



NCO EXCELLENCE RECOGNITION CEREMONY



**JUNE 13, 2025
HISTORIC FORT SAM HOUSTON THEATER
JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO, FORT SAM HOUSTON**

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

ENTRANCE OF THE OFFICIAL PARTY *

INVOCATION *

U.S. NATIONAL ANTHEM *

**GUEST SPEAKER
(CSM Victor J. Laragione)**

NCO INDUCTION CEREMONY

**GUEST SPEAKER
(CSM Michael D. Dills II)**

SERGEANT AUDIE MURPHY CLUB INDUCTION

ORDER OF MILITARY MEDICAL MERIT INDUCTION

THE CREED OF THE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER *

THE ARMY SONG *

DEPARTURE OF OFFICIAL PARTY *

Audience will rise and remain standing for these events

Backbone Week: **Strengthening Our Foundation**

As we close out "Backbone Week" (June 9-13, 2025), the Medical Center of Excellence celebrates a truly impactful event dedicated to recognizing and investing in our incredible Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs)!

This week was designed to strengthen the very foundation of our Army – our NCO Corps – and the results have been outstanding. Through focused training, robust mentorship opportunities, and strengthened communication across all levels, we've witnessed a palpable boost in esprit de corps and professional development.

Backbone Week wasn't just about training; it was about reaffirming the vital leadership role our NCOs play in our success. We're ensuring our NCOs remain highly capable and ready to lead, ultimately contributing to the Brigade's overall readiness and ability to accomplish any mission.

Thanks to their dedication and participation, we've reinforced a highly capable and cohesive team, and we look forward to seeing the continued positive impact of this week for years to come!

Thank you to all the NCOs who gave their time, experience, and knowledge to solidify our Corp.

BE! KNOW! DO!

NCO INDUCTION CEREMONY

<u>187 MEDICAL BATTALION</u> SSG COLEJOHNSON, ASHTON	<u>264 MEDICAL BATTALION</u> SSG BISSESSAR, GJOK SSG HERNANDEZ, KASSANDRA SSG HILL, TONY SSG SANCHEZVILES, IVAN SGT FOSTER, TYLER
<u>188 MEDICAL BATTALION</u> SSG CHEMUTAI, FRASER SSG WILLIAMS, ZACARY SGT ELSING, JADEN	
<u>232 MEDICAL BATTALION</u> SSG BALSITIS, MATTHEW SSG LOUGHLIN, THOMAS SSG MUIRURI, CHRISTOPHER SSG PRICE, BRIAN SSG WILSON, ABUBAKARI	<u>US ARMY PDA</u> MSG FOUST, WILLARD SFC MICHELANGELO, KAREN SFC PADAMADA, RACHELLE SFC PHILLIPS, ASHLEY SSG ALVARADO, DANIEL SSG RIDEL-BROWN, REYNIER

**SERGEANT AUDIE MURPHY CLUB
INDUCTION**

SFC BURNETT, JOEL
SFC DUNN, JACK
SFC WARE, MICHAEL
SSG LOPEZ, DYLAN
SSG RICHARDSON, GLEN

ORDER OF MILITARY MEDICAL MERIT

SFC MATTHEW RATCLIFF
1SG TYLER SMITH

CSM VICTOR J. LARAGIONE
COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
Medical Center of Excellence



Command Sergeant Major Laragione is a native of Corpus Christi, Texas. He attended Advanced Individual Training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, graduating as a Combat Medic. Command Sergeant Major Laragione comes to the MEDCoE from the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command where he served as the Command Sergeant Major since August 2020. Other notable assignments include: Medic and Squad Leader in the 261st Area Support Medical Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C.; Emergency Room Shift Leader at the Medical Element Sato Cano Air Base, Honduras; Clinic NCOIC at Keller Army Community Hospital, West Point, N.Y.; Clinic NCOIC and Training Room NCO at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC), Germany; RAKKASANS Medical Platoon Sergeant at 3/187th Infantry Battalion and 1/33rd Cavalry Regiment, Fort Campbell, Ky.; OC/T and Operations Sergeant at 1/289th Training Support Battalion (AC/RC), Houston, Texas; Clinical Operations and Company 1SG at LRMC, Germany; Company 1SG at 47th Combat Support Hospital, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.; Senior Enlisted Advisor at the Public Health Command – Pacific, Camp Zama, Japan; Command Sergeant Major at the Troop Command, LRMC, Germany; and the Command Sergeant Major at the Madigan Army Medical Center, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. He deployed to Blue Factory, Bosnia-Herzegovina in support of Operation Joint Forge and to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is a Class 65 graduate of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.

