

# GX<sup>®</sup>

THE GUARDIAN EXPERIENCE

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## WARRIOR SPIRIT

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# HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

FOR YOUR SOLDIER OVERSEAS

# UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SUPPORT NDARNG 188TH ADA



Courtesy of Shelle Michaels  
Soldiers' Angels Public Relations, Regional Manager  
and University of North Dakota Professor

NORTH DAKOTA—During the summer of 2006, the Women Studies class instructed by Shelle Michaels at the University of North Dakota (UND) applied the theory they were learning into activism by adopting the female Soldiers of the NDARNG 188th ADA. They tied this support with the national organization Soldiers' Angels, in which Michaels is the head of Public Relations and the North Dakota/Minnesota/South Dakota Regional Manager.

The project, "Supporting our Soldiers with Tender Loving Care from the University of North Dakota," or "SOS with TLC from UND," was started by allowing the students to show their support to the deployed Soldiers in many different manners.

Each week, the students and Michaels wrote letters to the Soldiers, who they aptly named "Ladies of Liberty." The weekly letters were part of a research project for the students as Michaels assigned a new topic for part of the letter and the students had to educate the "Ladies" on the topic while making it a personal note to lift their spirits.

Topics included: a woman the students associated with freedom, female health issues, equality, victimization and objectification.

"It is easy for the students to identify with these Soldiers, as many of them are UND alumni or students on academic leave while serving their country," Michaels mentioned. "It is very empowering for the students to see what women of today are capable of accomplishing as those rights have not always been in existence in our society."

Student Nathan Vasquez was intrigued with the concepts of this class, giving him another outlook in to the lives of women and the opportunity to care for many that are miles away from home. "6,140 miles," Michaels reminded him.

Vasquez, who used to work in the National

Guard Armory, said he has met many of the Soldiers who are deployed. SPC Courtney Olson (UND student on academic leave) is a good friend of his, so this project became personal for him.

"It's a job that many people wouldn't do, and I respect them for it," Vasquez said.

The class also gathered donations from local businesses to ship weekly care kits that they named "Kreature Komfort Kare Kits." The kits included "feel-good" items such as manicure and pedicure kits, stationery, spa-kits, vitamins (calcium in particular), tea, cookies, candy and more, Michaels said.

Getting the local community involved has been easy. The initial response from them has been good, Michaels said. "People want to help they just don't always have the avenue to be involved."

**It is very empowering for the students to see what women of today are capable of accomplishing as those rights have not always been in existence in our society.**

—Shelle Michaels, UND Professor

Although the summer class has ended, the support mission for the "Ladies of Liberty" has not. Michaels has her fall semester students writing letters every other week, while she has not missed a week of communication with them in her own letter-writing campaign. The "letter" that she started with four pages this summer, has grown to 60 pages of information from home, as well as additional local and global female-based issues.

SPC Courtney Olson said that she will sit in the sand and read what she calls the "Shelle Michaels Chronicles" in its entirety and then she passes it along to someone else to read, so it makes its way around the Forward

**CLASS ACT** (above) Shelle Michaels (front row, right), founder of the "SOS with TLC from UND" support program, with some of the University of North Dakota students involved in the program.

**GRATEFUL RECIPIENTS** (right) SGT Margaret Mork and SPC Courtney Olson of the NDARNG A/188th ADA (RAID), and a UND student, look forward to receiving support letters from Shelle Michaels and her students.



COURTESY OF UND WOMEN STUDIES

Operating Base (FOB) in Afghanistan.

Inspired by SPC Olson's reaction, Michaels named her letter the "Ladies of Liberty Freedom Focus" just to add some more personality to the letter.

Several of the Soldiers have made their way back to the class at UND while on "R & R" to tell the students about their experiences in Afghanistan. Soldiers have included MAJ Scott Fontaine, the commander for the 188th ADA RAID, SGT Laura Bearfield, SPC Courtney Olson both from RAID and SPC Megan Docktor of SECFOR.

One of the biggest projects stemming from this summer class started with student Thomas Harlow asking the Grand Forks City Band if they would donate toward the cause. Don Craig the director asked "if a concert would be appropriate?" Michaels and Harlow jumped at this opportunity to further advance the support of the community for the Soldiers.

What started out as a concert in recognition of "the Ladies of Liberty" soon spun into the project called "Day of the Deployed." A proclamation to Governor John Hoeven was written to express that October 26, 2006 recognize all North Dakota service members serving in and from ND deployed in the year 2006.

Through the chain of events that has transpired through this class at UND, it is very obvious what differences can be made in support of our Soldiers with a little bit of creativity, imagination and determination. It is quite true that everyone can make a difference. Michaels asks, "What will you do today to make a Soldier's deployment a little better? I challenge you to step up and start a 'Day of the Deployed' in your state for 2007."

Soldiers' Angels liked the idea of "Day of the Deployed" so much, that Michaels will be able to incorporate this in to a national event in 2007. **GX**

# HAWAII GUARD HOLDS NATION'S FIRST IND EXERCISE



By 1LT Regina Berry  
Courtesy of HIARNG

**JUST IN CASE** Teams treat "patients" for possible radiation exposure in the IND exercise.

HAWAII—In August, Hawaii's Bellows Air Force Station and Marine Corps Training Area-Bellows was the scene of the nation's first large-scale improvised nuclear device (IND) exercise. The Hawaii National Guard's Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear or high-yield explosive Enhanced Response Force Package and 93rd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team played critical roles in the exercise.

The Hawaii National Guard and State Civil Defense teamed up with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and many other government agencies and non-government organizations. The exercise was one of many conducted to ensure emergency management and first responder personnel are trained for all hazards.

"We wanted to make sure that our first responders from both the military and civilian sides of the house were going to be challenged and able to progress over the years," said MG Robert G.F. Lee, Hawaii Adjutant General. "That means getting a more complex comprehensive exercise every year."

The CERF-P team, which also included members of the Illinois Guard, was able to practice much more than simply decontaminating patients.

"We also had a search and extraction group that was led by CPT Ian Beltran from the 154th Civil Engineering Squadron doing collapsed structure search and recovery, decontamination, as well as the 154 MDG handling triage," said CPT Aaron Blanchard, Hawaii National Guard CERF-P coordinator, and a member of the HIARNG.

"We also had a command control, which is also made up primarily of 154th Medical Group members," he added.

Hundreds of HI Guard members participated as part of the 93 WMD/CST, CERF-P and Joint Force Headquarters.

"The National Guard certainly had a large part," said MG Lee. "But, we could not be doing this without support from our military partners in the active duty led by United States Pacific Command because they will be determining what other AD forces will come to the aid of Hawaii."

"We were able to connect and test all of our communications with the various state and local levels and also provide a lot of direct feed from the exercise site to the operations centers," said MG Lee.

The IND exercise was on the list as number one of the Department of Homeland Security's top-15 exercises that the Nation has to be prepared for, according to MG Lee. **GX**

For more information, visit  
[www.dayofthedeveloped.com](http://www.dayofthedeveloped.com)  
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