



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
**SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION
AND RESPONSE OFFICE**



SAPRO ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF THE 2021 LIZ BLANC SARC OF THE YEAR AND PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN PREVENTION AWARDS

APRIL 27, 2021

The Department of Defense (DOD) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) recognized recipients of the 2021 Liz Blanc Exceptional SARC of the Year Award and the Promoting Excellence in Prevention Award on April 27.

SAPRO's director presided over the virtual award ceremony, which enabled DOD leaders and professionals on the front lines of the battle against sexual assault to gather from different time zones and recognize those making a difference.

"This award ceremony shows that innovation in this mission space is not just coming from the National capital region," SAPRO Director Maj. Gen. Clement Coward said of the awardees who work at installations as close as Virginia and as far as England. "Your efforts are needed now more than ever as we explore new ways to prevent sexual assault and support survivors."

While the Department has recognized exceptional SARCs over the past few years, the award took on even more meaning last year when it was [renamed in honor of Elizabeth "Liz" Blanc](#). Liz was a DoD professional who passed away in March 2020 after a long battle with cancer. She had dedicated her life – including nine years as a Navy SARC – to supporting victims of sexual assault.

SARCs play a pivotal role in the Department's sexual assault prevention and response program. When any Service member reports a sexual assault, the SARC addresses the victim's immediate safety needs, connects the victim to recovery-oriented resources, and assigns a victim advocate to provide advocacy and assistance throughout the medical, investigative, and legal processes. In addition, SARCs work closely with other installation responders, train thousands of military members annually, and help military leaders improve their support of Service members impacted by sexual assault.

Besides recognizing SARCs, SAPRO also lauded individuals and teams dedicated to reducing and stopping sexual assault.

"I am grateful to have the opportunity to recognize the work that you all are doing in prevention across the Department," said Dr. Andra Tharp, SAPRO's senior prevention advisor. "In so many ways, prevention is an emerging area and you all are blazing a new trail."

Established in 2005, SAPRO worked to build a robust sexual assault prevention and response system that provided reporting options for sexual assault victims and connected them with support services. In recent years, the Department has increased its focus on preventing sexual assault from happening in the first place. Those efforts included releasing the [Prevention Plan of Action](#), publishing an [integrated violence prevention policy](#), and working towards building a prevention workforce.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office

This year's recipients of the Promoting Excellence in Prevention Award all showed a high degree of collaboration with stakeholders across the violence prevention community. Additionally, their efforts in many cases were built on existing prevention activities and enhanced to be more impactful and sustainable.

"I'm a firm believer that if you don't reward and recognize excellence, excellence will go somewhere else," Maj. Gen. Coward said. "Thank you for all that you do."

The winners of the 2021 Liz Blanc Exceptional SARC of the Year are:

- Army: Latisha Brossard – 32nd Medical Brigade
- Navy: Melissa Nauss – Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Center New Orleans
- Air Force: Captain Jazmine Hood – 48th Fighter Wing
- Marine Corps: Yiralys Suarez – Camp Lejeune
- National Guard: Arthur Littler – 195th Wing
- Coast Guard: Shari Freeman – Training Center Cape May

The winners of the 2021 Promoting Primary Prevention Award are:

- Army: Getting to Outcomes Team – U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence, Ft Benning
- Navy: Cultural Champion Network Team – 21st Century Sailor Office
- Marine Corps: Real Relationships Team – Marine Corps Headquarters
- National Guard: Getting to Outcomes Team – Virginia National Guard
- Coast Guard: Commander Brendan Gavin – Ninth Coast Guard District