

OFFICE *of*
ARMY CEMETERIES

&
ARMY NATIONAL

MILITARY CEMETERIES

2023
STRATEGY

-

2027



Visitors participate in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Centennial Commemoration Flower Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, Nov. 9, 2021.



Ms. Karen Durham-Aguilera, Executive Director, OAC and ANMC, expresses condolences to Gail Berry, wife of the late Secretary of the Army (SecArmy), Togo D. West, Jr. Also attending were (then) SecArmy Mark Esper and (then Army Chief of Staff, now Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff) GEN Mark Milley, Apr. 26, 2018.



Foreword

Note from the Executive Director:

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Most know Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) as a quiet place of reflection outside the bustle of our nation's capital. Behind the scenes, a flurry of activity is required to deliver such stillness for our visitors—not just at ANC, but at every one of the 30 Army cemeteries around the nation. Every day, hundreds of quiet professionals at the Office of Army Cemeteries (OAC) and Army National Military Cemeteries (ANMC)—together with key partners, including the various Military Service Districts of Washington, which include the service honor guards and military installations; the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE); and the National Park Service, to name a few—work tirelessly to uphold our nation's promise to honor the service and sacrifice of our veterans.

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy visits ANC, pictured with the Commander, Military District of Washington, Maj. Gen. Allan M. Pepin, Sep. 1, 2021.





Every year, ANC hosts over three million visitors and reaches millions more online through social media and an education program provided free-of-cost to educators worldwide. Annually, ANC conducts over 6,000 funeral services, holds over 3,000 wreath ceremonies, and hosts hundreds of distinguished visitors from around the globe. In recent years, ANC has welcomed dignitaries from many allied North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Indo-Pacific nations, such as Japan and South Korea, as well as from India, Taiwan and Israel. ANC has recently hosted dignitaries from Sweden and Finland, NATO applicants recently ratified by the United States Senate. We are proud to set a global example and serve as ambassadors of our nation's commitment to honor our fallen service members, veterans, and their families for all foreign visitors to witness.

