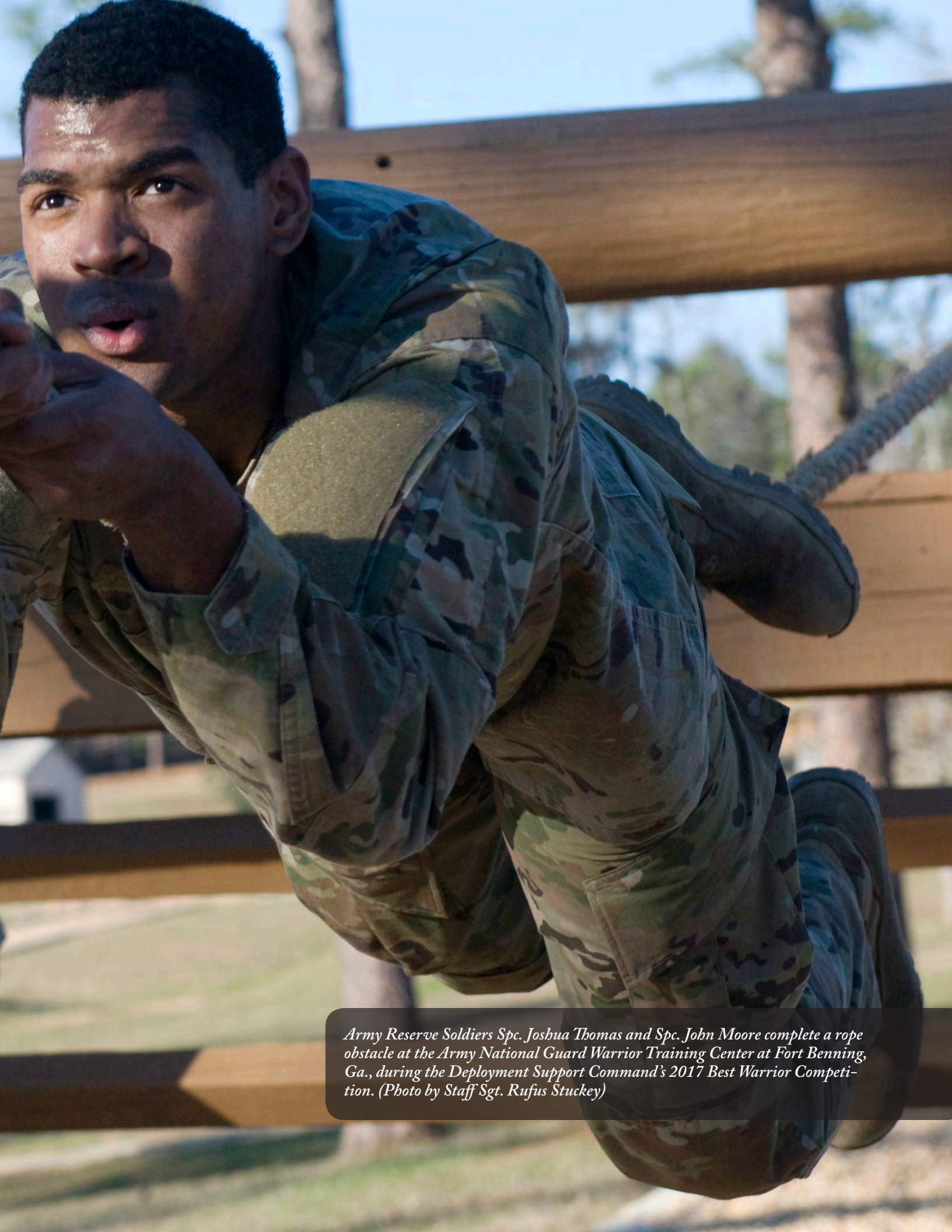


The Multiple Dimensions of Talent in the Army Reserve Soldier

■ By Maj. Gen. Steven W. Ainsworth and Col. John A. Stokes Jr.



Army Reserve Soldiers Spc. Joshua Thomas and Spc. John Moore complete a rope obstacle at the Army National Guard Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning, Ga., during the Deployment Support Command's 2017 Best Warrior Competition. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Rufus Stuckey)

Army Reserve Soldiers' varied experiences and skill sets increase their ability to solve complex problems and help the Army to win wars.

The Army Reserve is a capable, ready, and lethal team that provides critical capabilities to Army service component commands and combatant commands. Today's Army Reserve is the most combat-tested and experienced reserve force in U.S. history. Simultaneously, it is a premier sustainment force that provides approximately 56 percent of the Army's total sustainment capabilities.

These forces are critical to sustaining unified land operations. The Army Reserve provides the active Army with operational capabilities and strategic depth to expand its collective capacity. Since 2001, the Army Reserve has mobilized and deployed more than 300,000 Soldiers in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan while providing approximately 15,000 Soldiers for enduring worldwide missions.

The Army Reserve adds not only capacity to the total force but also many unique capabilities. Many reservists have complementary civilian skill sets that align with their military occupational specialties (MOSs), while others have civilian jobs unlike their MOSs. In both cases, their civilian jobs often enhance their Soldier and leadership skills.

Adding Capacity to the Force

The Army National Guard and Army Reserve provide more than half of the Army's total capacity. While all of the Army components share the same training standards, doctrine, and equipment, each is distinct, interdependent, and essential. The Army Reserve adds capacity to the total force with approximately 200,000 Soldiers. There are a number of important career fields in the Army Reserve, including civil affairs, medical, sustainment, chaplain, military intelligence, military police, and engineering.

