PA National Guard Service Member & Family Support

PNG State Family Programs

12th Edition Newsletter
3 June 2020

Mission & Vision

The PA State Family Program Office falls under the broader "Service Member & Family Support" (SMFS) office.

The mission and vision of SMFS, as a whole, is to use our passion and relentless customer service to orchestrate the delivery of entitlements and benefits, educate PA National Guard Service Members and their Families on resources available, promote services to mitigate stress and provide family support in order to increase personnel readiness.

As you all know, globally, we are still in the midst of the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic.

PNG SMFS and State Family Programs will continue to publish this weekly newsletter as a way to be available and supportive of our PNG families through this difficult time.

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Special points of interest:

- Activities and websites to visit to beat boredom during your child's unexpected school break!
- Resources to help your family during the COVID-19 Pandemic

We want to hear from YOU!!

We know that our PNG Families are overwhelmed with everything going on right now. You're learning to juggle many new roles and routines, all while being isolated inside, away from friends and family. Even more frustrating, is that there is no definitive end in sight.

This sense of isolation is very unnatural for us. Humans, by nature, are social animals who crave connection. Feeling connected can literally help to ease stress. So, now, more than ever before, it is important that we find ways to foster connection with others.

We encourage you to utilize this resource as a means of connection by sending pictures showing how your family is coping and staying engaged during this quarantine to rachel.n.fox-johnson.ctr@mail.mil.

We will share them in this newsletter!

Family Readiness Team

JUNE 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 VTT FRG-Training 6:30pm	3 TRICARE & TRICARE Dental 10:00am	4 VTT– FRG-Training 9:00pm	5	6
7	8	9	10 Military Acronyms & Terms- What do those letters mean? 10:00am	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 Preventing Burnout 10:00am	18 Preventing Burnout 7:00pm	19	20
21 Father's Day	22	23 Best Practices from our FRG Leaders! 7:00pm	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Family Readiness Connection Opportunities

See back page for registration information and meeting descriptions topics!

Call Toll Free 1-844-604-5354

http://www.facebook.com/pngsmfs

Connect with other PA Guard Family Members !

Family Readiness Connection Opportunities with your PA State Family Program Team!

NGB Family Program Volunteer Training Team, VTT Webinar– How to Hold a Successful Family Event
Where do you start? From picking a date, the venue, invites to the event itself and much more, we will discuss the process of planning these events from beginning to end.
Tuesday, June 2nd at 6:30pm
Register at: https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7289210543675297296
Thursday, June 4th at 9pm
Register at: https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6545853821880138256

TRICARE & TRICARE Dental
Wednesday, June 3rd at 10am
Hear about the latest TRICARE & TRICARE Dental program updates.
Register at: tricareandtricaredental.com

Military Acronyms & Terms— What Do Those Letters Mean?
Wednesday, June 10th at 10am
The Army Family Team Building curriculum presents Military Acronyms and Terms! Let's laugh and learn about what all those letters mean put together.
Register at: whatdoesthatmean.eventbrite.com

Preventing Burnout
Wednesday June 17th at 10am
Thursday, June 18th at 7pm
Hear from Lori Murphy, LCSW– PNG Director of Psychological Health about how to prevent burnout while working from home, homeschooling from home, and everything else life throws our way!
Register at: preventingburnoutwithlori.eventbrite.com

Best Practices from our FRG Leaders!
Tuesday, June 23rd at 7pm
Hear best practices from our FRG leadership across Pennsylvania about what they do to make family readiness a success!
Register at: FRGbestpractices.eventbrite.com

For more information please reach out to your local FRSA!

Meet a FRSA!

Cathy Pristas, South Central Region

I am Cathy Pristas and I am the Southcentral Region FRSA. I have been with the program for 8 years as a FRSA and 4 years with the Yellow Ribbon program. I have two daughters, 8 grandchildren and 4 greatgrandchildren. You will find me with the little ones during my down time.

Tessa Zantowsky, North East Region

Hello! My name is Tessa Zantowsky and I am the Northeast Region FRSA. I have been with the program for 4 years as a FRSA and I was an FRG volunteer with my husband's unit prior to that. My husband and I have been married for almost 7 years and we have two children together, Payton (4) and Lucas (3 months). I spend most of my down time at home with my children and husband, so quarantine has luckily not been much of a change for me!

Volunteer Spotlight

Jaime Barrick

2020 South Central Region Volunteer of the Year

Co D 128th BSB Family Readiness Group Leader

Years of Service: 3

Jaime stepped up as President for a unit which had no FRG. Jaime is married with children (her son is in the unit). She travels all over the state of Pennsylvania for her job. She and her husband are very involved in sports and school activities with their sons. Jaime has been an outstanding individual who keeps the FRG running and is constantly improving the unit's morale.

Ja'net Franco

2020 JFHQ Volunteer of the Year

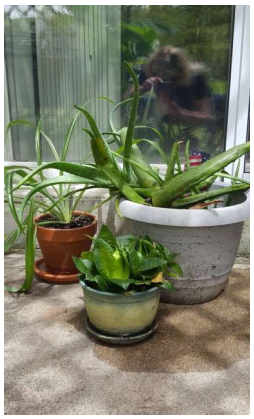
JFHQ Family Readiness Group Leader

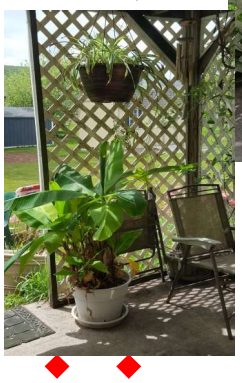
Years of Service: 1

Ja'net has been volunteering with the JFHQ at FTIG since 2019. She is the wife of PAARNG Soldier. Since joining the FRG Ja'net has attended 1 State Volunteer workshop and provided more than 100 hours of service to our families.