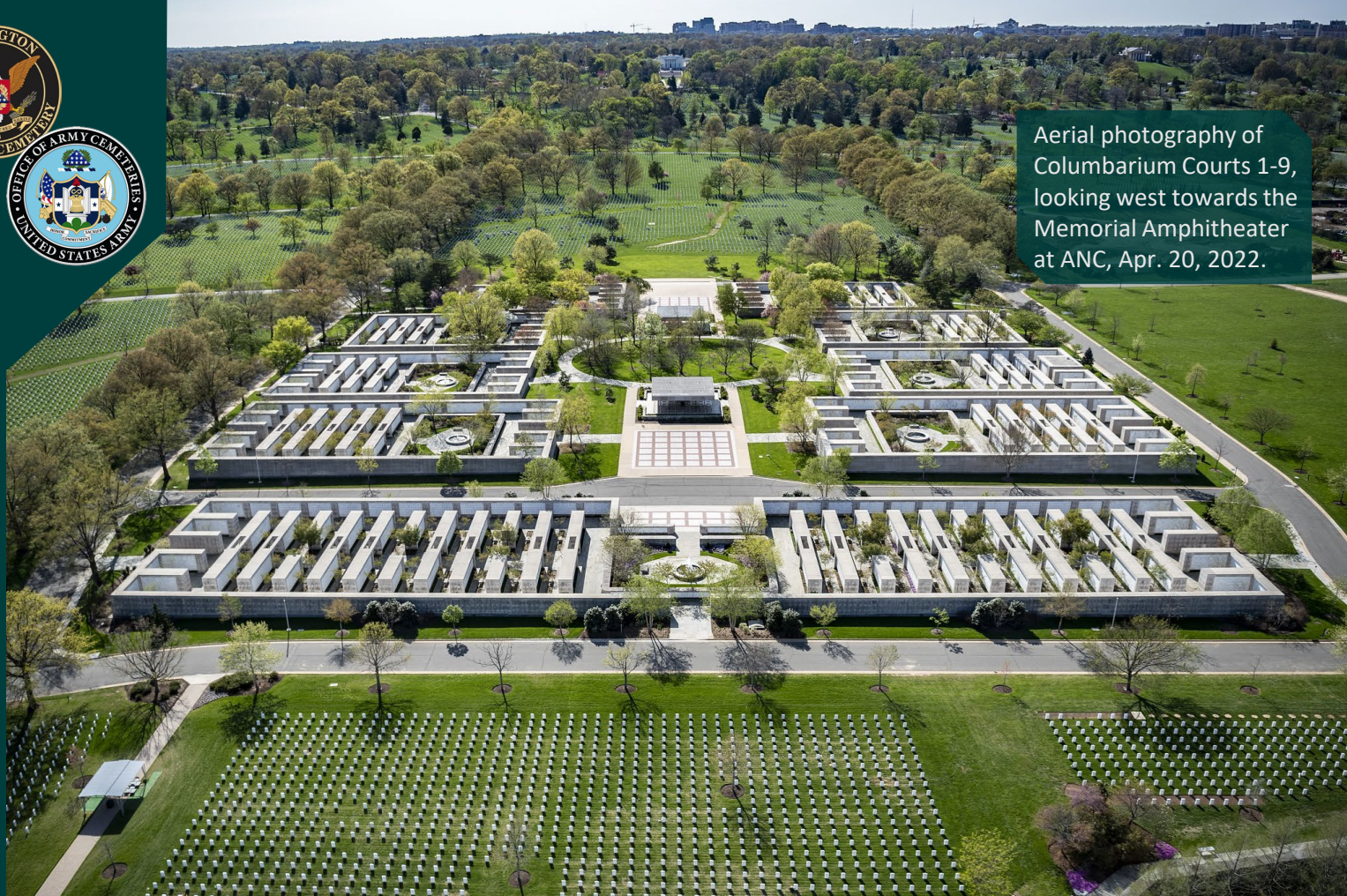
The impressive and unrelenting feats accomplished at our cemeteries year after year require a talented and dedicated staff working in tandem—from interment services professionals guiding grieving families through committal services to interment operations, conservation, facilities and horticulture experts maintaining the pristine beauty of the grounds and headstones. Engineers and cultural resource stewards navigate cemetery expansion and modernization while preserving our historical legacy. Operations and ceremonial teams manage a myriad of activities while warmly welcoming our distinguished visitors. Public affairs specialists and historians tell our stories and conduct public outreach, with the support of our information technology teams who keep us connected and secure our digital infrastructure, while our safety and security professionals safeguard our physical infrastructure, guests, and workforce around the clock. All are supported by a robust staff of human resources, administrative, budget, policy, planning, acquisition, and legal professionals.



ANC Superintendent Mr. Charles "Ray" Alexander, Jr. hosts Gen. Micael Bydén, Supreme Commander, Armed Forces of Sweden, Dec. 17, 2021.



Aerial photograph of Columbarium Courts 1-9, looking west towards the Memorial Amphitheater at ANC, Apr. 20, 2022.



This publication details who we are, what we do and where we are going. It includes the mission statements and explanation of the roles and responsibilities of both OAC and ANMC, as well as our vision for the future of the Army cemetery enterprise. Always aligned with our Army senior leaders, we share the same Army priorities. This publication describes how those priorities translate to our unique mission and how we put them into practice today to achieve our vision for the future. Furthermore, in keeping with the Secretary of the Army's emphasis on data-driven decisions, we have invested significant effort into implementing a rigorous assessment framework to measure our progress in meeting key objectives to reach our vision. Each year, new objectives and accompanying metrics will be crafted, briefed and evaluated in quarterly assessments briefs. We will maintain these assessments on file and add assessments from each subsequent fiscal year to record and track our progress over time. This program will be adapted as conditions require, ensuring that it remains an active, living program best-suited to ensure progress.

