

# ALABAMA GUARDSMAN

## Called to Serve

*187th Fighter Wing  
1305th Survey & Design  
877th Engineer Battalion*

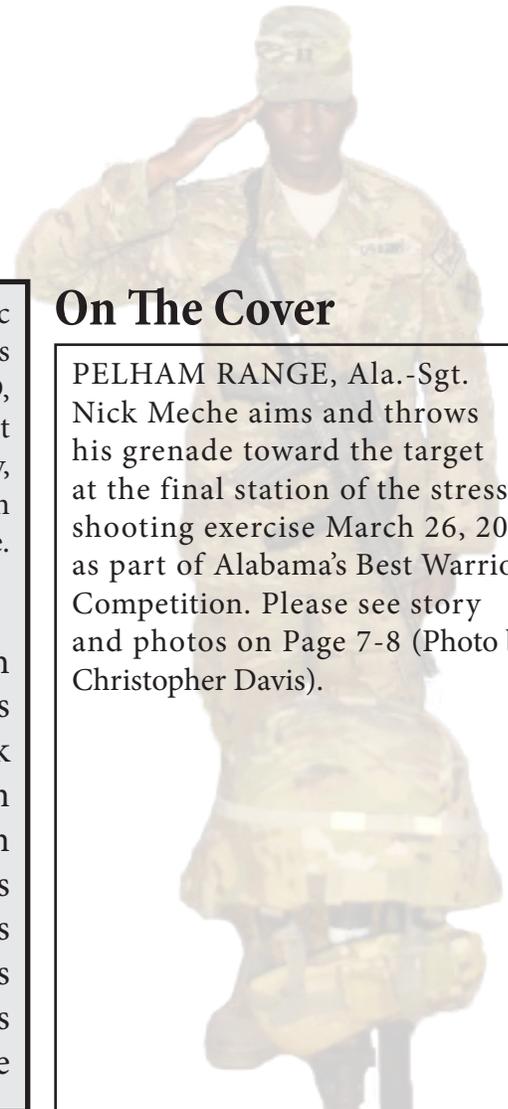
**1-1151ST  
ENGINEER CO**  
Recognized for  
deconstruction  
efforts

**SOLDIER OF  
THE YEAR  
COMPETITION**



*What's Inside*

- 3 Adjutant General/State Command Sergeant Major**
- 4 Alabama Guardsmen recognized for efforts in Afghanistan**  
*1st Platoon, 1151st Engineer Company*
- 5 Snapshots**
- 8 Competition brings out the best in Alabama Guardsmen**  
*Soldier of the Year Competition*
- 11 Live Our Values: Step Up to Stop Sexual Assault**
- 12 Holocaust: National Days of Remembrance**



The Alabama Guardsman is published by the 131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Alabama Army National Guard. Submissions are encouraged and should be e-mailed to the 131st MPAD, [alngpao@mail.mil](mailto:alngpao@mail.mil), (334) 213-7572. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army, the National Guard Bureau or the Alabama National Guard. This publication is electronically published on the Alabama National Guard website.

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**On The Cover**

PELHAM RANGE, Ala.-Sgt. Nick Meche aims and throws his grenade toward the target at the final station of the stress shooting exercise March 26, 2014 as part of Alabama's Best Warrior Competition. Please see story and photos on Page 7-8 (Photo by Christopher Davis).

## Adjutant General

# The important opportunity of Annual Training



**Maj. Gen.  
Perry Smith**

It is April and annual training season is beginning. Annual training is an opportunity to put together all of the pieces on which

you have trained all year long. It might be easy to overlook the importance of these training events, to just think of them as summer camp, but that

is a mistake. This training is a valuable assessment tool for your commanders and a good opportunity for you to instill confidence in yourself, in your skills, your equipment, and your fellow warriors.

In the near future, the Alabama National Guard will begin conducting annual training periods that focus on even larger collective events than just company-level with major commands leading multiple units toward a common mission goal.

There is a lot of planning that goes into an annual train-

ing period. There is also a great deal of money that goes into training. Leaders need to ensure that every Soldier and Airman is participating fully and getting valuable training of the event.

