



Company Grade Officer and Enlisted Professional Development Training



The 426th Regiment and the Recruiting and retention Battalion are co-hosting the 2024 Wisconsin National Guard State Conference at the Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake, WI, on 26-28 April. This event is co-sponsored by the Wisconsin National Guard Association (WINGA) and the Wisconsin National Guard Enlisted Association (WNGEA).

In addition to our Wisconsin National Guard Adjutant General, several professional speakers have been invited to the conference to share their expertise on topics to improve and enhance leadership, teamwork, legislative awareness, and mentorship skills. The following is a summary of our professional development speakers and their qualifications.



Major General Paul Knapp is Wisconsin's Adjutant General. He commands the Wisconsin National Guard and is responsible for Emergency Management. He also serves as the Wisconsin's Homeland Security Advisor, chairs the Wisconsin Homeland Security Council, and serves as the senior state official for cyber matters. Maj. Gen. Knapp holds a master's degree in technology management from the University of Maryland and a political science degree, with Japanese minor, from the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Maj. Gen. Knapp entered the Air Force in 1992 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy.

He served two operational tours as an F-15E Strike Eagle weapon systems officer and one as an Air Liaison Officer to the U. S. Army in South Korea. Maj. Gen. Knapp has over 3,000 flight hours, including 681 combat hours, and more than 262 combat sorties supporting operations Allied Force, Northern Watch, Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Joint Task Force Horn of Africa.



Colonel James A. Frick is an Assistant Professor within the Department of Distance Education at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He was commissioned in the Field Artillery Branch upon graduation from the United States Military Academy in 1992. COL Frick has served in numerous Field Artillery capacities including deployments with 3rd Division to Kuwait as part of Operation Desert Spring, and with the 4th Division to the Taji Region north of Baghdad, Iraq. He was assigned to U.S. Army, Pacific Command at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, where he served as Chief of Plans, Policy and Strategy for the U.S. Army war plans, strategy and posture development. COL Frick previously served as the Director,

Defense Planners Course at the U.S. Army War College and is currently serving as the Director, Second Year Studies, U.S. Army War College. His military awards and decorations include the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Order of St. Barbara, plus numerous other military awards. His academic degrees include a B.S. from the U.S. Military Academy, two Masters in Military Operational Arts and Science, a Masters in Strategic Studies, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science. COL Frick has authored numerous studies on Geo-Political topics, in particular associated with the Peoples Republic of China as a future U.S. adversary.



BG (Ret) Maria Kelly joined the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) staff in 2021 as the Membership and Marketing Director after serving six years as the Executive Director and Insurance Administrator for the Ohio National Guard Association. BG Kelly enlisted in the US Army in 1983 and spent most of her enlistment period stationed in West Germany. In 1988 she received her commission through ROTC at Ohio University. Previous assignments include Assistant Adjutant General Army, Commander of Ohio Special Troops Command, Commander of the 371st Sustainment Brigade, 237th Support Battalion, and two Contingency Operating bases in Northern Iraq. BG Kelly is a graduate of the US Army War College. She also holds a Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration from The Ohio State University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism from Ohio University. BG Kelly currently resides in Alexandria, VA with her husband David, a retired Colonel.