It is a privilege to serve those who have selflessly and faithfully served our nation. Our dedicated workforce strives every day to earn the public's trust and to ensure that everything we do in fulfillment of our sacred duties merits our nation's gratitude. As our vision states, we are: "Great people honoring service and sacrifice to a grateful Nation."

KAREN "KD-A" DURHAM-AGUILERA
Executive Director
Office of Army Cemeteries
Army National Military Cemeteries

Office of Army Cemeteries

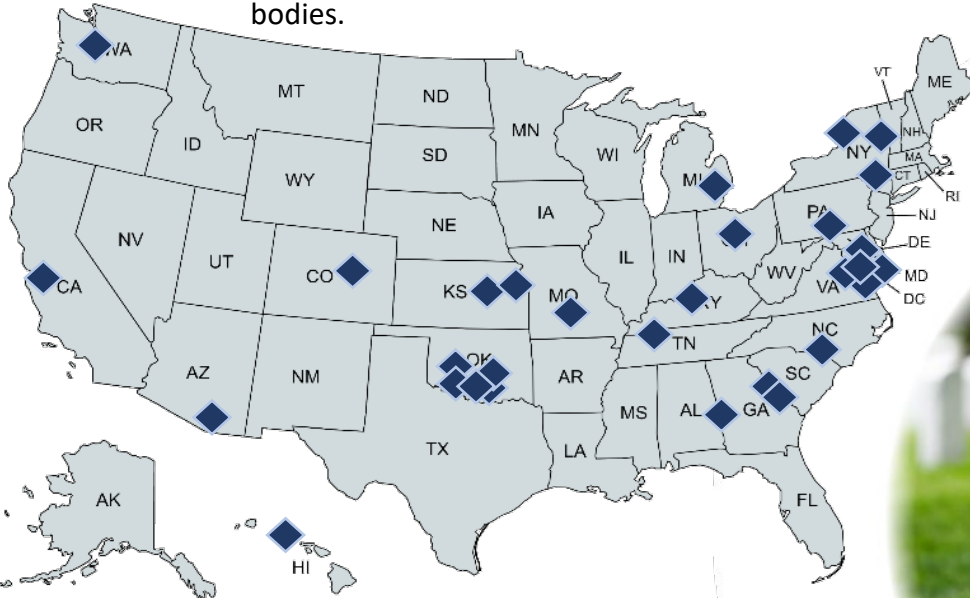


OAC is a Secretariat element within Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA); the Executive Director of OAC serves as a principal official reporting directly to the Secretary of the Army. OAC is responsible for policy, training, and oversight of the Army cemetery enterprise, consisting of 30 Army cemeteries including two national cemeteries (ANC and the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery [SAHNC]). OAC formulates, promulgates, administers, and oversees doctrine, plans, and standards with all stakeholders. OAC establishes and maintains gravesite accountability and provides technical guidance, training, staff assistance, and inspections for cemetery responsible officials, public works departments, and others who care for Army cemeteries. OAC also adjudicates burial exceptions, disinterments, expansion requests, revisions to eligibility criteria, commemorative works requests and other issues of concern at both the national and post Army cemeteries.

OAC Mission:

As the Army's cemeterians, OAC provides oversight and expertise for all Army cemeteries through policy, program management, inspections, training, and assistance, honoring those laid to rest in perpetuity.

OAC leads interagency coordination with partners such as the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OSD (P&R)), the Department of Veteran's Affairs National Cemetery Administration (NCA), the Defense POW and Accounting Agency (DPAA), Service Casualty Offices, and the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). The Director, OAC serves as the defense federal officer to assist the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Advisory Committee, the Department of Defense (DoD) Naming Commission, and similar bodies.