With the ending of action in Iraq and the drawdown of the majority of troops in Afghanistan, we need to be careful not to be lulled into thinking that the National Guard can relax and go back on a shelf. We are an operational force and will be continued to be used as one. One only  
(Please see AT, page 10)

## State Command Sergeant Major

# New code of military justice is a sign of significant change



**Command Sgt.  
Maj.  
Eddie Pike**

An important event happened recently which will greatly affect the Alabama National Guard. The Alabama Code of Military Justice (ACMJ) was passed

by the state legislature, and the governor and the adjutant general of Alabama signed the required documents to put it into effect.

The importance of the

ACMJ is that it gives leaders a tool for enforcing consequences for Guardsmen's actions. In the past, commanders did not have the framework to do much when Guardsmen were not doing the right thing. Commanders can now do more than just discharge a Guardsman. The ACMJ allows the prosecution of members of the Alabama National Guard for crimes for up to a year imprisonment in punishment. Of course I hope that this type of punishment is something that we don't have to use, but I believe the ACMJ is a good thing for the

Alabama National Guard. It holds us more accountable for our actions and it promotes structure and discipline.

The ACMJ is symbolic of the period of change we are currently entering into in the Alabama National Guard. As we transfer out of a time of war we can expect to see changes in structure and mission. I encourage each of you to prepare and set yourselves up for success in the coming years. Adaptability will be required. Those who can change with the times  
(Please see ACMJ, page 10)

# Alabama Guardsmen recognized for efforts in Afghanistan

by John Buchanan  
Contributing Writer

CAMP PHOENIX, Afghanistan - Last month Gen. Frank Grass, 27th Chief of the National Guard Bureau, visited Afghanistan to witness the efforts of National Guard Soldiers directly supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. During his March 25th visit to Camp Phoenix, in Kabul, he had the opportunity to see the many accomplishments of 1st Platoon, 1151st Engineer Company (Vertical Construction), out of Huntsville, Ala. 1st Platoon, affably known as the Heavy Hitters, had already deconstructed 142 re-locatable barracks (RLB) on Camp Phoenix; 115 of which were reinstalled at an adjacent base in Kabul.

“At an estimated value of \$12,000 per RLB, these Alabama Guardsmen have already saved the government over \$1.3 million,” explained Capt. Sam Gardener, Mechanical Engineer for the Directorate of Public Works at Camp Phoenix.

Grass also used his visit to recognize Soldiers for their exemplary service and accomplishments. Five engineers of 1st Platoon received the Army Commendation Medal for admirable actions while at Camp Phoenix. The Soldiers were Sgt Matthew Lamar of Red Bay, Spc. Steve Reece of Rogersville, Spc. Devante Dawson of Opelika, Spc. Earl Russell of Montgomery, Spc. Michael Miller of Greenville and Spc. Richard Mallory of Prattville. Sgt. Johnny Dawsey of Geneva and Sgt. Justin Cooley of Mobile received



Contributed/photo

*CAMP PHOENIX, Afghanistan-Spc. Regina Huskey of 1st Platoon, 1151st Engineer Company, Alabama Army National Guard is promoted to sergeant by Gen. Frank Grass, 27th Chief of the National Guard Bureau, March 25, 2014. 1st Platoon has been executing deconstruction operations in support of base closures in Regional Command – Capital since December.*

Coins of Excellence, as five other Soldiers were sworn-in by Grass during a reenlistment ceremony. Also, Spc. Regina Huskey of Wadley was promoted to sergeant by Grass.

2nd Lt. Isaiah Smith of Calera, platoon leader of 1st Platoon, was proud to see his Soldiers recognized in such a manner. “The Heavy Hitters have been extremely busy executing infrastructure retrograde in Regional Command-Capital, supporting the imminent drawdown of coalition troops in Afghanistan,” said Smith. “It was a great honor to see these fine Soldiers recognized by Grass.”

“I’m very proud of all our Soldiers here; they have worked hard and established a solid namesake for the 1151st [Engineer Company] here at Camp Phoenix,”

stated Sgt Jamar Miles of Madison, acting platoon sergeant. “In my opinion, 1st Platoon has set the bar...for the company to new heights, and we stand ready to accomplish more.”

Before coming to Camp Phoenix, 1st Platoon was tasked with supporting the 226th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade of Mobile in the transfer of Camp Eggers to the U.S. Department of State. The brigade, operating as Task Force Tarpon, and the platoon, operating under the Central Command Material Recover Element, worked hand in hand to accomplish this mission. A pivotal prerequisite in the transfer was the removal of 83 RLBs from a privately owned compound that the military was leasing.