Command Sergeant Major Laragione’s military education includes all levels of NCOPDS through the Nominative Leaders Course, Company Commanders/First Sergeant course, BN and BDE Pre-Command Course, Physical Therapy Technician course, Unit Prevention Leader course, Observer/Controller Trainer academy, Lean Six Sigma (Green Belt) course, the Master Resilience Trainer course, the Battle Staff course, and the Modern Army Combatives course. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Science from Saint Thomas Aquinas College and a Master of Arts degree in Leadership Studies from the University of Texas at El Paso.

His awards and decorations include: The Legion of Merit; the Bronze Star Medal; Meritorious Service Medal (6th oak leaf cluster); Joint Service Commendation Medal; Army Commendation Medal (1st oak leaf cluster); Army Achievement Medal (7th oak leaf cluster); Joint Meritorious Unit Award; Meritorious Unit Citation (1st oak leaf cluster); Army Superior Unit Award; Army Good Conduct Medal (8th award); National Defense Service Medal; Iraqi Campaign Medal (2nd campaign star); Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; Armed Forces Service Medal; Humanitarian Service Medal; Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal; NCO Professional Development Ribbon (5th numeral); Overseas Service Ribbon (5th numeral); NATO Medal; the Combat Medical Badge; the Expert Field Medical Badge; the Parachutist Badge; the Air Assault Badge; and the Pathfinder Badge. His foreign decorations include the British, Honduran and Guatemalan

CSM RODMOND Q. CHURCHILL II
COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
32d Medical Brigade



CSM Churchill attended Basic Combat Training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, where he attained the military occupational specialty Medical Supply Specialist (68J). Four years later, he reclassified to the MOS of operating room technician (68D), where he completed Phase I at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and Phase II at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

His assignments include medical supply specialist at U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense, Edgewood Proving Grounds, Maryland; Medical Supply Specialist at Tripler Army Medical Center, Hawaii; Operating Room NCOIC, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.; Operating Room NCOIC, JTF-Bravo, Honduras; DS/Platoon Sergeant at 1/19 FA, Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Peri-Operative NCOIC, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany; Platoon Sergeant, Camp Bastion, Afghanistan; Surgical Nursing NCOIC at Womack Army Medical Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; First Sergeant, Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital at Fort Polk, Louisiana; Operations NCOIC, 121/BAACH at Yongson, Korea; Chief Clinical SGM at Darnall Army Medical Center, Fort Hood, Texas; Command Sergeant Major, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Silver Spring, MD.

CSM Churchill's military education includes: Medical Supply Specialist Course; Air Assault Course; Primary Leadership Development Course; Operating Room Specialist Course; Small Group Instructor Trainer Course; Instructor Trainer Course; Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course; The Leadership, Education and Development Course; Combatives Level I and II; Drill Sergeant School; Enhanced Combat Lifesaver Course; Unit Prevention Leader Course; NBC Officer Course; Equal Opportunity Leaders Course; Field Sanitation Course; Advanced Noncommissioned Officers Course; Basic Healthcare Administrator Course; Master Resilience Trainer Course; Clinical Nurse OIC/NCOIC Leader Development Course; First Sergeant Course; Common Faculty Development Course, U.S. Army Sergeant's Major Academy (Class 69) and the AMEDD Executive Skills Course.

