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Citizens Preparedness

Griffo hosting emergency preparedness training program

Booneville Herald, March 25, 2026 :

Free event held in conjunction with New York State Citizen Preparedness Corps, New York National Guard, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services and City of Rome

New York State Sen. Joseph Griffo announced on March 16 that he will be hosting a free emergency preparedness training program in conjunction with the New York State Citizen Preparedness Corps, New York National Guard, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services and the City of Rome.

The free event will take place at on Tuesday, April 14 at 6 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers at Rome City Hall, 198 N. Washington St., Rome.

With severe weather events becoming more frequent and more extreme, it is more important than ever that New Yorkers are prepared for disasters. The NY Citizen Preparedness Training Program provides residents with the tools and resources to prepare for any type of disaster, respond accordingly and recover as quickly as possible to normal conditions.

This training course will provide an introduction to responding to a natural or manmade disaster. Participants will be advised on how to properly prepare, including developing a family emergency plan and stocking up on emergency supplies. Each family that attends will receive one preparedness kit.

Registration is required. To register, visit <https://www.dhSES.ny.gov/citizen-preparedness-training-calendar> and select the appropriate training session or scan the QR code.

“Preparedness is key,” Sen. Griffo said. “This training session will provide valuable tools and resources to attendees that can help them when an emergency strikes. I

hope that the public takes advantage of this important opportunity, and I thank the New York State Citizen Preparedness Corps, New York National Guard, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services and the City of Rome for their willingness to partner with me for this event.”

https://www.romesentinel.com/boonville-herald/griffo-hosting-emergency-preparedness-training-program/article_2ffdcafe-1f0f-4e0f-9797-b58a6c63d19b.html

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Military Museum

Act of Valor during Civil War lives on through Saratoga Springs museum (video)

WRGB, March 26, 2026 :

SARATOGA COUNTY, N.Y. (WRGB) — In Mechanicville, the name Ellsworth seems to be everywhere — on street signs, historical markers, and towering memorials. Most people drive right by, unaware that the name once belonged to the most famous man in America, synonymous with an act of bravery that helped save the nation.

Today, that story lives on at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs. Among its more than 25,000 artifacts documenting the state’s military past is a frock coat once worn by Elmer Ellsworth.

“This was the frock coat of Elmer Ellsworth, who was born in Malta, New York, raised in Mechanicville,” said Chris Morton, Associate Curator of the New York State Military Museum. “His father was a tailor, not a wealthy man. His mother ran a boarding house. A young guy, ‘What am I going to do? I want to make something of myself.’”

And he did.

In 1854, Ellsworth went west to Illinois to study law and military science. Just six years later, he rocketed to fame as the leader of a celebrated military drill team that toured the nation.

“He did this throughout the summer of 1860,” Morton said. “Arguably, he was the greatest, most well-known celebrity in that summer of 1860.”

Ellsworth’s rise soon put him alongside another name etched into history.

“He went to work at the law office of Abraham Lincoln, and he helped Abraham Lincoln during his campaign for presidency,” Morton said.

But the real reason Elmer Ellsworth is now remembered on street signs and memorials came at the dawn of the Civil War.

In May 1861, while commanding Union troops around Washington, D.C., Ellsworth spotted a massive Confederate flag flying atop a hotel across the Potomac River in Virginia. Acting on his own, he climbed the building and cut it down.

“Ellsworth decided to take it upon himself and climbed to the top and cut down the flag,” Morton said.

But on his way out, the hotel’s owner was waiting with a shotgun.

“Ellsworth is shot point blank in the chest,” Morton said.

He died on the spot, wearing the very coat now preserved at the museum.

“He is arguably the first Union officer to die and the first conspicuous casualty of the war,” Morton said.

Ellsworth’s death made headlines across the country.

“If you cracked open your newspaper and you saw the headline ‘Ellsworth Slain,’ you were like, ‘Oh my God, that’s the guy I saw last summer doing his little drill competition,’” Morton said.

But it also became a rallying cry, heard loudest in his home region.

“Small communities like in southern Saratoga County rallied to the cause,” Morton said.

In the summer of 1861, those recruits soon formed the New York 44th Infantry, dedicated to the memory of Elmer Ellsworth.

“They identified themselves by putting P E R on their hats right in the front, standing for People’s Ellsworth Regiment,” Morton said.

The 44th served with distinction at battles like Antietam and Chancellorsville, but their defining moment came at the Civil War’s most decisive battle — Gettysburg.

“The 44th found themselves at the crucible of the battle,” Morton said.