As of 2017, nearly 55 percent of all Army operational medical forces reside in the Army Reserve. Over 60 percent of the total force's critical care nurses, orthopedic surgeons, emergency physicians, and obstetricians

are Army Reserve Soldiers. Nearly 80 percent of the force's thoracic surgeons and nurse anesthetist are in the Army Reserve. These skill sets are honed by their respective civilian jobs and provide the total force with a deployable capability while minimizing individual training requirements.

Eight of the 14 expeditionary sustainment commands (ESCs) are in the Army Reserve. The ESCs deploy to austere environments devoid of infrastructure to provide mission command for theater opening and supply chain management and to move life-saving materiel and services into affected areas.

ESCs also provide mission command of the personnel services support structure. Of this structure, 65 percent of finance units and 73 percent of human resources capabilities reside in the Army Reserve.

The Reserve adds capability by providing mobilization force generation installation platforms, which expand reserve or active force capacity and allow for rapid growth during times of need. This support also enables rapid training and mobilization of forces for contingency operations.

The Army Reserve of today is truly an operational force able to perform in the full spectrum of conflict, routinely participate in global missions (not just in the event of large-scale conflict), and remain fully nested within national security objectives.

Unit and Soldier Capabilities

A number of sustainment commands are specific to the Army Reserve and not replicated elsewhere. For example, the Expeditionary Rail Center (ERC) is a Reserve capability created in 2010 to fill a 22-year gap in Army rail force structure. The bulk of the ERC's personnel have the Reserve-specific MOS 88U (rail operations crewmember).

The ERC helps a combatant command with using host-nation railroads to expand and expedite distribution within its area of responsibility. These Soldiers are in high demand and have recently performed assessments in

the European Command and Pacific Command areas of responsibility.

The Army Reserve's Deployment Support Command (DSC), under the operational control of the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, increases speed of operations and provides early-entry and theater-opening capabilities. This one-star command was established in 2007 to provide the Army with a single organization to develop concepts, identify enabling processes and technologies, test and experiment with options, and institutionalize solutions in the deployment and distribution functional arena.

The DSC has mission command of terminal, rail, deployment, and distribution support. It uses its expeditionary terminal operations elements, automated cargo documentation detachments, and deployment and distribution support battalions to load and offload ships and assist in the deployment processes from fort to port, port to port, and port to tactical assembly area. Most of the DSC's units are required to be ready and rapidly deployable to open a theater and support large-scale military operations at strategic seaports throughout the world.

The Army Reserve Support Command (ARSC) is another Reserve-specific one-star command. It is under the operational control of the Army Materiel Command and provides additional capability and capacity specifically to the Army Contracting Command. The unit has approximately 1,000 Soldiers working contract-related tasks.

The ARSC employs more than 80 percent of the Army's systems automation acquisition officers and over 80 percent of the Army's research and engineering acquisition officers. Most of these Reserve officers are also employed by government contractors and use these skill sets in their civilian jobs.

The acquisition and contracting skill sets take years to develop and are in high demand in the military as well as in the industrial base. ARSC

Soldiers have supported every contingency since 2001 and consistently support efforts in Europe, the Middle East, and the Pacific.

Reserve Soldier Characteristics

Reserve Soldiers generally stay with their units longer, work in one MOS longer, and are typically older than their active Army counterparts. The average age of enlisted Soldiers in the Reserve is 30.5 years old versus 27 years old in the active component. The average Reserve officer is 39.8 years old, and the average active Army officer is 34.8 years old. The Reserve force is very diverse, with 34 percent of the enlisted and 30 percent of the officers being minorities.

Higher education is a key developmental step for Reserve officers, and more than 34 percent have advanced degrees. In the Army as a whole, 75 percent of the doctorate degrees and half of the master's degrees are held by Reserve Soldiers.

These highly educated citizen Soldiers provide professional expertise that is developed in their civilian careers. They are doctors, lawyers, academics, scientists, engineers, and information technology specialists. Approximately 92 percent of Reserve Soldiers are part-time Soldiers. They serve their country and their communities by bringing a multifaceted set of Soldier capabilities combined with civilian skills.

While reservists maintain the equivalent required professional development standards of their active counterparts, they may also have civilian jobs that add different dimensions to their skill sets. An example is the leadership of the 377th Theater Sustainment Command (TSC), the Reserve's largest operational command.

The 377th TSC commander is a commercial banker and has mission command of more than 35,000 Soldiers and six general officer commands. Of the four ESC commanders in the 377th TSC, only one is a career military officer. One ESC commander is a business investor, one works as a technology manager, and one recently

retired from law enforcement.

The other two general officer commanders are the ARSC commander, who is a contracting manager for a defense contractor, and the DSC commander, who serves as a technology manager in his civilian position. These varied experiences and skill sets add dimension to their ability to solve complex problems that support unified land operations, lead to excellence in training, and help the military with its most important mission: winning our nation's wars.

The Army Reserve expands the total force while offering multiple dimensions of talent. Additionally, Reserve units and Soldiers support operational and strategic planning using specific sustainment capabilities that reside only in the reserve component. Finally, Reserve Soldiers serve in civilian careers that in many cases support their military skills and enhance the Reserve's multiple levels of talent.

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