(Please see *1151st*, page 9)

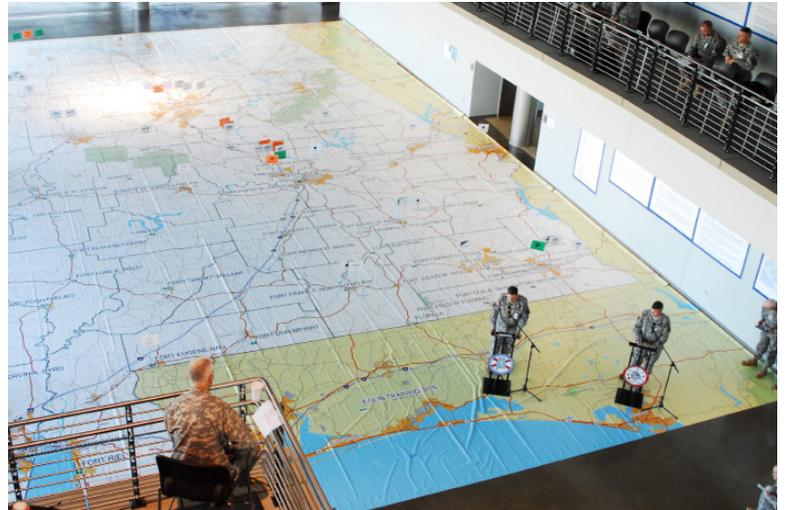
# Snap Shots

A look at some of the recent highlights from the Alabama National Guard



Contributed/photo

**CAMP PHOENIX, Afghanistan**- Gen. Frank Grass, 27th Chief of the National Guard Bureau, meets with members of 1st Platoon, 1151st Engineer Company, Alabama Army National Guard, March 25, 2014. 1st Platoon has been executing deconstruction operations in support of base closures in Regional Command – Capital since December.



David Arnold/photo

**MONTGOMERY, Ala.** - Participants in a hurricane rehearsal of concept (ROC) drill use a large map of Alabama to view assets and plan for a hurricane response.



Contributed/photo

**HALEYVILLE, Ala.** – Soldiers from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 877th and the 1305th Survey and Design Team watch attentively during a departure ceremony April 5, 2014. The 877th and 1305th will conduct materiel retrograde operations in support of the United States Central Command Materiel Retrograde Element (CMRE) mission in Afghanistan. The 877th and 1305th will continue to undergo extensive training at a mobilization station before deploying overseas.

## 6 Alabama Guardsman



Christopher Baldwin/photo

*MONTGOMERY, Ala. -The 187th Fighter Wing members stand in formation during a deployment ceremony at Dannelly Field Air National Guard Base, Ala., April 5, 2014. The ceremony was dedicated to the Airmen tasked to deploy this spring in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.*



Shannon Hancock/photo

*MILBROOK, Ala. -Recruits participate in a two-mile run during the Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) District 7 competition held at Lanark Alabama Wildlife Federation in Millbrook, Ala., March 22, 2014.*



Jeremiah Raines/photo

*FORT McCLELLAN, Ala. -Maj. Gen. Reynold Hoover, commander of the 167th Theater Sustainment Command awards Lt. Col. Thomas Whatley with a Meritorious Service Medal during a change of command ceremony for the 167th Special Troops Battalion, April 6, 2014. Lt. Col. Thomas Tyler took over command from Whatley during the ceremony.*



Brenda Thomas/photo

**AUBURN, Ala.-** Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, Alabama's adjutant general, presented Gus Malzahn, head football coach at Auburn University, with the William C. Oats award, April 2, 2014. Malzahn earned this award by volunteering his time to sign footballs, jerseys and other memorabilia to send to Alabama's deployed Soldiers and Airmen.



David Chase/photo

**DOTHAN, Ala.-** The official party, (from left to right) Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, Brig. Gen. Steve Berryhill, Brig. Gen. Paul Jacobs, Brig. Gen. Allen Harrell, Col. Jeff Newton, Col. Gary Kirk, Col. Paul Tabor, and Lt. Col. Bryan S. McNaughton, stands during a ceremony in which the 280th Combat Communications Squadron, Dothan Regional Airport Air National Guard Station was re-designated to the 280th Special Operations Communications Squadron, April 13, 2014. A release for the 280th said the new designation reflects more accurately and officially, our mission, duties, and responsibilities with Air Force Special Operations Command.