Your (Porch) Oasis

Nothing is more relaxing than sitting out on your back or front porch in the summer. Creating that space is easier than you think. Evaluate your space; is it tiny, moderate or spacious? If it's townhouse tiny, outfit the patio with a bistro table set to give seating. Smaller tables can be used for small or moderate patios. Next, fill in your space with plants. Does your porch or patio get a lot of sun, morning sun, evening sun or is it shaded by trees or covering? That will determine the plants you place out there. Most houseplants can be moved to a partly sunny space. If you are worried about burning those plants out, consider succulents that can be purchased from a nursey. Group your potted plants display in odd numbers as it can be more appealing to the eye. If you have a covering like a roof, hang plants from it.





Now sit back and enjoy your oasis.

Financial Readiness

Top Tips from Tamra Ivanoff, AFC

1. M-Day Soldiers and AGR are all eligible for life insurance at any time.
2. Financial Readiness is important at all times– don't wait for Annual Training or a Deployment to establish a financial plan. Have a plan in place for unexpected financial decisions while your Soldier is away.
3. Personal Financial Counselors are available for FREE to all PA ARNG Soldiers and Families. Feel free to reach out to anybody listed on the flyer later in this newsletter and find the PFC that best suits you!

IMPORTANT WEBSITES:

Military OneSource:
www.militaryonesource.mil

Military Legal Assistance:

legalassistance.law.af.mil

Military.com: www. military. com

Defense Finance and Accounting Services:
www.dfas.mil

Internal Revenue Service:

www.irs.gov

Jello Bisque

1 box Jello (any flavor)
1 large can of cold milk
1 ¼ c boiling water
Vanilla wafers (1 box, crushed)
1/3 cup sugar
juice 1 lemon and grate the rind
(I just add about 1T lemon juice)
1/8 tsp salt

Dissolve Jello, salt, & sugar in boiling water, add juice to Jello. Slightly gel the Jello. Whip cold milk, than add Jello mixture. Blend together. Pour in a (crushed) wafer Lined dish and cover with crushed wafers. Let set in refrigerator for approx 4 hours (covered), Enjoy! A cool light dessert.

Teacher Appreciation Wreath

Things you will need:

Metal wreath frame

Colored clothes pins or big box of crayons

Small chalk board or hello name tag

Scissors, Eraser, Pencil, Glue stick, Ruler, Yarn or ribbon

Hot glue gun

Steps to make your wreath:

Tie your yarn or ribbon to metal frame, make sure wreath will hang correctly

Take metal frame and begin hot gluing clothes pins with pincher end facing inward or crayons with point sticking outward

Take name tag or chalkboard and hot glue to top or bottom of wreath

Then glue on scissors, eraser, pencil, glue stick and ruler (optional) where desired

Your FRGs are working hard to keep us all connected as a unit family. You are NOT alone! Find out what your FRG is planning for when we can get together, talk with other people going though the same thing and meet new people. FRGs are hosting meetings via conference calls. You are not obligated to formally hold a position. Simply call in to get connected! Your FRSA team is still available during this time via cell phone and email, please see map below for contact information. We encourage you to reach out to us with any FRG related concerns.

Team Member	Region/Location	Contact Information
Gina Childress, SFRSA	FTIG	C: 717-708-8054 E: Gina.F.Childress.ctr@mail.mil
Gail Sweigart, FRSA	FTIG	C: 717-836-6317 E: Gail.M.Sweigart.ctr@mail.mil FB: www.facebook.com/Gail-Sweigart-28th-ECAB-FRSA-1399735986766113
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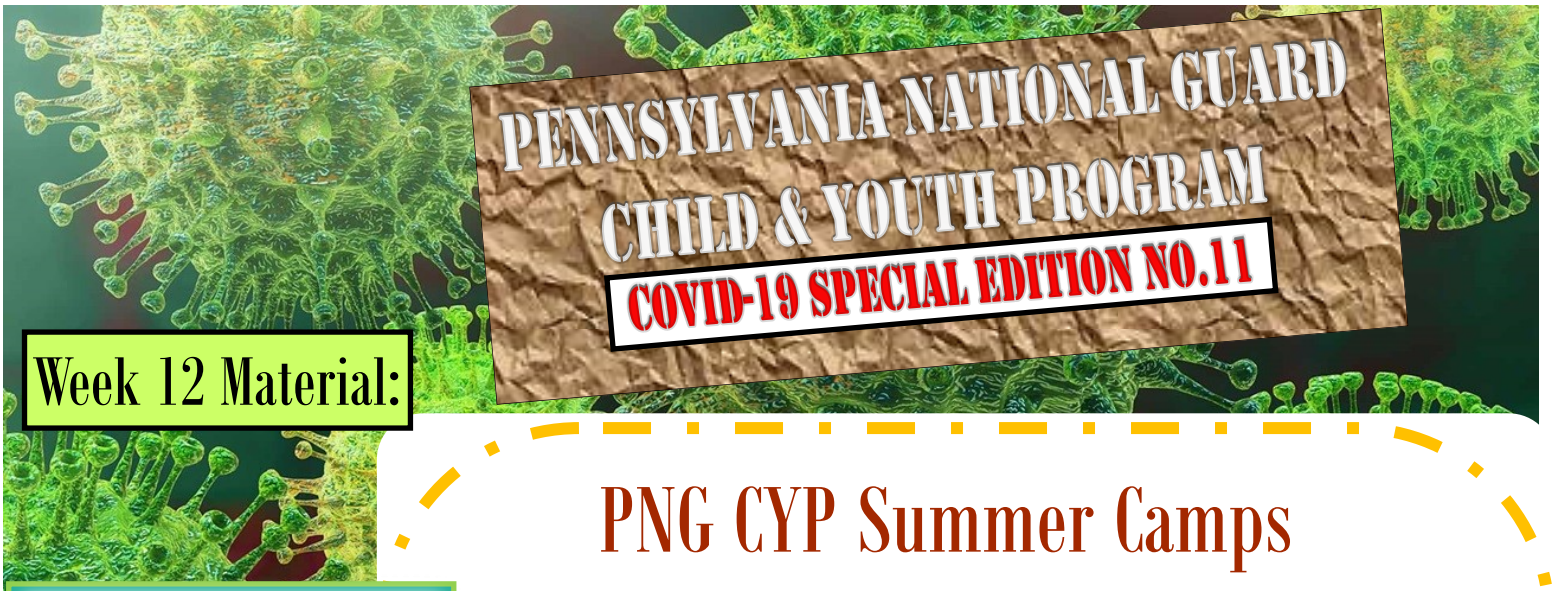
Colden Carroll, FRSA	South East Region Philadelphia	C: 717-836-6292 E: Colden.D.Carroll.ctr@mail.mil