National Cemeteries (2)

Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA
Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery, Washington, DC

Army Post Cemeteries (16)

Aberdeen Proving Grounds Cemetery, MD
Carlisle Barracks Cemetery, PA
Camp Lewis Post Cemetery, WA
Edgewood Arsenal Cemetery, MD
Fort Benning Main Post Cemetery, GA
Fort Bragg Main Post Cemetery, NC
Fort Huachuca Post Cemetery, NM
Fort Knox Post Cemetery, KY
Fort Leonard Wood Post Cemetery, MO
Fort Meade Post Cemetery, MD
Fort Riley Post Cemetery, KS
Fort Sill Post Cemetery, OK
Presidio of Monterrey Main Post Cemetery, CA
Schofield Barracks Post Cemetery, HI
Watervliet Arsenal Post Cemetery, NY
West Point Post Cemetery, NY

Native American Cemeteries (4)

Bailso Apache South Cemetery, Fort Sill, OK
Beef Creek Apache Cemetery, Fort Sill, OK
Chief Chihuahua Apache Cemetery, Fort Sill, OK
Comanche Indian Mission Cemetery, Fort Sill, OK

Enemy Prisoner of War Cemeteries (4)

Fort Campbell POW Cemetery, KY
Fort Drum POW Cemetery, NY
Fort Gordon German POW Cemetery, GA
Fort Gordon Italian POW Cemetery, GA

Army Plots in Private Cemeteries (3)

Fitzsimons General Hospital at Fairmount Cemetery, Denver, CO
Fort Hayes at Green Lawn Cemetery, Columbus, OH
Fort Wayne at Woodmere Cemetery, Detroit, MI

Criminally Incarcerated Cemetery (1)

United States Disciplinary Barracks Cemetery, Fort Leavenworth, KS





OAC has facilitated, consolidated, and completed the gravesite, location, record, and decedent accountability information for all those interred at Army cemeteries. Efforts are underway to make this information accessible to the public via the Army Cemeteries Explorer app. OAC is also championing the roll-out of the Enterprise Interment Services System (EISS), an enterprise database intended to ensure accountability of burials and formalize operational processes while streamlining headstone ordering and replacement. OAC is diligently working to increase the migration of EISS at all Army and DoD cemeteries.

OAC also facilitates any Native American burial and grave actions requiring resolution across the Army cemetery enterprise. One major initiative is the Carlisle Barracks Disinterment Program. In 1879, Carlisle Barracks (in Carlisle, Pennsylvania) became the site of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, operated by the Department of the Interior until 1918. The school

educated more than 10,000 Native American children representing over 50 tribes from across the nation. Children who died were interred in the Carlisle Barracks cemetery. OAC conducts outreach to determine Native American families' interest in returning their children buried in the Carlisle Barracks cemetery. In 2017, the first three children were disinterred and returned to their families with the support of the USACE, Carlisle Barracks garrison, and the Army War College. The project continued over the next several years, pausing only for COVID-19 safety concerns. In 2021, OAC returned the remains of nine children to the Rosebud Sioux Tribe of South Dakota and one Alaskan Native to St. Paul's Island. In July 2022, OAC conducted seven disinterments for the Oneida, Aleut, Ute, Washoe, and Lower Umpqua Tribes. To date, OAC has had the honor of conducting 28 disinterments to reunite Native American families with their children. Multiple tribes and families are in the process of requesting the return of their family members with OAC.

Ms. Karen Durham-Aguilera and SGM Patrick D. Thomas, Executive Director and Senior Enlisted Advisor, OAC and ANMC, present American flags and extend condolences to Native American families, Jul. 15, 2021.





Army National Military Cemeteries

ANMC Mission:

Arlington National Cemetery represents the American people for past, present, and future generations by laying to rest those few who have served our nation with dignity and honor while immersing guests in the cemetery's living history.