On July 2, 1863, elements of the regiment were rushed to defend two hills from a furious Confederate attack. Had they failed, the Rebels could have won the battle —

and perhaps the war. Casualties mounted, ammunition dwindled, but the 44th held fast.

“Ultimately, the battle had ended with the Union victory and the Confederates on the run back down to the South,” Morton said. “It’s the turning point of the entire war effort.”

Today at Gettysburg, the 44th New York is honored with an imposing monument on the hill they once defended. And in Mechanicville, weathered markers stand as enduring witnesses to the brave man who inspired them.

<https://cbs6albany.com/news/local/act-of-valor-during-civil-war-lives-on-through-new-york-state-military-museum-saratoga-springs-elmer-ellsworth>

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New York Air National Guard

New York Air National Guard Promotions

Daily Gazette, March 25, 2026 :

LATHAM — Air Force Major General Gary Charlton, the commander of the New York Air National Guard, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Air National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Angelo Calogero from Hagaman, and assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing, received a promotion February 1, 2026 to the rank of staff sergeant.

Steve Chasi Panza from Broadalbin, and assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing, received a promotion February 16, 2026 to the rank of airman first class.

Air National Guard promotions are based on a Airman’s overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

These promotions recognize the best qualified Airmen for a career in the New York Air National Guard, according to Charlton.

Air National Guard Citizen Airmen who serve our state and nation are eligible for monthly pay, educational benefits (from the state and federal government), travel

across the globe, technical and leadership training, health and dental insurance and contributions towards retirement programs similar to a 401(k).

For more information about the New York Air National Guard or contact a recruiter, visit <https://dmna.ny.gov/ang/>.

Dolgeville National Guard Soldier Receives New Rank, New Responsibilities

LATHAM — Major General Ray Shields, the adjutant general for the state of New York, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Army National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Joshua Montes Banegas from Dolgeville, and assigned to Bravo Company, NY Recruiting and Retention Battalion, received a promotion February 20, 2026 to the rank of private second class.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a Soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

These promotions recognize the best qualified Soldiers for a career in the New York Army National Guard.

Army National Guard Citizen Soldiers who serve our state and nation are eligible for monthly pay, educational benefits (from the state and federal government), travel across the globe, technical and leadership training, health and dental insurance and contributions towards retirement programs similar to a 401(k).

For more information about the New York Army National Guard, visit www.dmna.ny.gov or www.1800goguard.com

https://www.dailygazette.com/lh-local-news-in-brief/article_d69d9ad9-3b81-4d4a-8173-542e0122d3fb.html

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Derby National Guard Airman Receives New Rank

Valley Independent Sentinel, March 23:

LATHAM, NY — Air Force Major General Gary Charlton, the commander of the New York Air National Guard, announced the recent promotion of members of the New York Air National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

John Boateng from Derby, Conn., and assigned to the 224th Security Forces Squadron, received a promotion January 8, 2026 to the rank of airman first class.

Air National Guard promotions are based on a Airman's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

These promotions recognize the best qualified Airmen for a career in the New York Air National Guard, according to Charlton.

<https://valley.newhavenindependent.org/2026/03/23/derby-national-guard-airman-receives-new-rank/>

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New York Army National Guard

White House Makes Major Change to National Guard

Newsweek, March 23 ,2025 :

The White House has announced that certain National Guard troops will now receive the same benefits as other active duty troops.

"President Trump and [Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth] have announced FULL benefits for national guard troops, equivalent to those of other active service members," the White House wrote on X on Monday.

"No one stands with our troops like the Trump administration," it added.

Why It Matters

Advocates and lawmakers have long argued that extended deployments and shutdown-related disruptions have strained guard families and affected retention, spotlighting disparities between traditional guard benefits and those available to active-duty troops.

National Guard benefits depend on the legal status under which troops serve, with full active-duty benefits typically available only during certain federal deployments. The White House has not provided details on which benefits National Guard troops will receive.

Operational Deployment Pay is given to National Guard deployed away from their home station for approved deployments lasting more than 60 consecutive days, according to Army guidance.

Under current law, guard benefits vary by duty status, with full active-duty benefits typically limited to certain federal activations.

Trump also announced the benefits while in Memphis on Monday, according to NewsNation, where he celebrated the Memphis Safe Task Force's "remarkable progress in restoring safety to a city long ranked among the nation's most dangerous," the White House said.

Trump previously deployed federal government troops to Memphis, along with other Democrat-run cities, such as Washington and New Orleans.

What People Are Saying

President Donald Trump said at the Memphis event on Monday: "Today, I'm pleased to announce that the Secretary of War ... has just signed a directive to ensure that all National Guard members serving on this task force [the Memphis Safe Task Force]—as well as in D.C., New Orleans and our border security missions—will receive the same benefits as active-duty troops because you deserve it."

