



INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING

Premier Military Training for a
Secure and Prosperous America



JUNE 2026 | NEWSLETTER

Kodiak Arctic Care 2026: Meeting Challenges to Deliver Care

In May, over 140 Service members from across the Army National Guard, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Active Duty and Reserve, Air Force Active Duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) partnered with the Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) to deliver real-world training and no-cost medical services in remote Kodiak, Alaska.

The successful training was not without its challenges. Early on, government shutdowns compressed timelines and reduced the planning team's size. Limited funding forced Lieutenant Anneth George, Officer-in-Charge, and First Sergeant Melvina Richey, Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge, to take on multiple roles to keep the operation on track.



Senior Airman Khloe Perez-Owen, 59th Dental Training Squadron, prepares dental equipment.

Next, airlift assets originally scheduled to transport critical equipment were redirected to other operations. With commercial shipping costs exceeding \$300,000, the team had to pursue alternatives. IRT cargo transportation logistics manager Senior Master Sergeant Sean Graham, along with the Consolidated Asset Management Site (CAMS) team—led by Master Sergeant Courtne Clark and Master Sergeant Colin Boswell—and Master Sergeant Alissa Sparks of the 910th Logistics Readiness Squadron, coordinated transport through the Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command system. This pivot required the CAMS team to palletize 40,000 pounds of equipment a full month ahead of schedule.

On May 4th, mere days before the training began, news broke that the critical equipment was stranded in Seattle, jeopardizing the entire support activity. IRT Director Colonel James Hogan rapidly formed a Crisis Action Team. Senior Master Sergeant Shahid Din and Master Sergeant Matthew Janson of AFRC's A35 Air Allocation program secured a new airlift plan, but this meant the CAMS team faced a new hurdle: palletizing a replacement set of medical equipment within 48 hours.

Rising to the challenge once again, the CAMS team worked closely with the 443rd Airlift Wing (AW) to send the equipment to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA. There, the 62nd Aerial Port Squadron, supported by Master Sergeant Brian Dooley and the 446th AW, transferred the cargo. Simultaneously, Captain Collin Marot re-coordinated local logistics to ensure trucks were ready to collect the equipment on the ground. The cargo arrived in Kodiak on May 9th, just in time.

While the planning team and CAMS worked to ship the replacement equipment, the Advanced Echelon team on the ground in Kodiak managed the delay's impact. Facing the difficult decision to postpone or cancel the training, leadership opted to push the start date. The team quickly contacted all participants due to travel imminently, informed them of the delay, and rescheduled their travel, ensuring the training was back on track by the following morning.

"I was beyond impressed with Lieutenant George and all she overcame in this operation. She had no idea what she was in for and ended up managing O6s as a young O2," said Captain Heather Edsall, IRT AFRC medical program manager. "There's no question that she, First Sergeant Richey, and Captain Marot are the reason we didn't cancel."

Thanks to the dedication and innovation of those behind the scenes, Service members completed 4,799 hours of training and provided approximately \$871,990 in no-cost healthcare services to 2,250 patients, completing 3,877 medical exams, 4,023 dental procedures, 32 nutrition consultations, 95 behavioral health consultations, and 3,523 optometry exams and fabricating 707 pairs of glasses.

Kodiak Arctic Care 2026 demonstrated how the remarkable dedication, adaptability, and teamwork of civil-military partnerships enhance military readiness while delivering essential services to American communities. Despite multiple setbacks, the team overcame each challenge to complete a successful training and provide critical care. To learn more about the IRT Program, [visit irt.defense.gov](https://www.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 DoW 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
Medical Training
Joint Training

IRT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Colonel James Hogan, Director
Colonel Stephen Rubright, Deputy Director
Major Melford Simpson, Operations Officer
Chief Master Sergeant Mathew Forster, Superintendent

MESSAGE FROM COMMUNITY PARTNER

Nichole Miles

Kodiak Native Association
Vice President of Public Affairs



"I truly cannot say enough positive things about the team that was sent to support this effort. From leadership to logistics to clinic operations, the level of professionalism, adaptability, communication, teamwork, and overall attitude throughout was exceptional. This project came with plenty of challenges including equipment delays, shifting timelines, weather, compressed clinic days, and constant moving pieces. There were many moments where things could have gone very differently, but the team consistently stayed solution-focused, flexible, and goal-oriented."



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IRT STAFF SPOTLIGHT

LIEUTENANT ANNETH GEORGE

AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND
KODIAK ARCTIC CARE OFFICER IN CHARGE



“Kodiak Arctic Care 2026 reinforced the true purpose of an IRT support activity: bringing communities and Service members together to make a lasting impact. I learned firsthand how resilient, grateful, and passionate the people of Kodiak are. Despite the challenges that we initially faced, they welcomed us with open arms and appreciation. The support activity delivered critical healthcare services while providing invaluable training for Service members. With the support of community partners and IRT leadership, we overcame challenges, strengthened relationships, and made a meaningful difference. It will be remembered as the best one yet, at least in my opinion.”

IRT STAFF SPOTLIGHT

SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT SEAN GRAHAM

AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND
IRT CARGO TRANSPORTATION LOGISTICS MANAGER

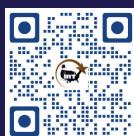


“When the original airlift was redirected and our barge shipment fell through, the entire training was on the line. Refusing to let it fail, the CAMS team worked around the clock to build a 40,000-pound deployment kit from scratch in just 48 hours. At the same time, the A35, 910 LRS, 443 AW, 446 AW, 62 APS and IRT Leadership synchronized seamlessly to solve a complex, high-pressure transport puzzle and get that equipment to Alaska. It was a massive background effort, but the team made it happen to ensure the Service members on the ground got invaluable training in unfamiliar environments while delivering vital care to the community.”

IRT EVENTS & SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

- June 1: Cyber Guam, Start Date
- June 1: Cyber Tatanka, Start Date
- June 9: Gem State Resilience, Distinguished Visitor Day
- June 10: Green River Wellness, Start Date
- June 11: Cyber Guam, Distinguished Visitor Day
- June 11: Cyber Tatanka, Distinguished Visitor Day
- June 12: Cyber Guam, End Date
- June 12: Cyber Tatanka, End Date
- June 14: Operation Colonia Improvement, Start Date
- June 17: Tropic Care Big Island, Start Date
- June 17: Green River Wellness, Distinguished Visitor Day
- June 18: Camp V-Bar Road Repair, Distinguished Visitor Day
- June 18: Operation Footprint, Distinguished Visitor Day
- June 22: Operation Forest Sentinel, Start Date
- June 23: Tropic Care Big Island, Distinguished Visitor Day
- June 23: Green River Wellness, End Date
- June 24: Shepard Point, Distinguished Visitor Day
- June 25: Operation Colonia Improvement, Distinguished Visitor Day
- June 27: Operation Footprint, End Date
- June 28: Operation Colonia Improvement, End Date

More information
on missions at:



FY26 IRT PROGRAM MANAGERS

Major Penny Cannon
Army Reserve | Army Active Duty

Captain Scott Thurman
Army National Guard

Captain Emanuel Mendez
Marine Corps Reserve | Marine Corps Active Duty

Commander Shaun Shillady
Navy Reserve | Navy Active Duty

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

Lieutenant Colonel Edward Brouch
Air Force Reserve