Week 12 Material:

PNG CYP Summer Camps

Has your child ever wanted to go to a summer camp similar to what they may have seen on shows like Disney's Bunk'd?! Send them to a PNG Child & Youth Program camp this summer! Our Camps are 3-5 day long, overnight-camps, that provide an opportunity for Guard children from across the state to connect with peers that know the struggles that sometimes face military kids. These camps fill up quickly! Register today using the registration information on the Camp flyer!

PNG Family Camp

Family Camp is a FREE weekend getaway for you and your family. This is a chance for your family to meet and reconnect with other military families to help build a strong PNG community. At camp, families choose from a flexible variety of activities to do at their own pace. Activities include: kayaking, horseback riding, swimming, outdoor living skills, and target sports, just to name a few. Evenings feature campfires, dance parties, and more! The camp features spacious rustic log cabins that accommodate up to 14 people in bunk style beds, and all cabins are just a short walk from a modern bathhouse! Don't forget your toothbrushes and sleeping bags! Register today using the information on the attached flyer!

PNG CYP Summer Scavenger Hunt

In-person events, classes, and other interactions all being replaced with on-line or virtual options, wouldn't it be nice to actually get out of your house to do a REAL LIFE activity with your family?!

The PNG Child & Youth Program invites YOU to compete against other PNG families in a fun, but still responsible and socially distant way by taking part in the first...

PNG CYP SUMMER SCAVENGER HUNT!

It is our hope that this scavenger hunt will be an enjoyable change of pace for your family! It will be full of a variety o f tricky: Riddles, word Puzzles, challenges to find various things on a hiking trail or around your hometown, and family stunt or craft challenges, etc..

See the attached flyers for more details and registration information! Contact Lauren and Rachel if you have any questions!

PNG CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM CONTACTS

Lauren Gerhart

Lead Child and Youth Program Coordinator

lauren.b.gerhart.ctr@mail.mil

C: 717-383-8680

Rachel Fox-Johnson

Child and Youth Program Coordinator

rachel.n.fox-johnson.ctr@mail.mil

C: 717-708-8364

Stay tuned for next week's COVID-19 Special Edition!

Summer CAMP WITH THE child & youth program Pennsylvania National Guard

WHO CAN GO TO CAMP?

PNG CYP Summer camps are open to **actively serving** Guardsmen's DEERS Registered PNG dependent children ages 6-18 years old.

TELL ME ABOUT CAMP...

Our Camps are 3-5 day long, overnight-camps, that provide an opportunity for Guard children from across the state to connect with peers that know the struggles that sometimes face military kids.

Each camp is staffed with PNG Child & Youth Staff and volunteers, staff from the camp locations, as well as staff from an outside organization who is contracted to provide both qualified staff and a 24/7 on-site nurse.

Children stay in cabins with groups organized by age and gender. Counselors are assigned to stay in and oversee each cabin and are available to assist campers, especially younger campers, with things such as bed-times and wake-up times.

During the day campers are in co-ed groups with other campers their age.

Camp activities vary by location, but include things like hiking, swimming, boating, kayaking, rock wall climbing, zip lining, horseback riding, camp fires, themed activities, group games, challenges, ice breakers, and even bedtime stories for younger campers.

****Exact camp locations will be announced as soon as the venue contracts are awarded****

HOW DO I REGISTER MY CHILDREN FOR CAMP?

Registration for both of our Summer Camps opens on **27 April, 2020 — They fill quickly!**

To register, copy and paste the Eventbrite links and passwords found on the back of this page. When registering please answer ALL questions so that we know in advance of any special dietary needs, allergies, medications, or special needs that your child has.

After you register your child(ren) online, we will contact you with the Camper Information Packet which includes additional information such as, an emergency contact, medical history, and other waivers so your children can enjoy all of the camp activities!

You will need to complete **one** Camper Packet **per child**.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT CAMP? CONTACT US!!

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FTIG BLDG 14-109

Rachel Fox-Johnson
PNG Child and Youth Program Coordinator
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FTIG BLDG 14-109

Summer Camp with the child & youth program Pennsylvania National Guard

Camp Registration opened on 27 April, 2020 and will fill quickly!

Kids' AT Camp

When: 15-18 August 2020

Where: Within a 50 mile radius of Fort Indiantown Gap, PA

Register on Eventbrite:

https://www.eventbrite.com/e/png-kids-at-camp-tickets-69451251563

Password: fy20pngkidsatcamp

* Please note that for Kids' AT Camp our oldest campers, ages 13-18, may be taking part in an "Adventure Hike" which may involve an approximately 3-5 mile hike, setting up tents, and sleeping overnight at a campsite.*

Camp Kidet

When: 20-24 July 2020

Where: Within a 50 mile radius of Stoystown PA

Register on Eventbrite:

https://www.eventbrite.com/e/png-camp-kidet-tickets-69448776159

Password: fy20pngcampkidet

****Exact camp locations will be announced as soon as the venue contracts are awarded****

Still have questions about Camp?
Contact Us!!

Lauren Gerhart
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FTIG BLDG 14-109

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child & youth program
Pennsylvania National Guard

FAMILY CAMP

What is Family Camp??