What Happens Next

The administration must define which duty statuses and benefit categories apply to guard members to align entitlements with active-duty standards, and agencies will likely issue implementing guidance and timelines.

<https://www.newsweek.com/white-house-makes-major-change-national-guard-troops-benefits-11725914>

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175 Years at the Front: The Fighting 69th Leads World's Largest St. Patrick's Day Parade once more

Army.mil, By Master Sgt. Warren Wright, March 23, 2026 :

NEW YORK – For 175 years, Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard’s 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, known as the “Fighting 69th,” have led the world’s largest and oldest St. Patrick’s Day Parade, celebrating Irish heritage.

On March 17, 2026, six hundred Soldiers from the battalion continued the tradition as they marched down Manhattan’s 5th Avenue.

The battalion’s morning began early as the Soldiers visited St. Patrick’s Cathedral, joining city and state leadership for the renowned St. Patrick’s Day Mass.

This year, the event was featured on the Fox and Friends national morning news show prior to the Mass. Host Steven Doocy interviewed Lt. Col. Andrew Prior, the battalion commander, and Sgt. Conner Battiste, and Spec. Daniel Pan, the battalion’s two best Soldiers..

Following Mass, the Soldiers marched to 44th Street, where they assembled with the 42nd Infantry Division band and others at the parade’s starting point. Joined by senior military leaders from the NYNG and the 42nd Inf. Div. band, the Fighting 69th then led 150,000 other parade participants up 5th Avenue, passing more than 2 million spectators along the nearly 2-mile route.

This year, officers from the Swedish military joined the New York National Guard leadership in the march. The New York National Guard has a partnership with the Swedish Military as part of the National Guard State Partnership Program.

Reflecting on the significance of the day, Prior shared memories of growing up in the city and watching the parade as a child.

“I remember one year was different because we had tickets to watch from the steps of St. Patrick’s,” he said. “It was my first memory of this unit. I remember sitting on my father’s shoulders, staring at the Soldiers marching by, and my dad looked up and said, ‘That’s the Fighting 69th.’”

Because of the regiment's roots in Irish American history, St. Patrick's Day also serves as the battalion's "Unit Day," during which Soldiers are recognized for their accomplishments.

However, this year's recognition ceremony saw a change of venue as the battalion's Lexington Avenue Armory home undergoes extensive modernization. In a temporary shift of traditions, the Fighting 69th gathered instead at the historic Park Avenue Armory to honor the day's achievements.

"Now, this isn't Lexington Avenue; it's not the 69th Armory, but it is still an honor to be gathered here at the Park Avenue Armory," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 William Solmo, NYNG's state command chief warrant officer. "We would all rather be down the block in our own historic armory, but if we're going to be temporarily displaced, we could do worse than landing here."

This year's celebration focused on the citizen-Soldier legacy, as leaders recognized the accomplishments of the battalion's Soldiers with awards, promotions, and scholarships, followed by recognizing Solmo's retirement after 40 years of service in the ARNG.

The 69th began leading the parade in 1851 because of threats of anti-Catholic and anti-Irish attacks on the procession by nativist groups.

In 2021, when the parade was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, a group of 50 Soldiers from the 69th staged an informal parade up the route to keep the tradition alive.

The 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, supposedly earned the nickname "Fighting 69th" from Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee. He is said to have referred to the Irish American unit as "that fighting 69th regiment" following the battle of Fredericksburg in 1863.

Speaking during the recognition ceremony, Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields, the New York Adjutant General, commended the battalion on hosting Swedish officers in this year's parade.

"In 2024, we signed an agreement with Sweden under the State Partnership Program," he said. "Sweden is a fantastic partner, and we are thrilled they got to see something very few people experience - marching in the parade today."

For more photos of the event, go to the NYNG's Flickr page here:

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCNudq>.

https://www.army.mil/article/291292/175_years_at_the_front_the_fighting_69th_lead_s_worlds_largest_st_patricks_day_parade_once_more

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New York Guard's Cyber Team Strengthens Online Battle Skills

NationalGuard.mil, March 25, 2026 :

KINGSTON, N.Y. – New York Army National Guard Soldiers with Cyber Protection Team 173 sharpened their skills defending critical infrastructure from digital threats during a simulated cyber battle.

"Our computer is our weapons system," explained Maj. Corbin Lounsbury, the commander of the New York and New Jersey National Guard's Cyber Protection Team 173, or CPT 173 for short.