ANMC was established as a direct-reporting unit (DRU) under HQDA and is responsible for the maintenance and operation of ANC—arguably the nation's most prominent cemetery—and the SAHNC in Washington, D.C. The Superintendent oversees the operation of both cemeteries and reports to the Executive Director, OAC, who serves also as the Executive Director of ANMC. This consolidation allows for uniformity in direction and standards across the Army cemetery enterprise.

Founded in 1864 during the American Civil War, ANC is the final resting place for American veterans who have fought in every war since the nation's inception. Over 150 years later nearly 400,000 veterans and their family members are laid to rest at the cemetery. With the burials of two U.S. presidents, numerous historical figures,

and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the cemetery has grown in size, significance, and prominence through the years. A visit to this national shrine continues to remind each generation of the sacrifice that members of the armed forces and their families make in the defense of freedom.

ANMC's motto is "**Honor—Remember—Explore.**" ANMC: **honors** the service and sacrifice of eligible service members, veterans, and their family members with dignity, compassion, and accountability; **remembers** those from each generation who have answered the call to serve by preserving cemeteries befitting their sacrifices; and enables guests to **explore** the rich history of ANC and SAHNC and to gain an appreciation for those who have defended our freedom and helped shape our nation's history.



ANC's Demand and Operational Constraints



ANC receives at least as many new requests for committal services each day as the number of services conducted, thereby maintaining lengthy wait times. These wait times increase for services requiring greater resources, such as military funeral honors with escort or those requesting the caisson and/or use of a military chapel. Wait times also vary amongst the services depending on resource availability due to other obligations.

Multiple variables related to military resources play into the complexity of scheduling services at ANC. While the exhaustive list of limitations is long, a few prominent ones are

highlighted to provide a examples of factors that influence wait times in the scheduling process. Five services can be conducted per hour to ensure sufficient privacy of each committal service. The chapels can only accommodate four services per day. The cemetery accommodates a limited number of casketed services each day, and no more than two per hour due to the length of time needed to close the grave without encroaching on the next service. The services have additional restrictions in order to meet other obligations, thus reducing availability. Chaplain availability also impacts the scheduling process.



ANC's Capacity Challenge

Congress recognized ANC's iconic status when passing the National Cemeteries Act of 1973, which transferred jurisdiction of all national cemeteries, except ANC and SAHNC, to the VA's National Cemetery Administration (NCA). Retaining ANC under the Department of the Army preserved ANC's unique eligibility standards, which have changed only 14 times in the past 150 years, with the last significant change in 1980. As of fall 2022, ANC has ~73,000 burial spaces available, with over 23 million active-duty service members, retirees and veterans living today. Without changes to eligibility, ANC will run out of space for new burials by the year 2041, or by the mid-2060s with the addition of approximately 80,000 burial spaces due to ANC's largest expansion to date: the Southern Expansion Project (SE). SE was initiated in the FY 2000 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and is projected to be completed in 2027. Once out of space, ANC will not be able to serve as the final resting place for future generations of service members.

In accordance with Public Law 114-158, passed in February 2017, the Secretary of the Army submitted a report to Congress on the capacity challenge at ANC and what might be done to preserve the cemetery as an active burial ground. Following submission of this report, ANC staff continued to analyze methods for extending the life of ANC. The Army conducted roundtable discussions with 32 veteran and military service organizations (VSO/MSO) in 2017-2018 and the Advisory Committee on ANC to create two public surveys that garnered over 250,000 responses;

96% supported keeping ANC open and active for our nation's killed in action well into the future.

Recognizing ANC's capacity challenge, in the FY19 NDAA Congress directed the Secretary of the Army to prescribe revised interment eligibility criteria. With implementation of revised eligibility, ANC is projected to have ground burial space available until the 2170s.