Family Camp is a FREE weekend getaway for you and your family. This is a chance for your family to meet and reconnect with other military families to help build a strong PNG community. At camp, families choose from a flexible variety of activities to do at their own pace. Activities include: kayaking, horseback riding, swimming, outdoor living skills, and target sports, just to name a few. Evenings feature campfires, dance parties, and more! The camp features spacious rustic log cabins that accommodate up to 14 people in bunk style beds, and all cabins are just a short walk from a modern bathhouse! Don't forget your toothbrushes and sleeping bags!

For MORE INFORMATION contact Lauren and Rachel

Why??

To ensure PNG children and families are well-equipped to manage their lives throughout the deployment cycle as well as with other military related absences. Camp will help foster resiliency, leadership, and teamwork skills as a family.

Where & When??

Location: Within 50 miles of Dingmans Ferry, PA
Date: 4-7 September 2020
Check in: Friday at 1700
Check out: Monday at 1200

How to Register

Register on Eventbrite at: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/png-family-camp-tickets-69452505313

PASSWORD: fy20pngfamilycampfun

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FTIG BLDG 14-109

What?

The PNG Child & Youth Program invites YOU to compete against other PNG families in a fun, but still responsible and socially distant way by taking part in our first PNG CYP SUMMER SCAVENGER HUNT!

It is our hope that this scavenger hunt, full of a variety of tricky: Riddles, Word Puzzles, challenges to find various things on a hiking trail or around your hometown, and family stunt or craft challenges, etc. will be an enjoyable change of pace for your family.

When and Where?

Registration begins 5 May 2020 and ends at ~~COB 28 May 2020~~

Registration extended through 28 June!

The Scavenger Hunt will begin on 1 June and run through 28 June! Your family can participate right in your own hometown (or any town you are in!) any time during that time period!

Who?

ALL PNG families of ALL AGES are welcome to participate!

Why?

To provide PNG families with a way to foster resiliency, connection, and mental health at a time when so many in-person events, classes, and other interactions being replaced with online or virtual options.

How do we participate?

We are using a site/app platform called Scavr to build and facilitate the scavenger hunt.
Prior to 1 June, the link for our Scavenger Hunt on Scavr and a general information sheet will be sent to everyone who registers on Eventbrite.

Register EVERY member of your family who will be participating in the Scavenger Hunt even though you will be completing the challenges as a team.

To register, go to Eventbrite at: https://pngcypsummerscavengerhunt.eventbrite.com

Password: pngcypsummerscavengerhunt

Questions? Contact Us!

Lauren Gerhart
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Rachel Fox-Johnson
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Family Assistance Center Specialist News

The Family Assistance Team is always ready to assist you with finding resources that help to meet your needs!!

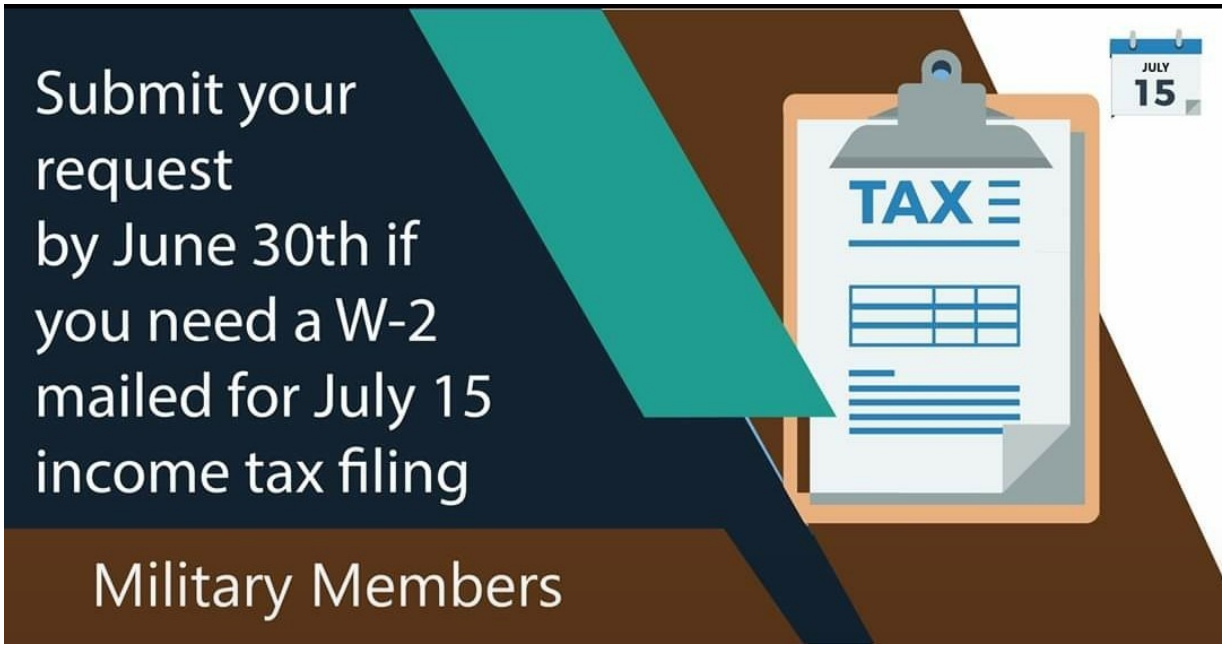
Taxes

Topics:

- Taxes
- Financial Help
- Food
- COVID-19
- Employment

Have you filed your taxes yet?

Current and separated Military members: Do you still need a copy of your W-2? Don't wait on hold! Use the easy-order telephone self-service at 1-888-332-7411, option 1, option 1 and then option 2! Or you can go online AskDFAS form (https://go.usa.gov/xdKzh) to request your tax documents.



Financial Help

Are you struggling to pay your bills?

* Rent/Mortgage
* Utilities
* Car Payment/Insurance

If you are in need of financial resources call your Family Assistance Specialist and we will help you find what you need! Please reference the FACS map to determine who covers your home of record! We can assist with referrals to our financial assistance community partners!

