

## APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 3, 2019.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: KING GEORGE COUNTY

Program Title: OPERATION: KING GEORGE

Program Category: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / REGIONAL COLLABORATION

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: MEGAN PITTS

Title: EXECUTIVE ADMIN ASSISTANT

Department: ADMIN

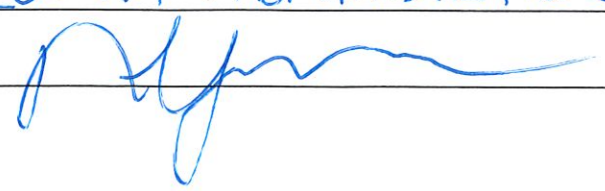
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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: NEIMAN C. YOUNG

Title: COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Signature: 



## **2019 ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

**VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES**

**KING GEORGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA**

**"OPERATION: KING GEORGE COUNTY"**



**APRIL 16 – 20, 2018**

### **Abstract of the Program:**

The Army's 98<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion conducts validation exercises and, in the past, those exercises were located in Puerto Rico. As a result of the September 2017 Hurricane and the damage it caused to the island, the 98<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion lost access to its former training ground.

This provided an opportunity of mutual benefit for the 98<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion and for King George County. The Battalion would complete its validation exercises within the County and the County would benefit from an extended staff augmented by the military teams. Some of the situations presented to the Battalion are issues facing the County and, being a rural community, the resources and manpower are not always readily available to face every situation. This exercise affords us an opportunity to give secondary priorities a fresh set of eyes, and often, creative solutions to address them.

### **The Problem or Need for the Program:**

The 98<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion, like virtually every Army unit, asks its Soldiers to perform tough jobs. In some instances, Soldiers are asked to sacrifice their lives in the defense of our nation's interests. This is a commitment bonded in blood. With this understanding, the Commander has a moral obligation to ensure that the Soldiers have the equipment and training they need to have a fighting chance to return home.

To ensure that deploying Soldiers are properly trained, the Commanders hosts a validation exercise. The validation exercise is literally the last chance that a command team has to adjust units before Soldiers go overseas. In the instance of the King George Military Exercise, these soldiers literally completed their training in our County, went home and packed, and deployed 3 weeks later.

### **Description of the Program:**

The program initiated with a mock "invasion" of King George County, in which the 98<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion was inserted into the County. In the past, this insertion included paratroopers jumping into the drop zone at Fort A.P.





Hill and travelling north into King George. The insertion is followed by an introduction to King George County Staff. During this time, the teams conduct an inbrief that details their understanding of our area, what capabilities they can bring to the table, and their intent for the rest of the week.

It is also during this time, that the staff provides the teams a more detailed explanation of our problem sets, the issues we want them to look at, and the mandatory deliverables we expect to see at the end of the week.

This meeting is also used for us to lay down the ground rules. This is an explanation of the left and right limits that the teams will have to abide by while being hosted in King George County. Specifically, they were banned from carrying weapons, wearing military uniforms outside of the County, and driving military vehicles on our major corridors.

The next 72 hours are spent working on the county's stated priorities, or "lines of effort". This is especially interesting, because the teams were taken out of their comfort zone. Instead of studying terrorist networks, the troops were asked to create emergency response plans for vulnerable, yet key infrastructure in the County. Rather than recon drug passageways, we had the teams write and complete supporting documentation for our 2018 SmartScale projects submissions.

Naturally, this work isn't done in a vacuum; the teams had to meet with many of the County's strategic partners to first get a crash course in each subject and help bring context to their deliverables. These partners, to which special thanks goes out to, include UMW Dahlgren, NSF Dahlgren, GWRC, FAMPO, VDOT and the Berkeley Group.

The hallmark of the event was the mock town hall we hosted with King George County's citizens. The teams received an impromptu invitation to a "meet and greet" with interested citizens. The teams accepted the invitation under the belief that it would be a friendly public affairs opportunity.

They could not have been more wrong. Rather, we wrote tough questions on index cards and randomly handed them out to our citizens. As the night grew on, the questions got tougher and the crowd more hostile. At the end of the event, the Soldiers looked like they had just endured a congressional testimony.



Though there were many shenanigans, this training was invaluable. Many of these Soldiers will enter contested areas and have to sell themselves to hostile citizens. By participating in this mock event, the command team was able to authentically witness how their soldiers will react while under public pressure.

The final day culminated with an outbrief to the Board of Supervisors, County staff, and citizens. During this event, the teams were expected to present the deliverables we asked for at the beginning of the week. We reviewed tourism brochures, new economic development opportunities, and security plans that we have incorporated into our real world SOPs.



### **The Results/Success of the Program:**

King George, like any community, has more problems than we will ever have resources, time, or people to address. By participating in this exercise, we were blessed with an extension of our staff to review "wish list" priorities that we simply do not have the time to engage on a regular basis.

In addition, the exercise provides the government leaders an opportunity to bond with its constituents and strategic partners. As we all know, it is a rare occasion that all three of these stakeholders are focused in the same accord. However, the military exercise is about helping Soldiers. We found this to be a mission that allowed us to lay down our differences and center around.