From Feb. 23-26, the CPT Soldiers fought an online campaign against a simulated "threat actor" who executed a blended cyber operation against an electrical utility.

The Soldiers were physically located at the Kingston Armory, but their battle took place inside the U.S. Cyber Command's Persistent Cyber Training Environment. This is a national-level computer simulation that replicates the challenges a CPT Soldier faces.

"The system can be programmed to provide cyber-Soldiers with varying threat levels, adversaries and scenarios," Lounsbury explained.

The scenario was built around a classic attack against a computer network, said Maj. William Mackey, the officer in charge of the New York National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters' Defense Cyber Operations Element.

In the exercise scenario, the attackers conducted "reconnaissance" by identifying security weaknesses in the computer network and stole user logins and passwords in an operation known as "credential harvesting", Mackey said.

That information was then used to gain access to the computer and shut down key systems, he added. The mission for CPT 173 was to determine how the "bad actor" got into the system, close those holes in the defenses, find the malware – in the case "ransom ware" – and end the threat, Mackey said.

The members of Lounsbury's Cyber Protection Team also were joined by the Division of Military and Naval Affairs Critical Infrastructure Response Team and the Defensive Cyber Operation Element in battling the simulated threat.

Thirty-four Soldiers took part in the exercise.

Ransomware is software that is placed on a system to shut it down. The hackers offer to remove the software once money – the ransom – is paid.

According to the FBI, in 2024, there were 3,156 ransomware attacks against American businesses and individuals, costing more than \$12 billion.

Healthcare organizations have been especially susceptible to these attacks, according to the FBI's Internet Crime Report for 2024, but utilities – charged with providing electricity, water and natural gas to hundreds of thousands of households – are also a concern.

A likely mission for a National Guard CPT is to help local governments and critical infrastructure companies counter these threats, Lounsbury said.

Fortunately, most of the CPT 173 members work in the computer security field in their civilian jobs, he said. As Guardsmen have always done, they use their civilian skills to further the mission.

Lounsbury, for example, has worked for General Dynamics in network protection since 2018.

TV and movies portray cyber experts defending a computer system by feel and instinct. But in real life, everything is much more methodical, Lounsbury said

Just as any other unit would when given a mission, the CPT 173 leaders spent two days using the Military Decision-Making Process and the Joint Planning Process to plan their response to the threat, Lounsbury said.

The CPT Soldiers determine how to counter a computer threat and then help the threatened firm's computer technicians make the right moves, he said.

"Actions are very planned and very deliberate, and nothing is done without approval," he said. "There are a lot of reporting and tracking processes we need to follow."

Along with the specialized hardware and software installed on their computers, the CPT Soldiers also have access to a portable server kit that includes a collection of devices loaded with incident response tools.

The Soldiers can use these to identify and neutralize the threats to a network, he explained. The mission normally breaks down into "hunt the threat, clear out the adversary, then harden the system against further attacks," Lounsbury said.

The 173 Soldiers were very successful in countering the cyberattack during the exercise, Mackey said.

The team determined which actions the simulated attacker took, found the malware and then "hardened" the network defenses and set up a system to monitor for further attacks, Mackey said.

This was the first time a National Guard cyber unit conducted this type of simulation exercise, and they still wrapped up their mission a half-day earlier than expected, Mackey said.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article-View/Article/4444105/new-york-guards-cyber-team-strengthens-online-battle-skills/>

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Rockland's Maj. Sorffly Davius to be laid to rest in New York City

Rockland/ Westchester Journal News, March25, 2026 :

Funeral services have been set for [Maj. Sorffly Davius, an NYPD and U.S Army National Guard officer](#) who died in Kuwait while serving Operation Spartan Shield and Operation Epic Fury.

Davius died Friday, March 6, of a non-combat related medical emergency after spending several months at Camp Buehring, Kuwait serving the 42nd Infantry Division as a data systems engineer. He and his family resided in New City at the time of his death.

Wake viewing for Maj. Sorffly Davius will be held Friday, March 27 at the Christian Cultural Center in Brooklyn from 9 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. A funeral service will follow at 11 a.m. Davius will be buried at Pinelawn Memorial Park and Arboretum in Farmingdale.

Davius developed a love for aircraft engineering in high school

According to an obituary written by his family, Davius was born in Haiti on December 25, 1979 and was raised in Cambria Heights, Queens. He attended August Martin High School, where he developed a love with aircraft engineering through the school's aviation program.

"As a child, he loved building paper airplanes and flying them around the house with his sister; an early sign of the curiosity and enthusiasm that would follow him throughout his life," the obituary read.