Need Food ????

Food Assistance:

https://www.feedingpa.org/find-assistance/

Meals for Students :

Visit https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/Meals4Kids/Pages/default.aspx

Many places have a drive-thru feature! Contact your Family Assistance Specialist for a location near you!

COVID-19 Information

Up To Date Information on the COVID-19 virus:

- https://www.coronavirus.gov/
- https://www.health.pa.gov/
- https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/

Employment

The Veterans in Piping (VIP) program

The Veterans in Piping (VIP) program offers high-quality skills training and jobs in the pipe trades to US veterans and active duty military personnel preparing to leave the service.

UA General President William P. Hite established the program as a means of addressing two important issues:

1. A growing shortage in the construction industry of skilled workers due to the combined effects of an aging workforce, increased demand, and lack of skills training for youth;.
2. An exceedingly high unemployment rate for US veterans, despite there being a disciplined and highly trainable population.

Military and government officials have lauded VIP as a model in workforce development. Participants enroll in accelerated 18-week courses in welding and/or HVACR service, both fields experiencing increased demand for skilled workers. They also earn industry-recognized certifications as a part of their education. Upon graduation, VIPs gain direct entry into UA apprenticeship, leading to lifelong career opportunities. All training is paid for entirely by the UA and its industry partners at NO cost to participants.

For more information visit the UA's website at http://www.uavip.org/

Additional programs to check out.....

The SMART Heroes Program

SMART Heroes provides sheet metal industry training through an accelerated seven-week program for enlisted U.S. Military men and women who plan to enter civilian life within the year, assisting with their successful transition to the civilian workforce and satisfying lifelong career in the sheet metal industry.

The Millwrights Veterans Program (MVP)

The Millwrights Veterans Program (MVP) offers a Free 8-week veterans program specially designed to take specific military experience matched with innovative millwrights training for a rewarding career

https://helmetstohardhats.org/military-service-members/resources/veterans-in-piping/

Pennsylvania National Guard Family Assistance Team

Toll Free at 1-844-604-5354

www.facebook.com/pngsmfs

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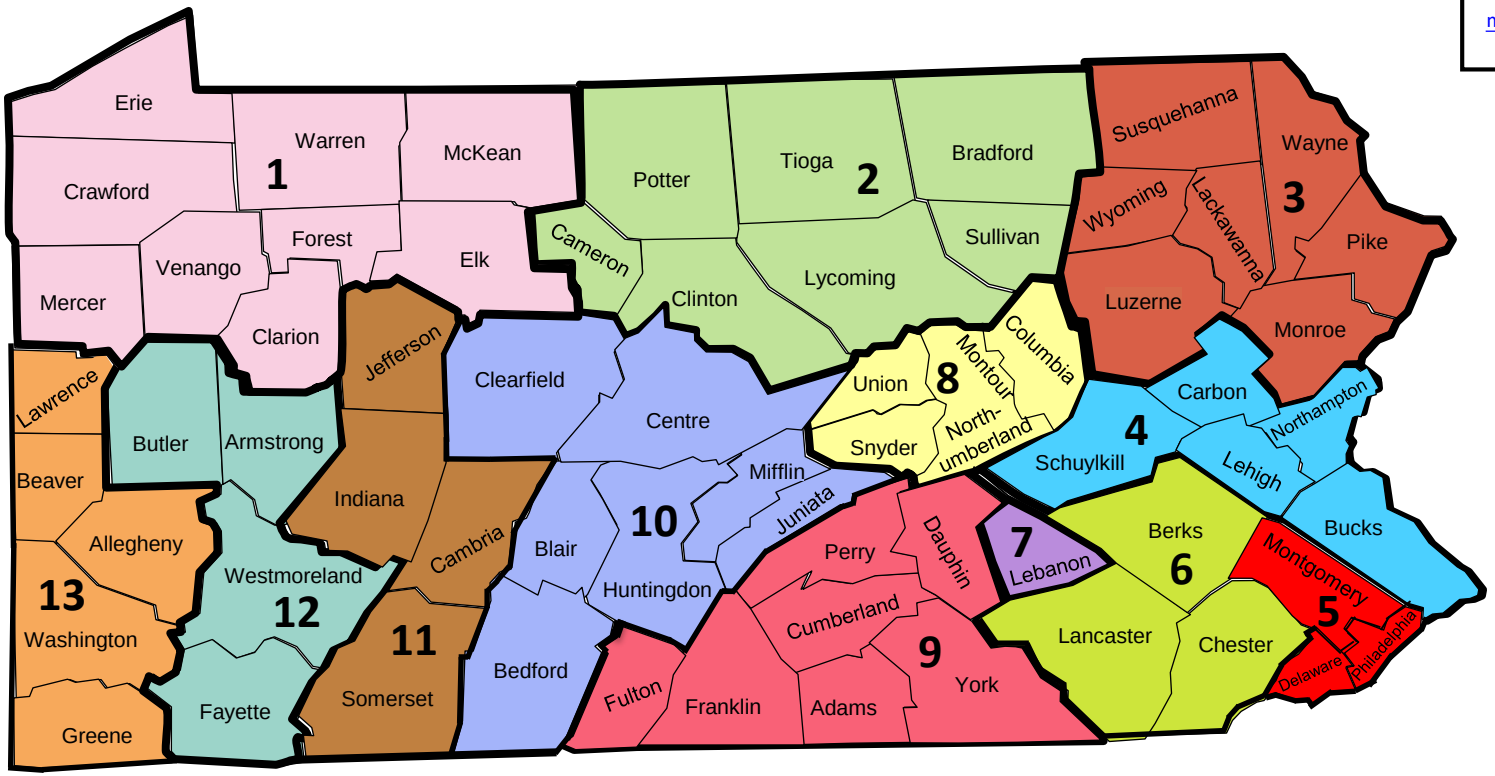

Region 5 FAC-S Philadelphia
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Region 7 FAC-S Ft Indiantown Gap
VACANT
Contact Region 6 and 10

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PA National Guard Family Program

www.facebook.com/pngsmfs

Family Assistance Center Specialists the 411 & 911 for Service Members and Military Families

There are 13 Family Assistance Center Specialists (FACS) across the Commonwealth who reach out to military families and are available 24/7 to assist during all phases of the Deployment Life Cycle by maintaining a directory of local, state and national resources.

