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## National Training Center Visit Inspires Army Scientist

*By Jerilyn Coleman*



**Dr. Danielle Kuhn, Acting Chief of DEVCOM CBC's Smoke and Target Defeat Branch, visited the National Training Center to witness obscurant demonstrations and engage with the warfighter. (U.S. Army photo by Dr. Danielle Kuhn)**

**Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD –** After visiting the National Training Center (NTC), a scientist from the U.S. Army's Combat Capabilities Development Command Chemical Biological Center (DEVCOM CBC) was inspired to improve her work for the Center's end-customer—the warfighter.

Dr. Danielle Kuhn, Acting Branch Chief of the Center's Smoke and Target Defeat branch, visited the NTC in Fort Irwin, California, along with DEVCOM Command Sergeant Major Brian Haydt and personnel from other DEVCOM laboratories, to witness a live fire demonstration using obscurant and smoke that simulated a battlefield environment.

The U.S. Army created the training center in 1981 to train armored brigade combat teams, develop the best readiness with the most lethal fighting force in the world, and enhance and equip the warfighter with the best skills to be successful on the battlefield.

In February, Kuhn and the visiting group watched maneuvers in which artillery rounds containing white phosphorus were fired. They generated smoke clouds that were a part of the tactical strategy to execute their maneuver. Kuhn noted, "It was wonderful to see everything in scale."

Kuhn was selected to attend the NTC after demonstrating DEVCOM CBC's smoke obscurant capabilities for DEVCOM leaders. "We were impressed by her presentations on smoke, and she had never seen her work used in real-time," Haydt said. "So, we invited her to the training center, and we thought it would be great leader development to go out and see the work and talk to some of the warfighting professionals and see how they can take their experiences to the next level."



The purpose of the week-long visit was to exemplify the collaborative spirit between Army scientists and warfighters. It provided an opportunity for scientists like Kuhn to engage with warfighters, witness some of their research and development work in real-world scenarios, ask questions about their capabilities, and offer recommendations for modernization and improvement. "I had open dialogues about the warfighter's needs and wants and what's realistic. They answered my questions, and it was helpful to them to explain a little about smoke and obscuration and some of its possible capabilities. It was an awesome two-way conversation," Kuhn said, highlighting the sense of unity and shared purpose that permeated the visit.



**Kuhn and the visiting group watched maneuvers in which artillery rounds containing white phosphorus were fired. They generated smoke clouds that were a part of the tactical strategy to execute their maneuver. (U.S. Army photo by Dr. Danielle Kuhn).**

In the future, Kuhn envisions further modernization of DEVCOM CBC's obscuration efforts by incorporating bi-spectral capabilities. "White phosphorus is incredible when it comes to obscuring visually, but utilizing anything that possesses thermal or infrared vision, you would be able to see through the cloud," she said. "Bispectral capability, the ability to cover visual through far into the infrared is imperative."

After the visit, Kuhn's perspective on her work and the Center's mission was profoundly transformed. "This experience was life changing. What I saw was so incredible—so humbling, and it really put things into perspective about who our customer is," she said. "It makes me ask myself how I can do better to protect the warfighter. It just made me want to be better for them."

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For more information about the DEVCOM Chemical Biological Center, visit <https://cbc.DEVCOM.army.mil>

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