Davius earned an Associates Degree in Construction Technology from the Community College of the Air Force in Montgomery, Alabama, a Bachelor of Arts from the City College of New York and an MBA from the University of Phoenix.

After completing his initial education, Davius joined the FDNY as an EMT at Station 57 in Brooklyn and progressed to Rescue Medic.

While serving in the FDNY, he joined the Air Force National Guard in 2004, where he served from October 2010 to July 2011 as part of Operation Enduring Freedom in the War in Afghanistan. He later transferred to the New York Army National Guard in 2013.

While in the New York Army National Guard, Davius joined the NYPD as an officer in the 79th Precinct in Brooklyn. He was able to serve both as law enforcement and military through the New York Army National Guard's Joint Task Force Empire Shield, which serves as military defense support throughout the New York City area for civil missions.

Most recently, Davius was deployed to Kuwait in the summer of 2025 to Operation Spartan Shield and later Operation Epic Fury, where he served as Deputy G-6 for the 42nd Infantry Division and as a Data Systems Engineer and helped to ensure the division's communications and operations remained effective throughout the deployment.

Through his service in the military, Davius was recognized for his service through awards and decorations such as the Meritorious Service Medal, Combat Action Badge, the U.S. Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal and a posthumously awarded Bronze Star Medal.

Davius shared six children with wife Angeline Davius. He is survived by his wife, children, mother Marie Rosette Davius and siblings Christopher, Sherly, Michaelle, Judith Deshommes and Marie Mitius Center. He was preceded in death by father Jean Listin Davius.

As of March 25, a [GoFundMe](#) to support the children through their future education has raised over \$174,000.

As of March 25, a [GoFundMe](#) to support the children through their future education has raised over \$174,000.

"Those who knew him remember a man of integrity, humor, and deep compassion. He was responsible, reliable, and resourceful — someone who could always be counted on in times of need," the obituary read. "Sorffly treated everyone with respect, both young and old, and was fiercely protective of his family, always going above and beyond to ensure those he loved were safe and cared for."

<https://www.lohud.com/story/news/local/rockland/new-city/2026/03/25/funeral-services-set-for-maj-sorffly-davius-for-friday-march-27-rockland-army-guard-officer-nypd/89318217007/?gnt-cfr=1&qca-cat=p&qca-uir=true&qca-epti=z113820p003550c003550e1139xxv113820d--41--b--41--&qca-ft=179&qca-ds=sophi>

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Trump Floats National Guard for Airports as ICE Expands Nationwide

Military.com, March 25, 2026 :

Photo Caption: New York Army National Guard Soldiers on state active duty as part of Joint Task Force Empire Shield, patrol at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York City on, Sept. 16, 2019. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by New York Guard Capt. Mark Getman)

Photo Caption: New York Army National Guard Specialists Kwabena Berko, a member of the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, and Kwaku Mensah, a member of the 101st Signal Battalion, who are both on state active duty as part of Joint Task Force Empire Shield, patrol at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York City on, Sept. 16, 2019. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by New York Guard Capt. Mark Getman)

The National Guard could soon be deployed to U.S. airports.

Donald Trump saying in a Truth Social post on Wednesday that he is prepared to send troops if disruptions worsen, signaling a potential escalation in the federal response to mounting travel chaos.

“I may call up the National Guard for more help,” Trump wrote.

Military.com reached out for comment to the Department of Homeland Security, ICE and TSA regarding the scale of the deployment and whether any immigration enforcement is taking place inside airport terminals.

His administration is weighing the move as U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents are already deploying to airports nationwide to assist the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) with staffing shortages and long security lines, marking a new escalation that could bring military personnel into civilian travel hubs.

ICE Deployed to Airports Nationwide as TSA Crisis Deepens

Federal officials began deploying ICE and Homeland Security Investigations personnel on Monday to roughly 14 major airports, including John F. Kennedy International Airport and Newark Liberty International Airport, as TSA operations strained under severe staffing shortages.

The deployment comes as TSA faces widespread absenteeism tied to missed paychecks during the ongoing Department of Homeland Security funding strain. Roughly 50,000 airport security officers are working without pay, while absentee rates reached nearly 12%—more than 3,400 officers—at the peak earlier this week. More than 480 officers have quit, according to federal data.

Officials said ICE agents are being used for support roles including crowd control and managing passenger flow in public areas, and are not being deployed behind security checkpoints.

The move marks an unusual use of immigration agents inside civilian travel hubs as travel demand remains high, with passenger volumes running about 5% above last year.

Even as operations continue, most TSA functions remain active because the majority of officers are considered essential personnel required to work during funding lapses.