His civilian education includes a Bachelor of Arts in leadership and workforce development from Command General Staff College, Bachelor of Science from Excelsior College, and currently completing MSM in Organizational Leadership. CSM Churchill's awards and decorations include: Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (4), Army Commendation Medal (4), Army Achievement Medal (10), Army Superior Unit Award (2), Army Good Conduct Medal (7), National Defense Service Medal; Afghanistan Campaign Medal (1CS), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, NCO Professional Development Ribbon (5), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (4), Nato Medal, Drill Sergeant Badge; Air Assault Badge; Drivers Badge w/Wheel; German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency (Gold), German Schutzenschnur Badge (Gold), Sergeant Audie Murphy Award and the recipient of the Order to Military Merit (O2M3).

His civilian education includes a Bachelor of Arts in leadership and workforce development from Command General Staff College, Bachelor of Science from Excelsior College, and currently completing MSM in Organizational Leadership. CSM Churchill's awards and decorations include: Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (4), Army Commendation Medal (4), Army Achievement Medal (10), Army Superior Unit Award (2), Army Good Conduct Medal (7), National Defense Service Medal; Afghanistan Campaign Medal (1CS), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, NCO Professional Development Ribbon (5), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (4), Nato Medal, Drill Sergeant Badge; Air Assault Badge; Drivers Badge w/Wheel; German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency (Gold), German Schutzenschnur Badge (Gold), Sergeant Audie Murphy Award and the recipient of the Order to Military Merit (O2M3).

CSM MICHAEL D. DILLS

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

US Army Medical Research & Development Command



Command Sergeant Major Michael Dills enlisted in the United States Army in July 1996 as an 11B Infantryman. After completing One-Station Unit Training at Fort Benning GA, he completed two subsequent assignments before reenlisting to become a Combat Medic.

CSM Dills most recently served as the Command Sergeant Major for U.S. Army Garrison Fort Detrick. Prior to that he served as the Command Sergeant Major of Irwin Army Community Hospital. He has held numerous medical and leadership positions including Advanced Trauma Life Support NCO, Senior Line Medic, Squad Leader, Aid Station NCOIC, Medical Platoon Sergeant, First Sergeant, and Chief Medical

NCO for the First Infantry Division. He also served as a Senior Medical Observer Coach/Trainer (Cobra Team) and as the AMEDD Board NCOIC. His assignments include: 505th PIR, Fort Bragg NC; 502nd IN, Fort Campbell KY; 10th Combat Support Hospital and the 2d Forward Surgical Team, Fort Carson CO; 1-9 IN, Camp Casey, Korea; 3-61 CAV, Fort Carson, CO; Operations Group, Fort Irwin CA; Evans Army Community Hospital, Fort Carson CO; 560th Medical Company (GA), Camp Stanley, Korea; AMEDD Center and Schools, JBSA; and Division Surgeon Office, Fort Riley KS.

CSM Dills' military and civilian education includes Airborne School, Air Assault School, Battle Staff, Master Resiliency Trainer, Master Fitness Trainer, and Instructor Training course. He is also a graduate of the Primary Leadership Development Course, Advanced Leaders Course, Senior Leaders Course, and the United States Sergeants Major Academy. CSM Dills holds a Bachelor's Degree in Leadership and Workforce Development from the Command and General Staff College and was the first NCO in the Army to receive this degree.

His awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters, Achievement Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Good Conduct Medal 7th knot, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with one Campaign Star, Iraq Campaign Medal with four Campaign Stars, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Global War On Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon with numeral 5, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon with numeral 3, NATO Medal, and the Multinational Force & Observers Medal. His unit awards include the Army Superior Unit Award, Meritorious Unit Citation, Presidential Unit Citation, and Navy Unit Commendation. He was also awarded the Latvian Medal of Diligence by the Commanding General of the Latvian Forces. He has earned the Combat Medical Badge, the Expert Field Medical Badge, Parachutist Badge, and Air Assault Badge.

Biography of Audie Murphy

Audie Leon Murphy was a legend in his own time. A war hero, movie actor, writer of country and western songs, and poet. His biography reads more like fiction than fact. He lived only 46 years, but made a lasting impression on American history. Audie was born on a sharecropper's farm in North Texas on June 20, 1924. As a boy, he chopped cotton for one dollar a day and was noted for his feats of derring-do and his accuracy with a gun. He had only 5 years of schooling and was orphaned at age 16.