Shannon Hancock/photo

**CAMP DODGE, Iowa.-** Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, Alabama's adjutant general, stops for a picture with Pfc. Christopher Jones during a visit with the 778th Maintenance Company April 9, 2014. The 778th was here for its two-week annual training, where its members performed various maintenance related tasks.

# Competition brings out the best in Alabama Guardsmen

by Christopher Davis  
Contributing Writer

Ten competitors from different MACOMs of the Alabama Army National Guard engaged in a series of physical endurance and Soldier skill events during the week of March 24 to 27 on Fort McClellan and Pehlman Range as part of Alabama's Best Warrior Competition. The multiple events tested their military knowledge and skill sets, as well as their stamina and endurance for stress to the body.

Alabama's Noncommissioned Officer of the Year was Sgt. Nick Meche, A Company, 20th Special Forces Group, and Alabama's Soldier of the Year was Spc. Aaron Capuchino, 214th Military Police Company, 231st Military Police Battalion.

"These Soldiers displayed the best attributes of Alabama's Army National Guard," said State Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie Pike.

"It has been both an honor and a privilege competing alongside the best NCOs and Soldiers the great state of Alabama has to offer," said Meche. "I look forward to representing the Alabama National Guard in the regional competition."

"I feel so grateful to be able to compete with the best Soldiers in the state of Alabama, said Capuchino. "I am equally grateful to be representing Alabama in the regional level Soldier of the Year Competition."

Meche and Capuchino will travel to Camp Blanding, Fla., in April to attend the Region III Best Warrior Competition.



Christopher Davis/photo

*PELHAM Range, Ala. -Staff Sgt. Mark Taft emerges from the crawl tunnels into smoke and artillery simulators during the stress shooting exercises March 26, 2014.*



Christopher Davis/photo

*PELHAM Range, Ala. -Sgt. Nick Meche checks his calculations on direction and distance for his next point on the land navigation event of the Best Warrior Competition March 26, 2014.*



Christopher Davis/photo

*PELHAM Range, Ala. -Sgt. Jackie Parker descends down the repelling tower as part of the mystery event on the last day of the Best Warrior Competition March 26, 2014.*



Christopher Davis/photo

*PELHAM Range, Ala. -The junior enlisted and NCO competitors pose with Command Sgt. Maj. Pike at the end of the Alabama Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition March 26, 2014.*



Christopher Davis/photo

*PELHAM Range, Ala. -Spc. Jonathon Hill maneuvers through the high crawl portion of the stress shooting exercise March 26, 2014.*

## *(AT continued from page 3)*

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hotspots all around the world that could escalate quickly and require your Guard to respond. Our annual training periods are a key way we ensure that we are ready to meet that challenge whenever it arrives.

With all of the talk of the seriousness of annual training, let me also remind you to have some fun. What is

more fun than doing all those things your mother always told you not to do? Jump out of a perfectly sound aircraft, shoot fully-automatic weapons, sleep out in the woods, blow things up, roll around in the mud, paint your face, operate heavy machinery, spend time with your buddies – and get paid to do it! It is important that we do things to standard and that we

do them safely, but we should also enjoy our jobs and enjoy the opportunities that only military training and camaraderie can offer.

So, take annual training seriously; learn lessons from it; make yourself a better Soldier, Airman and unit; and have some fun. Lead from the front!

## *(ACMJ continued from page 3)*

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will have the greatest chance for success. All Guardsmen need to stay current on their educational requirements. I implore you to take advantage of any opportunity for military education that comes your way.

I had the privilege of attending the state's best warrior competition recently and what I saw there fills me with confidence for the future of the Alabama National Guard. The Guardsmen who participated were the best of the best

and they inspired me. The Alabama Guard has always met change head on and I have no doubt that the Soldiers and Airmen of the Alabama Guard will carry on that tradition. It is an honor to serve with each of you.

## *(1151st continued from page 4)*

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Having no room to maneuver heavy equipment into the compound, the platoon coordinated airlift assets to sling-load 55 RLBs to a nearby staging area. After the completion of nine sling-load operations, the Soldiers were able to mobilize crane and forklift assets into the housing area to remove 28 remaining units. The diligent efforts by both Alabama units proved successful as the camp was turned over in early March.

Sgt. Jonathan Shales, a team leader out of Huntsville, was impressed with

how smoothly the Camp Eggers project went. "We had multiple crews running two shifts to ensure that we finished the project on time. We were able to complete the project safely and efficiently, and had a great time working with the Chinook [helicopter] to move the RLBs out."