National Guard deployments are typically carried out under state authority at the direction of governors, though the president can federalize those forces in certain circumstances.

Officials have not released details on how such a deployment would be structured, which airports could be involved, or what specific role Guard personnel would play.

Concerns Mount Over ICE Role

Criticism is growing over the use of ICE agents inside airports, with lawmakers and civil liberties advocates questioning whether immigration enforcement actions could take place in civilian travel spaces.

“Every time Donald Trump gets involved, he creates chaos for the American people,” New Jersey Gov. Mikie Sherrill, a Democrat, said in a statement on Sunday.

Sherrill also said sending “untrained ICE agents to staff our airports is not an acceptable solution.”

Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ) called for the removal of ICE agents from airports, saying Monday at Newark Liberty International Airport, “Fund TSA and get ICE the hell out of our airports.”

The deployment, initially described as a support role to assist TSA with crowd control and passenger flow, has fueled uncertainty about the scope of ICE’s authority and whether travelers could be subject to questioning or enforcement.

Staffing shortages at the TSA have strained airport security operations nationwide, with long lines and delays reported at major hubs.

The pressure has forced the federal government to pull personnel from other agencies, including ICE, to help stabilize airport operations.

Travelers wait in a TSA line, Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at LaGuardia Airport in New York. (AP Photo/Yuki Iwamura)

The expanding response from ICE deployments to the possibility of National Guard support reflects growing concern that disruptions could worsen without additional manpower.

The current strain follows broader warnings that prolonged funding disruptions could impact travel operations, with TSA absenteeism rising as workers miss paychecks.

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/headlines/2026/03/25/trump-floats-national-guard-airports-ice-expands-nationwide.html>

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NY Guard soldier from Olean promoted

**Olean Times Herald, March 24, 2026 :
Mar 27, 2026**

LATHAM — New York National Guard soldier Alena Murphy of Olean, assigned to Bravo Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry Regiment, has been promoted to the rank of specialist.

The promotion was announced by the office of the adjutant general for New York.

<https://www.oleantimesherald.com/2026/03/24/ny-guard-soldier-olean-promoted/>

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Town of Smithtown hosts successful Citizen Preparedness Training Program

TBR News media, March 24, 2026 :

The Town of Smithtown hosted a Citizen Preparedness Corps (CPC) Training Program on March 23 at the Smithtown Landing Country Club, bringing together more than 70 residents for an engaging and informative session focused on emergency readiness.

The interactive workshop, part of the New York State Citizen Preparedness Training Program administered by the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), was led by a team from the New York National Guard. The program is designed to equip residents with the tools and knowledge needed to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a wide range of emergencies—strengthening both individual households and the community as a whole.

“The safety and preparedness of our residents remains a top priority. Attending a workshop like this is a proactive step the community can participate in to protect themselves and their families in the event of an emergency. When individuals are prepared, our entire community is stronger and more resilient,” said Smithtown Town Supervisor Edward R. Wehrheim.

Participants were introduced to key preparedness topics including emergency management, fire prevention and control, emergency communications, and responder wellness. The training also highlighted critical state resources such as the State’s Learning Management System (LMS) and the State Preparedness Training Center—offering a comprehensive look at the systems in place to support both residents and first responders during times of crisis.

Members of the New York National Guard, including First Lieutenant Maliq Cumberbatch, Sergeant First Class Cristiam Ruiz Marquez, Technical Sergeant Alex Compere, and Staff Sergeant Ryan Kelly, guided attendees through practical emergency planning, risk awareness, and real-world preparedness strategies.

In addition, the American Red Cross delivered a timely fire safety presentation, aligning with the Town's ongoing month-long Fire Prevention Awareness campaign. The initiative has focused on critical safety measures such as maintaining smoke detectors, carbon monoxide awareness, and preventing common causes of home fires—particularly following an extended and severe winter season. Red Cross guest speakers; Magnolia Chiri and Jason Campbell, were on hand to assist residents in registering for free smoke alarms, including installation services and specialized equipment for individuals with hearing loss.

Each household in attendance received a complimentary emergency “go-bag” stocked with essential supplies, including first aid materials, and other critical items. The distribution reinforced the importance of being prepared before an emergency occurs and ensured participants left with practical resources they could use immediately.

About the Program:

Originally launched in February 2014, the Citizen Preparedness Corps program—an initiative of the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services—provides residents with the training and resources needed to effectively respond to disasters and emergencies, helping to build safer, more resilient communities across New York State.