After being refused enlistment during World War II in both the Marines and Paratroopers for being too small (5'5") and underweight (110 lbs.), he enlisted in the U.S. Army a few days after his 18th birthday. After basic training at Camp Wolters, Texas, and advanced training at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, Audie was sent overseas. He was assigned to the famous 15th Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Infantry Division where he fought in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, France, and Germany. He earned a battlefield commission for his courage and leadership ability, as well as, citations and decorations including every medal for valor that America gives. He was also awarded one Belgian and three French medals. Lieutenant Audie Murphy is the highest decorated soldier in American history.

Discharged from the Army on September 21, 1945, Audie went to Hollywood at the invitation of movie star James Cagney. He remained in California for the rest of his life and was closely associated with the movie industry, both as an actor and a producer. He acted in 44 films starring in 39 of them. His best known film is "To Hell and Back", adapted from the best selling book of his war experiences by the same name. Most of his movies were westerns. In 1955, Audie Murphy was voted the Most Popular Western Actor in America by the Motion Picture Exhibitors. Audie wrote the lyrics to 16 country and western songs, the most popular of which was "Shutters and Boards", written with Scott Turner in 1962. The song was recorded by over 30 pop singers, including Jerry Wallace, Dean Martin, and Porter Wagoner. He was an accomplished poet; unfortunately, only a few of his poems have survived.

In 1950 Audie joined the 36th Infantry Division ("T-Patchers") of the Texas National Guard and served with it until 1966. He was a Mason and a Shriner and belonged to several veterans' organizations. Audie Murphy was killed in a plane crash on a mountaintop near Roanoke, Virginia on May 28, 1971. Fittingly, his body was recovered 2 days later on Memorial Day.

ORDER OF MILITARY MEDICAL MERIT

We celebrate individuals who embody the highest ideals of service and dedication within the Army Medical Department (AMEDD). We are honored to recognize their induction into the prestigious Order of Military Medical Merit (O2M3).

Founded in 1982, the O2M3 is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering camaraderie amongst AMEDD personnel – Active Duty, Reserve Component, Civilian, and Retired – worldwide. However, membership is more than just belonging to a network; it signifies a lifetime of exceptional contribution.

The O2M3 recognizes individuals who stand out as leaders, demonstrating unwavering integrity, professional competence, and selfless service. Members have dedicated 15 years or more to Army Medicine, consistently exceeding expectations and ranking within the top 10% of their field. Their accomplishments directly enhance the AMEDD and align with the Surgeon General's priorities.

Membership is a testament to a sustained commitment to excellence, a benchmark for professional achievement, and a visible symbol – proudly worn as a medallion at formal AMEDD events – of dedication to advancing the health and readiness of our Soldiers and beneficiaries.

We acknowledge these exceptional individuals and welcome them into the ranks of the O2M3, honoring their past contributions and looking forward to their continued leadership within the AMEDD.



CREED OF THE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER

No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of Soldiers. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as “The Backbone of the Army.” I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers, and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the military service, and my country; regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watch-word. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind: Accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers. I will strive to remain technically and tactically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer, I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All Soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my Soldiers, and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my Soldiers, and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my Soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Non-commissioned Officers, leaders!

THE ARMY SONG

March along, sing our song, with the Army of the free.

**Count the brave, count the true,
who have fought to victory.**

We're the Army and proud of our name!

We're the Army and proudly proclaim:

**First to fight for the right
And to build the Nation's might,
And the Army goes rolling along
Proud of all we have done,
Fighting till the battle's won,
And the Army goes rolling along.**

**Then it's Hi! Hi! Hey!
The Army's on its way.
Count off the cadence loud and strong
For where'er we go,
You will always know
That the Army goes rolling along.**

EXCELLENCE IN ACTION



U.S. ARMY



THIS WE'LL DEFEND