50,000, respectively, in fair market value.

The mountainous terrain, arctic weather patterns, remote location, lack of communication infrastructure, and logistical challenges accessing some communities provided a unique training environment simulating real-world conditions for service members in forward-deployed environments. Many of the service members participating in this support activity were forward deployed to an additional eleven villages across the region, transported by Black Hawk helicopters and snowmobiles. They provided services at Maniilaq Association facilities and received lodging and meals in Northwest School District schools.

The gastrointestinal team was the number one request from the community partner. “We have a high incidence of colon cancer, so we have been pushing and pushing to get more colonoscopies in the area,” said Kandy Barlow, Maniilaq Association Vice President of Health Services. “If we get one person saved from colon cancer, that’s worth the entire mission.”

During the mission, medical personnel identified 96 polyps and diagnosed one individual with colon cancer. They also delivered life-saving emergency care to a patient experiencing a stroke, another suffering a heart attack, and a pregnant individual in distress—responding swiftly to save each of them.

Operation Arctic Care provided essential medical services to Alaskan residents and fostered invaluable training and cooperation among joint service members.

IRT’s civil-military partnerships continue to strengthen relationships between military members and American communities, enhance unit and deployment readiness for service members, and provide essential services to local communities. To learn more, visit irt.defense.gov.

UNITY OF PURPOSE

IRT strengthens joint coordination and hands-on military training that ensures real-world readiness and mission success in complex contingency environments.

ACCOUNTABILITY & INNOVATION

IRT increases fiscal discipline, ensuring best use of DoD resources for cutting-edge military training and threat resilience for American communities.

READINESS & LEADERSHIP

IRT develops strong military leaders who are prepared to meet the challenges of deployment, mission success, and deterrence abroad.

IRT TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

Civil Military Partnerships
Joint Support Activity
Medical Support Activities

IRT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Colonel James Hogan, Director
Colonel Stephen Rubright, Deputy Director
Major Melford Simpson, Operations Officer
Master Sergeant Rachelle Morris, Public Affairs Manager

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Kandy Barlow

Maniilaq Association
Vice President of Health Services



“Operation Arctic Care 2025 was an incredible experience for Maniilaq Health Center. The teamwork among all military branches and tribal leadership ensured smooth operations. The goal of having positive patient and community impacts remained at the forefront during the planning and implementation of the operation. I was touched by the team’s motivation and willingness to immerse themselves into the culture of our villages. The level of professionalism and organization was outstanding and well above any previous collaborative operations that I have experienced. During this experience, I learned of more opportunities to partner with IRT for civil engineering and cybersecurity.”



INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING

Premier Military Training for a
Secure and Prosperous America



MAY 2025 | NEWSLETTER

IRT STAFF SPOTLIGHT

CAPTAIN HEATHER EDSALL

AIR FORCE RESERVE
MEDICAL PROGRAM MANAGER



“Serving with IRT has, by far, been the most fulfilling chapter in my 24-year military career. Few things compare to witnessing the life-changing impact we make in underserved communities across the United States and its territories.

The fact we are simultaneously preparing our military personnel for the challenges they will face on deployments makes this program one of the most valuable training tools we have. I am humbled by the courage, compassion, and leadership I see on every mission and am honored to be a part of the team that makes it all happen!”

IRT STAFF SPOTLIGHT

STAFF SERGEANT CONRAD SCHNEIDER

ARMY RESERVE
RESOURCE ADVISOR



“IRT embodies the spirit of service, and it’s been a privilege to support missions benefiting communities in need while providing invaluable training for our service members. Leveraging military skills for civilian good is a powerful testament to our commitment, and the positive impact is undeniable. It’s a program I’m proud to contribute to, strengthening both our communities and our force.”

IRT EVENTS & SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

May 1: Cyber Kauai, Final Planning Meeting
May 1: Natchitoches Port Levee, Start Date
May 1: Tracy City Community Center, DV Day
May 3: Operation Build Akuligaq, Mid Planning Meeting
May 7: Operation Healthy Delta, DV Day
May 7: Tracy City Community Center, End Date
May 7: Operation Build North Carolina, Final Planning Meeting
May 10: Operation Healthy Delta, End Date
May 10: Nimiipuu Wellness, Start Date
May 11: Operation Outreach Unangan, Final Planning Meeting
May 12: Operation Build Hawaii, Start Date
May 12: Cyber Kauai, Start Date
May 12: Operation Healthy American Samoa, Final Planning Meeting
May 13: Operation Healthy Tennessee, Final Planning Meeting
May 20: Nimiipuu Wellness, DV Day
May 20: Operation Healthy Ellwood, Final Planning Meeting
May 22: Cyber Kauai, DV Day
May 23: Cyber Kauai, End Date
May 23: Nimiipuu Wellness, End Date
May 27: Operation Build California, Start Date
May 27: Salud en Tu Pueblo, Start Date
May 31: Operation Build Michigan, End Date
May 31: The RES Footbridge, End Date

More information
on missions at:



FY25 IRT PROGRAM MANAGERS

Major John Pineau
Army Reserve | Army Active Duty

Captain Scott Thurman
Army National Guard

Captain Emanuel Mendez
Marine Corps Reserve | Marine Corps Active Duty

Lieutenant Commander Shaun Shillady
Navy Reserve | Navy Active Duty

Major Nathaniel Horwitz-Willis
Air National Guard | Air Force Active Duty

Major Michael Nordin
Air Force Reserve