

# BUILDING RESILIENCY THROUGH CLIMBING

**T**he Resiliency Campus at Fort Hood, Texas, recently added a new climbing wall to the functional fitness center, bringing a whole new dimension of training and recreational fun to soldiers and families.

“I wanted to incorporate something into the fitness center that would foster family resiliency as well as unit solidarity,” says Col. William Rabena, Commandant of the Fort Hood Resiliency campus. “With a climbing wall, kids of all ages, soldiers, and families alike can come together and engage in an activity that builds cohesion.”

The climbing wall, which was purchased from Eldorado Climbing Walls, is 30-feet long, 30-feet high, and 10 feet at its deepest point. In addition to the wall, there is a youth boulder that is utilized for younger and beginner climbers. The wall is complete with belay and auto belay lines.

The climbing wall has seen heavy traffic since it opened in February 2010, according to Cpt. Connor J. Crehan, Assistant Operations Officer, Fort Hood Resiliency Campus.

“The wall is closely monitored by a team of soldiers who are led by a Non-Commissioned officer who is a certified instructor,” says Crehan. “Prior to climbing, each individual must go through a block of instruction on basic climbing techniques and

belay procedures before they are allowed on the wall.”

Capt. Joseph Seaton, who is the Functional Fitness Center Director of Operations, has been extremely pleased with the implementation of a climbing wall.

“Given the current operations being conducted, particularly in mountainous terrain like Afghanistan, climbing can be considered an important and functional aspect of training for our soldiers,” Seaton explained.

Crehan points out that many units at Fort Hood choose to reserve a block of time to use the wall for soldiers (usually groups of 30-40). “For an Army unit, it fosters a great sense of cohesion in the unit,” he says.

The Resiliency Campus offers other amenities that enhance the quality of life on campus, including a quarter-mile trail, a reflection pool with a garden, a playground and a putting green.

—GRF



PHOTOS BY CPT. CONNOR J. CREHAN



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