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## Nine selected as JBSA Fiesta ambassadors

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Nine military members based at San Antonio installations will represent their respective services as 2011 Military Ambassadors.

The ambassadors represent the military at San Antonio-area community events, including nearly 150 activities associated with Fiesta. Ambassadors will also participate in parades and visit local schools, nursing homes and retirement facilities throughout the year.

The Military Ambassadors for 2011 include:

- Air Force — Staff Sgt. Jillian Pass, Lackland Air Force Base, and Maj. Paul Ferguson, Randolph Air Force Base
- Army — Sgt. Lauren Aldaco and Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Ebert
- Navy — Petty Officer 2nd Class Nicholas Campos and Petty Officer 2nd Class Sarai Cordova
- Coast Guard — Petty Officer 3rd Class Florencia Mendez and Petty Officer 2nd Class Dustin Debarge
- Marine Corps — Cpl. Angela Hudson

“The ambassador program is another tool for the services to get their message out,” said Bill Gaines, 502nd Air Base Wing civic outreach chief. “Over the course of a year, the ambassadors have a chance to utilize their talents and skills, and really expand on them. It’s certainly a learning experience.

“They’ll participate in local festivities (during the year) and have an opportunity to meet local leaders, with Fiesta being the highlight simply because of its exposure and the time spent (in the community),” Gaines added.

To retain the uniqueness and significance of the program, each San Antonio-area military service selected two ambassadors for representation. In previous years, each installation selected ambassadors.

Senior Air Force leadership views the ambassador program as an important component in connecting with the local community.

Lt. Gen. Douglas H. Owens, Air Education and Training Command vice commander, said in a Nov. 1 memorandum that ambassadors play an integral role for the installations' community relations programs, not only during Fiesta, but also during parades and community events throughout the year.

Cordova, a Navy cryptologic technician based at Lackland, said she was honored to be an ambassador.

"One of my close friends was a Marine ambassador three years ago," she said. "From what she told me about it, it sounded like something I would like to do."

As preparations hit full stride for the city-wide celebration in April, Cordova will no longer be a novice when it comes to Fiesta.

"I've actually never been," she said. "I'd heard of Fiesta when I was stationed here the first time (2003-2006), but my husband was stationed elsewhere and attempting to do things with the kids was always difficult.

"This is our first year back and it's going to be a whole new experience for me. It's something I'm really looking forward to."



**Marine**



**Air Force**



**Army**



**Coast Guard**



**Navy**