<https://tbrnewsmedia.com/town-of-smithtown-hosts-successful-citizen-preparedness-training-program/>

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Flags fly at half-staff in honor of National Guard major from Rockland County

Mid-Hudson.com, March 26, 2026 :

ALBANY – Governor Kathy Hochul has directed that flags on all state government buildings be flown at half-staff in honor of decorated U.S. Army National Guard Major and NYPD Officer Sorffly Davius, who died March 6, 2026, while serving with the 42nd Infantry Division at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

Flags will be flown at half-staff on Friday, March 27 from sunrise to sunset in honor of the resident of Clarkstown in Rockland County.

“Major Davius was the ‘Citizen Soldier’ in every sense. A dedicated NYPD officer and decorated Army veteran, he spent his career protecting others,” the governor said. “His life is a powerful reminder of the extraordinary sacrifices made by our National Guard members, who balance their roles as citizens, first responders and soldiers. I send my deepest condolences to Major Davius’ wife and will keep his family, colleagues and all who knew him in my thoughts.”

Davius joined the New York Air National Guard in 2004 and previously deployed to Kuwait from October 2010 to July 2011 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2013, he transferred to the New York Army National Guard and in civilian life, joined the New York Police Department in 2014.

Prior to his most recent deployment, Major Davius had been on military leave from the department, serving on state active duty as a member of the New York National Guard’s Joint Task Force Empire Shield – the New York National Guard’s security force working with law enforcement to protect critical infrastructure including major transit hubs in New York City.

Davius is survived by his wife and six children.

<https://midhudsonnews.com/2026/03/27/flags-fly-at-half-staff-in-honor-of-national-guard-major-from-rockland-county/>

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Flags ordered to half-staff for NYPD officer Sorffly Davius: Here’s why

WPIX, March 26, 2026 :

NEW YORK (PIX11) – On Friday, flags will be at half-staff to honor a U.S. Army Major and NYPD Officer who died from a medical episode in Kuwait while supporting Operation Epic Fury.

New York Governor Kathy Hochul has instructed the flag to be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset in honor of Sorffly Davius. Davius’ funeral is scheduled for Friday in Brooklyn, according to the New York City Police Benevolent Association.

“Major Davius was the ‘Citizen Soldier’ in every sense. A dedicated NYPD officer and decorated Army veteran, he spent his career protecting others,” Governor Hochul said. “His life is a powerful reminder of the extraordinary sacrifices made by our National Guard members, who balance their roles as citizens, first responders, and soldiers. I send my deepest condolences to Major Davius’ wife and will keep his family, colleagues, and all who knew him in my thoughts.”

Davius died overseas on March 6, 2026, while serving with the 42nd Infantry Division at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, due to a medical episode, officials said.

NYPD HANDOUT

Born in Haiti in 1979, Sorffly was raised in Queens, where he attended August Martin High School. As a child, he loved building paper airplanes and flying them with his sister. Davius earned an Associate's degree in Construction Technology from the Community College of the Air Force, a Bachelor's of Arts from The City College of New York, and a Master's degree from the University of Phoenix, according to his obituary.

Major Davius joined the New York Air National Guard in 2004 and served the country in an additional deployment to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2013, Davius transferred to the New York Army National Guard and, in 2014, joined the New York Police Department to serve the city, officials said.

He began his career with the NYPD, serving Brooklyn's 79th precinct.

Prior to his most recent deployment for Operation Epic Fury, Davius had been on military leave and serving the state on active duty as a member of the National Guard's Joint Task Force Empire Shield.

Davius is survived by his wife and six children.

An American flag at half-staff indicated mourning or local remembrance in the event of the death of a former or current member of the service. Flags can also be lowered for heads of department agencies of the federal government, according to Veterans Affairs.

<https://pix11.com/news/local-news/flags-ordered-to-half-staff-for-nypd-officer-sorffly-davius-heres-why/>

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Staten Island resident takes command of the New York Army National Guard Field Feeding Company

MilitaryProvisioner.com, March 26, 2026 :

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, Cortlandt Manor, New York – New York Army National Guard Capt. David Martin, a Staten Island resident, assumed command of the 1501st Quartermaster Company (Field Feeding) during a Feb. 7, 2026 ceremony at Camp Smith Training Site near Peekskill .

Martin, who serves as a full-time deputy logistics officer with the 53rd Troop Command, replaced Capt. Jowayne Meadows who served as the 1501st's commander since it was activated on January 20, 2024.

The 1501st is the first field feeding company in the New York Army National Guard and is part of the 369th Division Special Troops Battalion, which is commanded by Lt. Col. David Myones.

Myones, who presided over the ceremony, said, "In a very short period of time, the 1501st Field Feeding Company has become a statewide asset for the New York Army National Guard."