FACS provide information and referrals for (and not limited to):

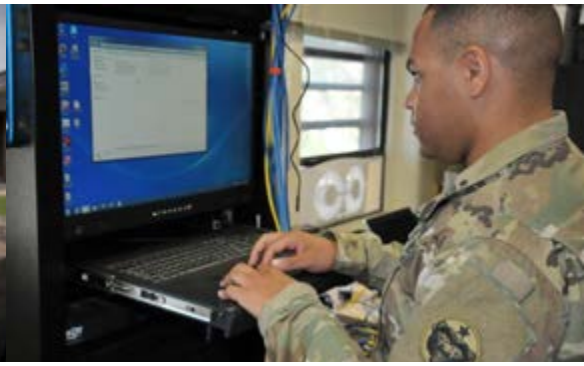
8 Essential Services	Additional Services
TRICARE Health Insurance	Military Benefits
DEERS & ID Card info	Education Questions
Legal Referrals	Deployment Support
Financial Assistance	Reintegration Concerns
Behavioral Health issues	Chaplain Referrals
Community Outreach	Job Search Opportunities
Exceptional Family Member	Veteran & Retiree Benefits
EFAC for Natural Disaster	Family Care Plan review

Do you or someone you know have an issue or a question and are not sure who to talk to?

For assistance or more information please contact the Family Assistance Specialist in your Region.
(see map on reverse side)

PNGAS PROUDLY PRESENTS

VIRTUAL JOB FAIR



FREE FOR ALL JOB SEEKERS, VETERANS & NON-VETERANS!

Be prepared to interview online with hiring managers and recruiters from top hiring companies. This online chat will connect you directly with organizations from the comfort of your home, office, smartphone or tablet. Our online, cloud-based platform makes it easy and fun for you to participate. After signing in, you'll be able to explore the available information and opportunities, and participate in 1-on-1 text-based chats with representatives from participating organizations. Share your background and experience, and get all your questions answered.

3 free webinars to prepare for the Virtual Job Fair:

Develop Your LinkedIn Profile June 3, 2020, 11:00 am, EST
https://bit.ly/3d8kNfj

Resume Building Strategy June 10, 2020, 11:00 am, EST
https://bit.ly/3ekX9fu

Cover Letters and more, June 17, 2020, 11:00 am, EST
https://bit.ly/2yE418F

JOB FAIR, JUNE 24, 2020

ENTER 10:00 AM -1:00 PM

Attendee Registration Link https://bit.ly/3c8hEe3J

Thank you to our Virtual Job Fair Host: DeVry University Keller Graduate School of Management

PNGAS.JOBBOARDHQ.COM

NEED HELP WITH FINANCIAL MATTERS?

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR MONEY

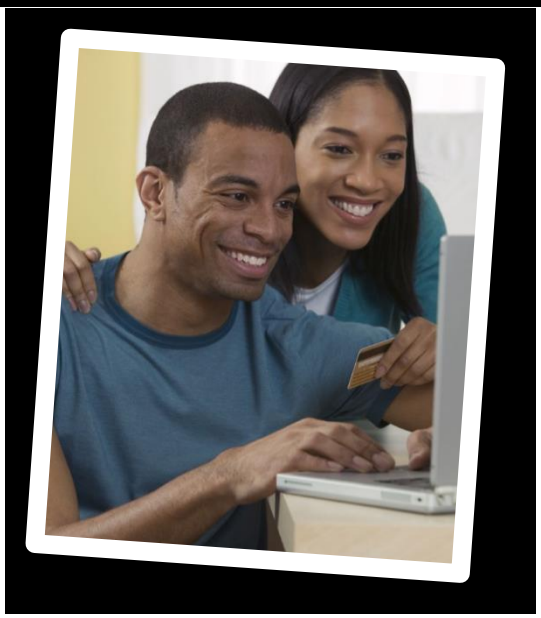
Personal Financial Counseling (PFC) can help you and your family: manage finances, resolve financial problems and reach long-term goals such as getting an education, buying a home and planning for retirement.

SUPPORT AND COUNSELING SERVICES

- Confidential financial consultations for individuals and families
- Referrals to military and community resources
- Support for family members during deployment
- Help with credit management and budgeting
- Help navigating benefits

TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS

- Money Management
- Budgeting and Developing Spending Plans
- Debt and Credit Card Management
- Consumer Rights and Obligations (dealing with creditors)
- Financial Planning: Reaching Life Goals
- Financial Readiness and Economic Security
- Financial Readiness for Deployment
- Transitioning to Civilian Life
- Home Buying
- Understanding Mortgages
- Preventing Foreclosure
- Kids and Money: Raising Financially Savvy Kids
- Military Benefits, Pay and Entitlements
- Savings and Investments
- Retirement Planning
- Estate Planning
- Taxes



PFC services are **no cost, private and confidential**.

Personal Financial Counselors in Pennsylvania:

Andrew K. Hartnett Sr, ChFC®
(814) 440-8693
PFC5.PA.NG@Zeiders.com
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Bruce Nieman, AFC®, ChFC®, EA
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Garland Murray, AFC®
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Transition Assistance Advisor

A Transition Assistance Advisor's (TAA) job is to provide information and assistance to Service members, veterans, and their families in order to help them understand how and where to obtain their benefits.

We are a state wide point of contact for all concerns. TAAs are linked into various Federal, State, and non-governmental organizations that are dedicated to helping the Service or Family member.

Attached is an Information Paper that discusses Pennsylvania's state benefit called Veterans' Temporary Assistance (VTA).