ANC is our nation's most hallowed shrine to military service. The proposed eligibility criteria preserves in-ground burial space for those with extraordinary military service, including those killed in action or recipients of the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Medal (with armed conflict service), Silver Star or Purple Heart. Without changes to eligibility, a service member born today who is killed in action in 40 years could not be buried at ANC due to lack of space. The most significant change is that retirees (without other eligibility) will no longer be eligible for in-ground burial but will remain eligible for above-ground burial with the same level of military funeral honors. If approved, the revised eligibility criteria will be implemented 30 days after the date it is published in the Federal Register. The 6,000+ families in the burial queue will remain eligible and can proceed as planned. Only new cases initiated after the implementation date will be impacted.

Revised eligibility at ANC will not affect eligibility at the 155 VA national cemeteries and 138 state, territorial, and tribal veterans' cemeteries, which are the national standard for veteran burials. VA cemeteries provide military funeral honors, supported by DoD and VSOs, in accordance with law.





Vision

**“ It is only
through change
that we will
best preserve
tradition.”**

◆ We are privileged to honor the service and sacrifice of those laid to rest at our cemeteries. This solemn duty shapes the singular vision that drives what we do each and every day:

**Great people honoring service and
sacrifice to a grateful Nation**

Our dedicated workforce strives every day to earn the public’s trust and to ensure that everything we do in fulfillment of our sacred duties merits our nation’s gratitude. Our professionals are passionate about serving those who serve, and are leading efforts to plan adapt cemetery operations to the emerging conditions of the 21st century. Over the years, the cemetery has adapted to overcome challenges. We have transformed an antiquated paper record-keeping system into a digital repository that we continue to evolve in order to address arising challenges with increased complexity. We have adopted new burial techniques, such as pre-set crypts, to maximize dwindling burial space; and we have modernized equipment to increase safety, efficiency, and sustainability. These innovations make us more responsive to veterans and their families and better able to fulfill our mission to the American public. With the world changing at an ever-increasing pace, we ask our workforce to strive to innovate and be even more nimble, for it is only through change that we will best preserve tradition.



The Defense Access
Road and Southern
Expansion Project

Our Priorities – People



◆ People are at the heart of everything we do. We can effectively perform our mission and ensure the highest-quality family and visitor experience only through recruiting and sustaining a competent workforce built on a culture of teamwork and trust. We echo the Secretary of the Army's sentiment that character and culture matter and we are committed to best practices to attract, retain, and develop talent so that we can better serve others.

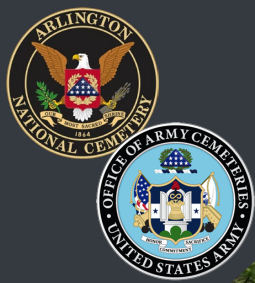
Over the next five years, we are improving how we recruit, starting with completing our Strategic Recruitment Plan. We share Army senior leaders' commitment to selecting the best possible team members and developing them from the top down and bottom up. We only accept skilled and proficient employees with the capacity and affinity to serve this most sacred mission.

Retaining the best talent will require sustaining a positive command climate. We will increase efforts to implement prevention-oriented approaches to addressing harmful behaviors and take concrete measures to reduce employee turnover and to identify succession plans for our workforce. As part of our retention efforts, we will focus on developing our people by prioritizing our employee training and leadership development program. We will also implement a robust onboarding and acculturation program to drive employee engagement, productivity and retention.

To better serve others, over the next five years we will continue developing our Carlisle Barracks Disinterment Program by completing our guiding plan and increasing outreach efforts. We will actively work to reduce the ANC interments verification and scheduling queue. For those waiting in the queue, we will improve the customer experience through measures such as reducing call-back times and eligibility determinations. Additionally, we will continue to increase public and virtual engagement by enhancing our education program and onsite interpretation of the cemetery's historic sites.



Sgt. Maj. Patrick Thomas offers condolences to Patricia Sargent following the funeral service of her father, Medal of Honor recipient U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. John Canley, Aug. 25, 2022.



Our Priorities – Modernization



Rendering of the Southern Expansion Project

◆ Our cemeteries are a perpetual tribute to those at rest. We focus on modernization to sustain and extend this tradition for future generations. We share the Secretary of the Army's commitment to innovation, and we are increasing our efforts to embrace emerging technologies to become more effective and efficient.