1st Platoon will continue executing deconstruction projects at Camp Phoenix through May, 2014. By the end of their tenure in the capital region, the Heavy Hitters will have removed 558 RLBs for reuse. "I couldn't

be more proud of these Soldiers," replied Capt. Ryan Bean of Wetumpka, commander of the 1151st Engineer Company. "Like each of my Platoons, 1st Platoon has greatly exceeded expectations, and we look forward to finishing out the deployment strong and safely returning home to Alabama."

To see more photos of the 1151st Engineer Company in Afghanistan, visit their Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/1151encompany>

# Live Our Values: Step Up to Stop Sexual Assault

"Live Our Values" every day, all year long.

"Step Up" by intervening when appropriate, reporting crimes, and supporting victims.

If we do, we can help "Stop Sexual Assault."

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) – recognized across the country by both civilian and military communities. SAAM provides an annual opportunity to reinforce our commitment to strengthening the professional climate across the armed forces where the cultural imperatives of mutual respect and trust, team commitment, and professional values are reinforced to create an environment in which sexist behaviors, sexual harassment and sexual assault are not condoned, tolerated, or ignored.

The campaign's slogan is "Live Our Values: Step Up to Stop Sexual Assault." The Department will emphasize bystander intervention as an important aspect for prevention. "The goal of the department is to get people to come forward and report. We want to give you the care and the support you need. We want to decrease the stigma ... we want people to know that services are available to them around the clock."

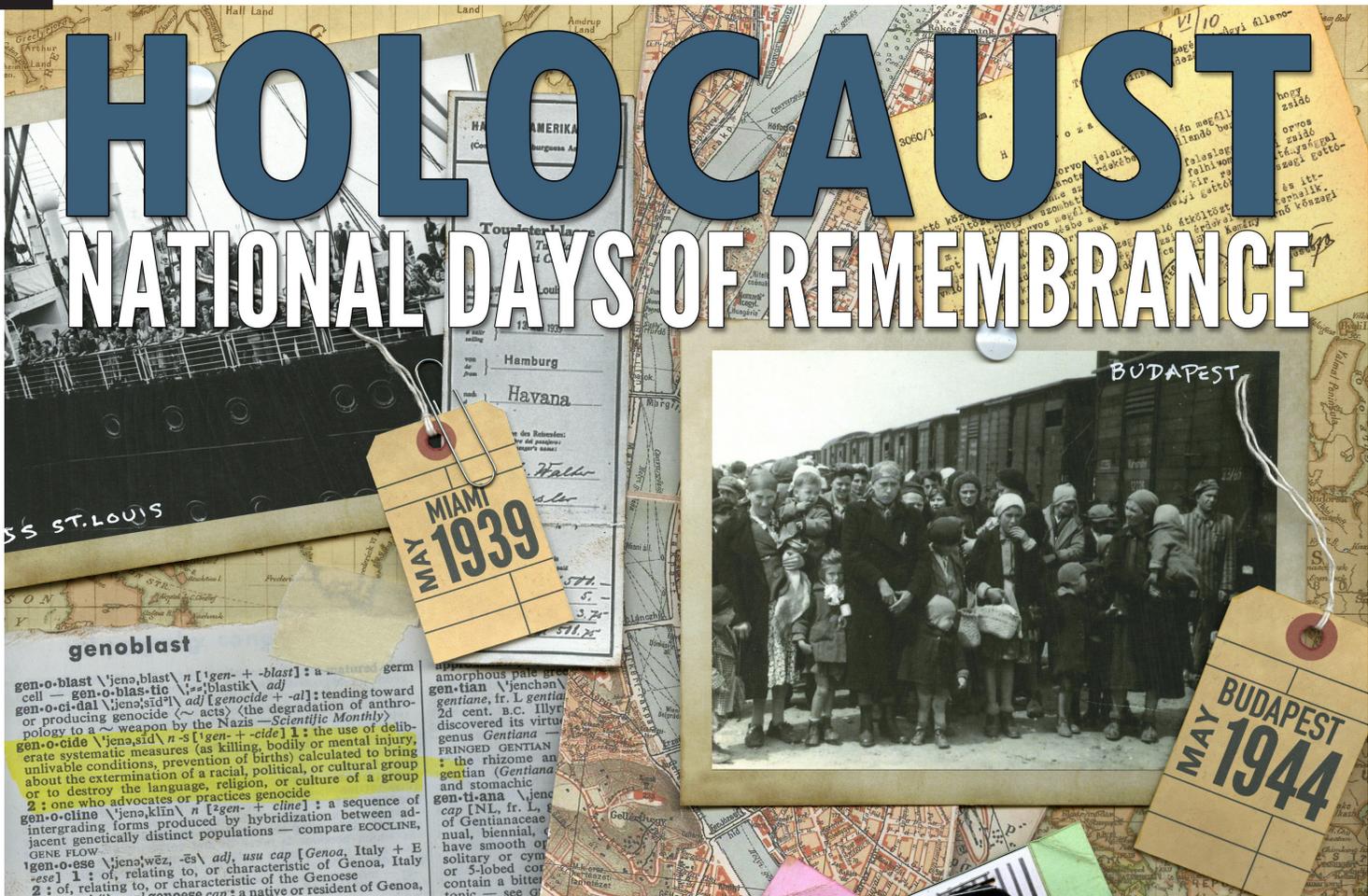
**Alabama Army National Guard SARC**  
**WO1 Ryals 334-782-4301**