If you need additional information, or have questions, please feel free to contact us at:

Katie Johnson

Office 717-861-8706

catherine.a.johnson4.ctr@mail.mil

or

Andy Charpentier

Office 717-861-2813

william.a.charpentier2.ctr@mail.mil

Veterans' Temporary Assistance (VTA)

Provides temporary financial aid to Veterans and their beneficiaries who reside in Pennsylvania for the necessities of life (food, shelter, fuel, clothing and medical expenses). If eligible, a Veteran or their beneficiary can qualify for an amount not to exceed $1,600.00 in a twelve month period.

Eligibility:

- Must be a resident of Pennsylvania
- Discharged under Honorable Conditions after period of active duty, other than active duty for training
- Has a service-connected disability as certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Veteran must demonstrate a financial need
- Must show either a loss of income or increase in expenses that renders the applicant temporarily unable to provide themselves with the necessities of living

Surviving Dependent Eligibility:

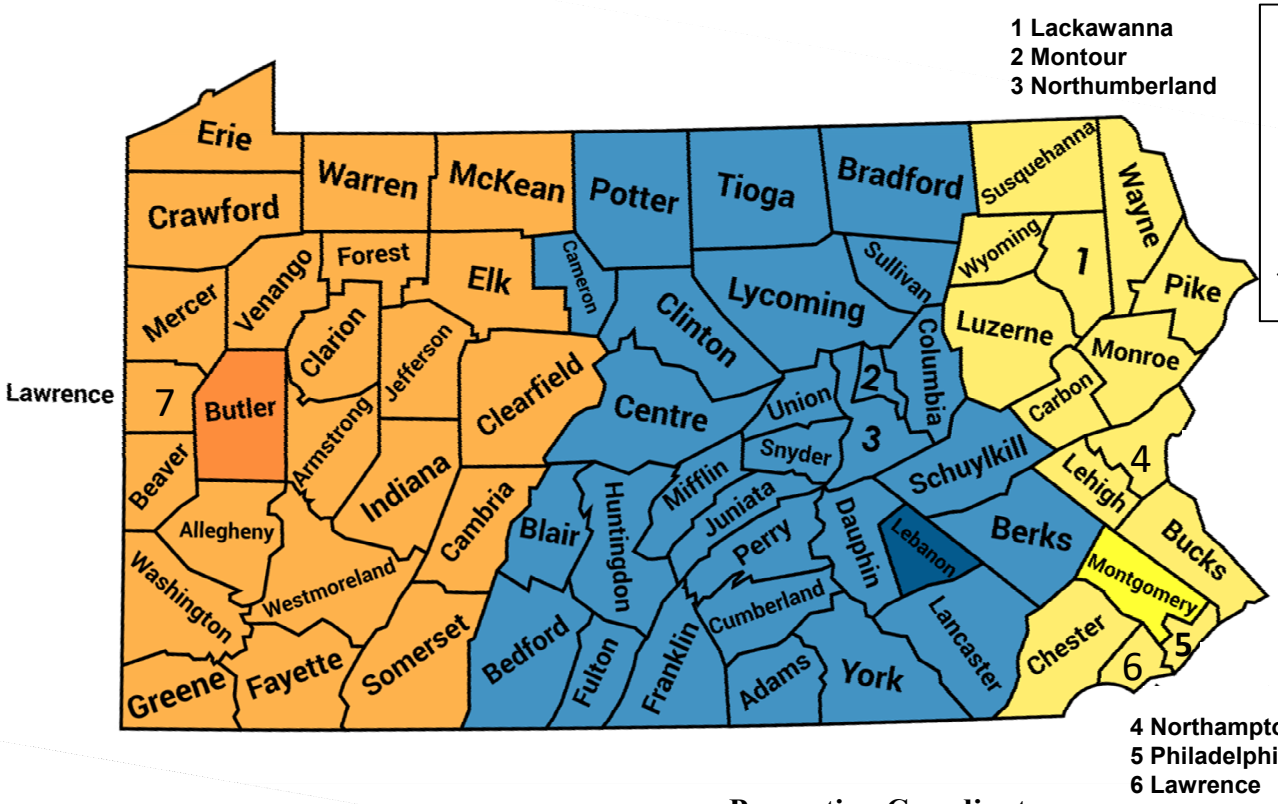
- Upon the recent death of a veteran, their unmarried spouse is eligible provided the Veteran would have qualified prior to his/her death
- Death Certificate for the Veteran must be included with the application
- Must provide marriage certificate for spouse, birth certificate for children, and the Veteran's birth certificate for parents

Application:

Contact the County Director of Veterans Affairs in the county you reside or see and accredited representative of a Veterans Service Organization to apply for the VTA.

For information on additional Pennsylvania State Benefits, visit www.veterans.pa.gov

PA Substance Abuse Program Team



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Eastern Region:
Vacant
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Updated 20190925