The company started with only 47 Soldiers and has grown to 201, including mechanics and supporting staff.

According to Meadows, the company has served over 15,000 Soldiers, 100,000 plates and saved the state 35% on feeding costs in their first operational year alone. This ceremony marks the beginning of the company's third year.

They've also won the New York State Philip A. Connely Competition, which recognizes excellence in Army food service.

Myones said, "To Capt. Meadows, you were the first commander of this unit and you have set a standard of excellence that will be hard to match."

"We are not just changing commanders, we are marking the end of its first chapter, and the beginning of its next," Myones said.

Martin, a Staten Island native, began his service in the New York Army National Guard as a second lieutenant, earning his commission through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at Hofstra University in 2020.

He holds a bachelor's degree in Criminology with minors in Sociology and Civic Engagement, and a Master's in Business Administration with a focus in finance from Wagner College.

During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, he was called to active-duty to serve as a battle captain in support of Joint Task Force Javits located at the Jacob J. Javits

Center in New York City, which was the largest COVID-19 vaccination site in the country, at that time.

One year later, he was called back to active-duty to serve as the lead logistics officer, supporting the New York City Officer of the Chief Medical Examiner to manage daily operations during the tail-end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Later that year, he deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (Spartan Shield) as the executive officer of the headquarters company 369th Sustainment Brigade.

Martin continued his full-time service upon his return in 2023, as the assistant brigade operations officer, supporting the brigade's Warfighter 25-3 exercise for the 42nd Infantry Division, until his selection as the deputy logistics officer with the 53rd.

Myones said, "I've had the distinct pleasure of working with you in the past, and I know firsthand the quality of your character and the depth of your leadership abilities."

In response, Martin said, "Sir, I can assure you, the winning culture of the 1501st will not skip a beat, and we will continue to answer our state and nation when called upon."

Martin is a graduate of the Logistics Basic Officer Leader Course, Logistics Captain Career Course and the Support Operations Course.

His military awards and decorations include four Army Commendation Medals, an Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, and the Army Service Medal.

"While what lies ahead of us may be uncertain, I do know one thing for sure – we will be ready to accomplish our mission whenever, wherever," Martin said, "Let's roll!"

<https://www.newsbreak.com/news/4560590656178-staten-island-resident-takes-command-of-the-new-york-army-national-guard-field-feeding-company>

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Veterans

Disgraced NY teacher accused of hosting prostitution parties at home

The Mirror U.S., March 21, 2026 :

A veteran-turned-teacher was recently indicted by a federal grand jury for allegedly operating a prostitution enterprise out of his home in Macedon, New York, for nearly four years.

Eric Simpson, 66, was a middle school technology teacher for the North Rose-Wolcott Central School District and previously worked at Gananda Central School District. He also served in the New York National Guard for 29 years, including tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Between 2021 and 2025, Simpson allegedly used a Gmail account to advertise parties, set cover charges, and provide lists of available women and specific sex acts. He also provided parking instructions to guests to ensure they did not park too close to his residence.

Simpson, who is referred to as “Major Hands” in court documents, faces one count of using interstate facilities (the internet) to promote and facilitate a prostitution enterprise.

If convicted, he faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison.

Simpson worked as a teacher for approximately five and a half years across two districts.

He spent four years at Gananda Central School District, from September 2020 – August 2024, serving as a substitute teacher for the first two years and as a middle school computer science teacher for the final two.

He worked as a probationary middle school technology teacher for about a year and a half at North Rose-Wolcott Central School District, from August 2024 – January 2026, before resigning in January 2026 following the investigation.

Teacher accused of hosting illicit sex parties

Prior to his teaching career, Simpson had a long-term military career, serving 29 years in the New York National Guard before retiring in 2010.

During his nearly three-decade career, Simpson was deployed to Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

He primarily served in the Rochester and Troy, New York areas when stateside.

The investigation was initiated by the Macedon Police Department and later involved the New York State Police and Homeland Security Investigations once federal laws were found to be involved.

Much of the case appears to be built on digital evidence, specifically emails sent from a Gmail account used to promote the parties and advertise specific sex acts.

He's facing five years in prison

Public reports indicate that neighbors were largely shocked by the news. Residents expressed that such activity was not something they ever expected to occur in their neighborhood.

Simpson was indicted on one count of use of interstate facilities to promote, manage, establish, carry on and facilitate a prostitution enterprise.

He was arraigned on Wednesday and pleaded not guilty.

<https://www.newsbreak.com/the-mirror-us-1900780/4551488316453-disgraced-ny-teacher-accused-of-hosting-prostitution-parties-at-home>

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