Over the next five years, we will aim to complete our largest expansion to ANC to date: the Southern Expansion and Defense Access Road Projects. This expansion will add an additional 50 acres and approximately 80,000 burial spaces to ANC. The latest burial techniques, such as pre-set crypts, will be incorporated to maximize burial space. LED lighting will be incorporated in the design, thus eliminating waste and disposal costs and reducing energy consumption (as compared to florescent lamps which are being phased out across the cemetery). With the completion of the roads program, ANC's physical infrastructure will be modernized on four of its throughways.

OAC is also assisting with the West Point Cemetery Land Reclamation Project, which will extend in-ground, casketed burials to 2035 and

cremated burials to 2100 with the addition of niche walls and preset crypts.

ANMC is also enhancing its education and interpretation program in order to effectively communicate with our visitors and to meet their needs. To this end, we will modernize our enterprise architecture to enable seamless operations and provide our millions of visitors (physical and virtual) a richer immersion experience in our outdoor exploration space.

In addition to its physical infrastructure, ANC will modernize its digital infrastructure. EISS, a geospatially-aware decedent database of record for all Army cemeteries, will be integrated across all 11 DoD cemeteries. It will expand capabilities and migrate multiple aging legacy tools into a single, hardened, cloud-based platform. This will improve confidentiality, integrity and availability of cemetery data to support cemetery operations. Lastly—in perhaps our most ambitious effort—we will seek to further automate, as much as feasible, our burial service request, eligibility, and scheduling services to provide additional transparency and efficiency.



The West Point Land Reclamation Project

Our Priorities – Readiness



◆ We deliver our sacred mission while maintaining readiness through the optimal management of valuable resources. We understand the importance of maintaining a sustainable, strategic path amidst fiscal uncertainty. Our ability to sustain existing infrastructure restoration and maintenance and daily operations at a consistently high level depends on our capacity to efficiently allocate resources to optimize and streamline business operations. Critical to this continuous process is managing our logistical and contracting activities, minimizing waste, maximizing contractor performance, and conserving valuable resources. Over the coming years, we seek to implement an acquisition strategy with proven operating procedures, as well as internal and external reviews for continual improvement and accountability. One facet of improving our acquisition process is to expand the headstone procurement and installation process across all Army and DoD cemeteries.

We will also focus on one of our most valuable resources: dwindling burial space at ANC. Space optimization has long been a vital component of burial management at ANC and we are always exploring solutions to space challenges. ANC's Burial Management Plan, published in January 2020, operationalized

additional practices to optimize space and identified parcels within the cemetery that have the potential to garner additional burial capacity, both above and below ground. Yet these efforts—even when combined with the additional burial capacity resulting from the Southern Expansion Project—will extend the life of ANC only to the mid-2060s. After years of extensive analysis, dialogue, and study, without changes to eligibility ANC will not remain an active cemetery able to honor our nation's future veterans. To remain ready to serve future generations of service members, veterans, and their families we will support implementation of senior leader decisions regarding extending the life of ANC.

Supporting plans and programs will ensure successful navigation of our readiness challenges. In coming years, we will complete an ANC Space Utilization Plan to maintain adequate spaces to accommodate our workforce through the completion of Southern Expansion. We will continue to leverage our Organizational Inspection Program of Army Cemeteries and Program Management Plan to keep us current on best practices for providing support to our post cemeteries and for ensuring perpetual care for the graves of our nation's service members, veterans and their families.





“They, and we, are the legacies of
an unbroken chain of proud men and women
who served their country with honor,
who waged war so that we might know peace,
who braved hardship so that we might know opportunity,
who paid the ultimate price so that we might know freedom.”

The President’s Memorial Day Address
Memorial Amphitheater
Arlington National Cemetery, May 25, 2009