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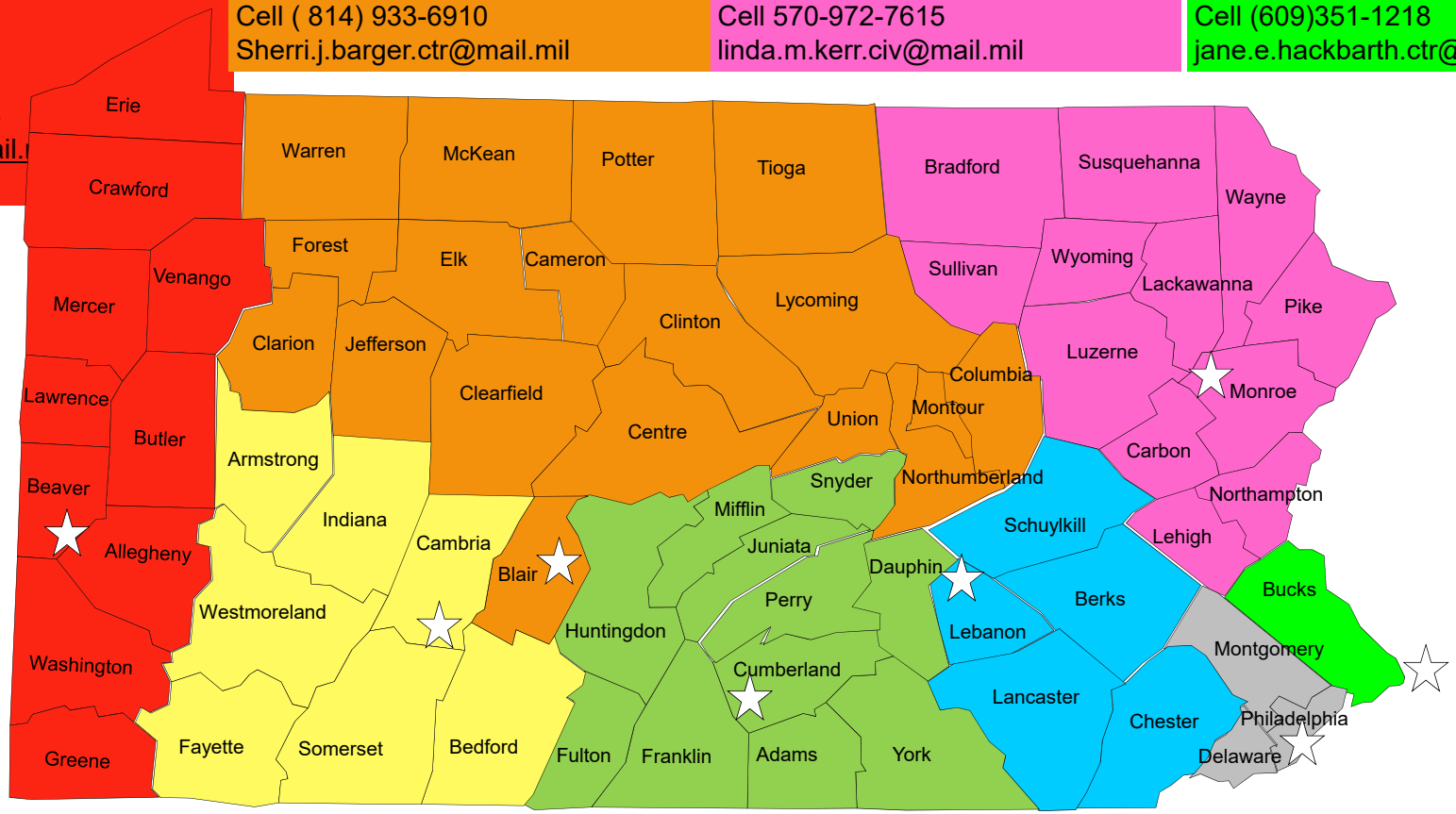

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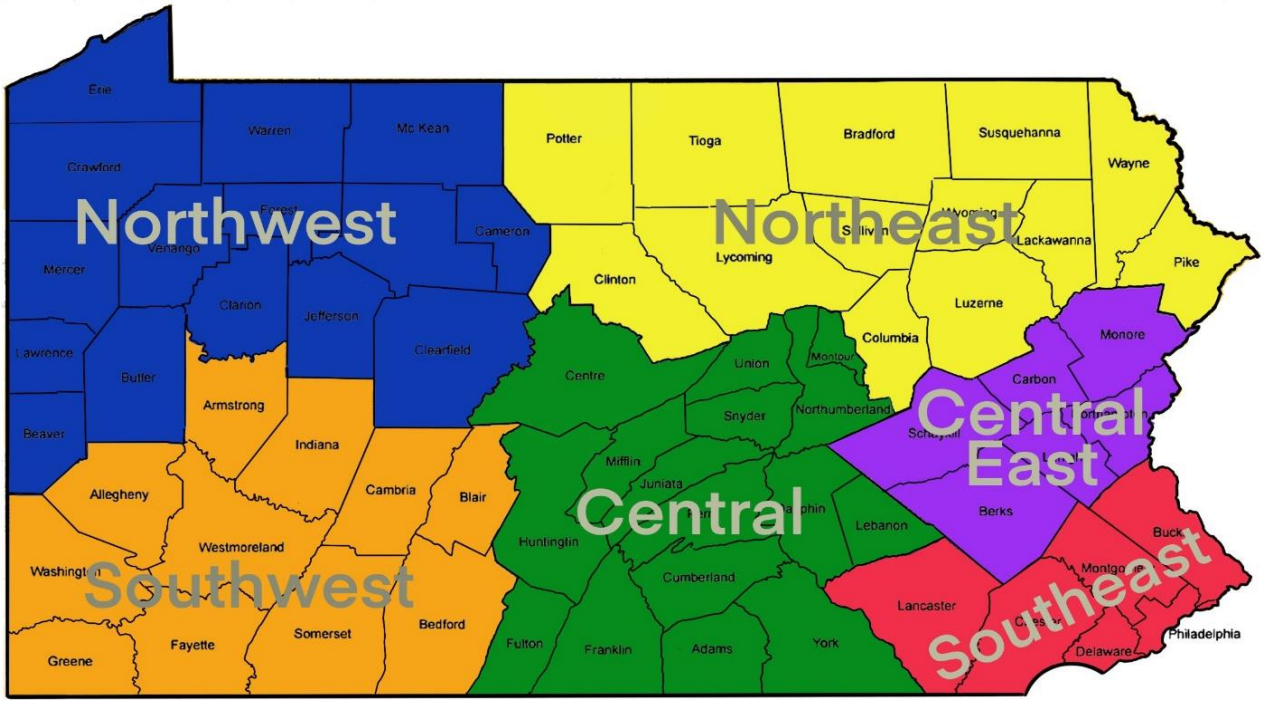
Pennsylvania Army National Guard
Psychological Health Team



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