**Call the Safe Helpline at**  
**877-995-5247**

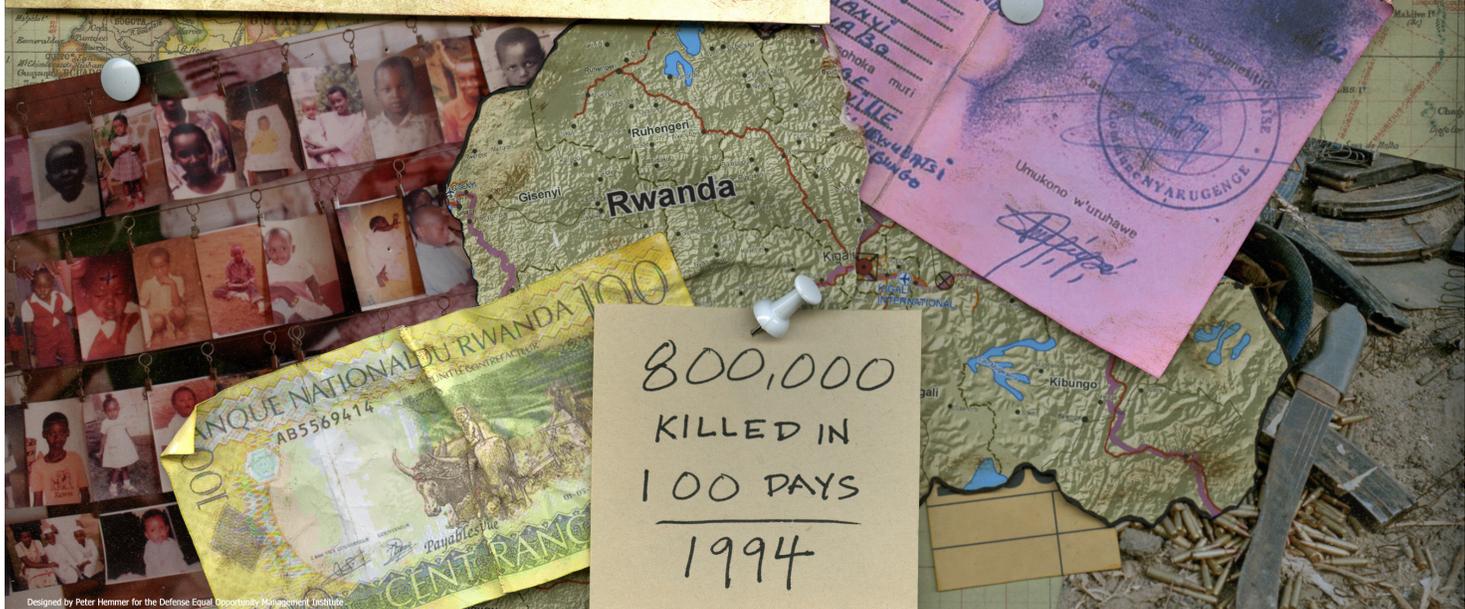
**In immediate danger?**  
**CALL 911**

# HOLOCAUST

## NATIONAL DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE



### Confronting the Holocaust: AMERICAN RESPONSES



Designed by Peter Hemmer for the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute.