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U.S. ARMY MANEUVER SUPPORT CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FT. LEONARD WOOD, MISSOURI



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Post housing great option for some military Families

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – For the Helton Family, living on post worked out in the best way they could imagine.

Lt. Col Mike Helton, who is the deputy commanding officer for 1st Engineer Brigade, said he and his Family couldn't be happier with their decision to live on post, for benefits of Family time, camaraderie and safety.

Sometimes in the military lifestyle, Family time can be hard to come by due to the demands of work, but Mike said living on post allows them to spend more time together than they could if they lived off post.

“I love being five minutes from the office, Exchange, commissary, chapel and MWR facilities,” Mike said. “If I want to run home for lunch, or after (physical training), I can, and I get home sooner in the evenings.”

Timing can sometimes make all of the difference, when moving on post meant they could be in a home before the holidays.

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“We arrived before Christmas, and they were able to hurry up and get us in so we could enjoy Christmas in our home,” said Michelle Helton, Mike’s wife. “Fort Leonard Wood is probably one of the best installations we have lived on, because previously we have had an 18-month wait for housing, and by that time you’re moving again.”

According to Michelle, living on post has a strong sense of camaraderie amongst the neighbors, because people understand exactly what you are going through.

“Mike just got home from an 11-month deployment and having this support network is unlike anything else,” Michelle said. “When he was gone, people would bring meals and offer to help with our kids. We just look out for each other.”

For the Heltons, having a son enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program, living on post is beneficial because any of the services he might need are a five-minute drive away.

Safety is also another reason the Helton Family chooses to live here.

“The military police are always patrolling and are available whenever they are needed and have always been helpful,” Michelle said. “Whenever Mike is gone, I feel so much safer because not just anyone can come on the post. Most of the time they are vetted in one way or another, so it’s like living in a gated community.”

Having immediate access to personnel in case of an emergency provides a sense of security.

“One time we could smell an electrical burning (smell), and the fire department was there in minutes. They were so awesome with trying to figure out what was going on,” Michelle said.

She said home maintenance and repairs are also convenient.

“If we put in a work order, it will usually get completed the day that we put it in, and we’ve never had any issues.”

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For more information, contact the Fort Leonard Wood Public Affairs Office at 573.563.4145.

Encl. Photo

Photo outline: From left, Robert Ishmael, Fort Leonard Wood civilian police officer, and Sgt. Anthony Narug, conduct a foot patrol of the Woodlands neighborhood. *(Photo by Kyrene Resel, Public Affairs volunteer.)*

About Fort Leonard Wood

Fort Leonard Wood is a thriving and prosperous installation that has evolved from a small basic training post 70 years ago to a premier Army Center of Excellence that trains about 80,000 military and civilians each year.

Home to the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence, Fort Leonard Wood now trains and educates service members and develops doctrine and capabilities for the Training and Doctrine Command's U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School, U.S. Army Engineer School, and U.S. Army Military Police School, three gender integrated Initial Military Training brigades, one of only four reception stations in the Army, and the Army's largest Noncommissioned Officers Academy.

Over the past several years, Fort Leonard Wood has received numerous additional responsibilities to include supporting a colonel-commanded Marine Corps Detachment and an Air Force Detachment, which are both the largest on any Army installation, are located on Fort Leonard Wood; a large Navy Seabee Detachment and elements of the Coast Guard train here as well.