Finally, the exercise afforded many Soldiers their first look into local government operations. They witnessed both the opportunities and our challenges. I have no doubt that we may be doing our part to build our next generation of municipal leaders.

### **Worthiness of Award:**

Considering the challenges of being understaffed, King George County has found a way to overcome this issue through hosting the 98<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion's validation exercises. It is useful to be able to view problems facing the county through the eyes of those who have an outside perspective.

These accomplishments meet the following Achievement Award Program Criteria:

- Offer an innovative solution to a problem, situation or delivery of services
- Promote intergovernmental cooperation and/or cooperation with local, state and federal entities and/or private enterprise in addressing a problem or situation.
- Provide a model that other local governments may learn from or implement in their own localities.

-----**Supplemental Materials (Local Press):**-----

## **Special ops battalion undertakes a different kind of mission in King George**

By CATHY DYSON THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Apr 15, 2018

The special operations battalion from Fort Bragg typically parachutes into hostile territories to deal with drugs, bombs and bad guys.

But 57 soldiers from the 98th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne) at the North Carolina base are working on a different kind of mission this week in King George County.

The group will study tourism instead of terrorism. They'll collect information for an economic development brochure instead of collecting weapons in a war zone. They'll evaluate the region's transportation needs instead of assessing drug-trafficking routes.

It's not the cookie-cutter type of mission the men and women are used to, and King George County Administrator Neiman Young can't wait to see what the group produces.

"I'm excited to see how they react to getting a mission set like recreation," he said, adding that a special operations battalion should be able to adapt to whatever task it is presented.

Young spent 23 years in the Army and retired a major. While at Fort Bragg, he served with many of the people still attached with the 98th and planned two VTEs, or Validation Training Exercises, like the one happening in King George.

The exercise started Friday afternoon at Fort A.P. Hill in Caroline County, where eight King George officials had cellphones and cameras at the ready, waiting for the appearance of a C-17, a large transport aircraft.

The skies couldn't have been any bluer, but winds were strong. The gusts didn't hamper the delivery of a container delivery system—a pallet that weighed 1,800 pounds and contained four 50-gallon containers full of water.

"They're going to open the back of the plane, push it out and hope for the best," said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Medina, as he asked King George officials to watch from the safety of an observation tower.

Soldiers can use the steering devices on their chutes, but the containers go with the flow of air. As it turned out, the massive parachute attached to the water container—which is one of the supplies the group would have to bring if it were jumping into a remote area—didn't collapse after it landed on the hillside next to the asphalt.

The wind was so strong, it blew the big package like it was a flimsy kite in the breeze—straight toward the observation tower.

Later, King George Registrar Lorrie Gump would thank Young for the experience, saying her favorite part was when the green parachute came right at her. It was especially scary for someone afraid of heights, as she is.

Twice, the C-17 attempted to discharge teams of the 57 paratroopers who had been harnessed and ready to go for hours. But the wind was too strong, and the cargo plane hovered in a holding pattern until the wind died down.

Then it made a third pass, and the door behind the plane's giant wing opened. Out came one jumper after another, their chutes unfurling like a flag, as 14 of them headed toward the ground.

"Awesome," Gump said, as she aimed her new camera—the only thing she wanted for Christmas—at the billowing chutes.

Young's wife, Stephanie, thrust her arms into the air and yelled, "Woo!" as the soldiers descended. She jumped up and down when the first soldier in each of the four passes made it safely to the ground.

If she could have, she said she would have crossed the field and personally greeted the soldiers and thanked them for their service—which is what she did to other mission members gathered around the observation tower. But one of the men in camouflage said she had to stay a safe distance, about 1,000 feet, back from the landing zone.

Three jumpers ended up in the trees. Lorenzo Smith, an athletic supervisor with King George Parks and Recreation, shouted as one chute drifted toward the woods.

"Back, back, back," he yelled.

When another trailed farther down the landing zone than all the others, Smith again yelled, this time saying, "Stop. Stop."

As the parachute drifted so far away from the others, Stephanie Young said, "He's going back to Fredericksburg."

After seven passes and accelerating winds, Army officials decided to halt the jumping because it was too dangerous.

Battalion members did their own exercises at the fort through the weekend, then were scheduled to show up Monday morning for a briefing with county officials. Annie Cupka, King George's grant writer, had worked with other staff members for months to come up with assignments.

Members of the five teams will look at regional transportation needs, including bikes, trails and pathways; compare county recreational facilities with those at the Navy base at Dahlgren and look at ways to unite regional trails; produce drafts of brochures to promote development at the King George Industrial Park and the county's 300th anniversary in 2020; and assess security issues at county buildings and schools.

The week definitely won't be a vacation for the battalion, Cupka said.

"I was specifically told there was not to be a lot of downtime," she added.

The soldiers will be in civilian attire and will not carry weapons. The Army is paying all their expenses, including reimbursing King George for any technical accommodations it made.