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D and I, s c, r o and I, and and currently with your rank and duties, Sergeant Major, the brigade operation.

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Sergeant Major for Third Security Force Assistance Brigade.

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just my first question is how long have you served with this? I have served with the firms since its inception in 2008 team here at Fort Cavazos, Texas. I decided to join the ASVAB when it stood up here because I wanted the opportunity to to learn more about broadening myself with some of the other career career fields that are in the organization and having spent many, many years deployed, it was an opportunity for me to be in a position that has some form of influence.

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Working with my partner, I was a first sergeant in Team 3220 with the squadron here and third ASVAB. I left for one year to go to the Sergeant Major Academy and I got selected to come right back to the exact same organization. That's

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languages? I personally don't speak any foreign languages. No,

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what is the mission of Security Force Assistance brigades? So the mission of the Security Force Assistance brigades is to partner persistently with foreign partners across the many different regions.

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There are security force assistance brigades that are aligned to every one of the major geographic component commands. So we're talking South America, Europe, Africa. And then the third as fab, where I'm at, obviously, we operate in the Central Command of the Middle East. The mission specifically, like I stated, is to partner persistently. What we're trying to do is we are trying to help our partner forces build capacity through through capability and credibility, as well as providing a forum for power projection by having boots on the ground in those regions.

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The best part about that is, you know, through the competition space and trying to deter malign activity. Any time that you have soldiers on foreign ground tends to sway in a positive way malign actors from trying to encroach or do something bad in the regions that we as the United States see is as important to us globally. Fabulous

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answer.

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You're crushing this crushing tool. Fabulous. Why would a Security Force Assistance Command originally stood up? So the Security Force Assistance Command originalists sit up back with General Milley? There's really a twofold answer for this. The first part of that answer is the fact that for a long period of time through the global war on terror, there was always and there still there still is a requirement or a necessity to partner with foreign nations.

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The way that we were doing that in the past, as we were pulling senior leaders away from the brigade combat teams over 20 years of the global war on terror, what we actually did was we kind of crippled in a way, the Brigade Combat Teams mission by creating this different type of a culture that was focused heavily in on things like counterinsurgency, counterterrorism.

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We recognize there was a necessity for us to to elevate our position once again in large scale combat operations. It was hard for us to accomplish that if we were continuously pulling away senior leadership from the brigade combat teams who are the Army's unit of choice for large scale combat operations. So by developing the Security Force Assistance Command and then the Security Force Assistance brigades, by creating its own organization, we are now allowing the brigade combat teams to focus on manning, equipping and training those brigade combat teams for future global conflict

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battles.

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We've got an array of good answers on this one, and they've been a little bit different each time. What is the most impressive thing about security force assistance brigades? I would say that the most impressive thing about the security forces, this brigade is the individual adviser. I personally see the individual advisor and the advisor teams as the center of gravity for the organization.

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It's a breath of knowledge and talent that's coming from different parts of the army. We're talking about different MLS that are, you know, sometimes for the first time working with people they've never had a chance to work with brings different character strengths to the team. Working in a small team is different than working in a large team. It'll make or break you.

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Having having the opportunity to bring all these people together, in my opinion, is what makes the offense such a valuable asset and what makes the the ASVAB as an organization such an awesome opportunity for especially noncommissioned officers to come to this organization and do a lot of cross level training to learn things along different warfighting functions that they may otherwise not learn unless they choose to make a career out of this and find themselves one day at the Master Leader course or even the Sergeant Major Academy.

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So we are expediting their their broadening of different types of things that are going to make them a huge asset when they leave. But again, to answer the question, I said the most important or impressive part about the organization is the individual advisor that serves their fabulous energy, and they have lots of people that you just keep back together.

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And so that's yeah, even better. Yeah. What, what challenges are unique to it as fab as opposed to the conventional army? I would say some of the, some of the more unique challenges to our organization, to the fab that you don't necessarily see in the conventional force is a need to to learn how to actually build partnerships are our social responsibility you know lies you know, heavily with whether or not our advisors are able to actually build relationships with the people that they're serving with.

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If you're not the right person for it, if you don't have the right character, it's going to be hard to do that. And that is where we succeed the most, is in our ability to actually build great partnerships with our foreign partners in order to help them in the areas that are important to us as well as important to them so that we as an organization can succeed where we're required to succeed in order to help deter malign actors in a in a regular conventional unit.

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Those those soldiers are working as a part of a team that are all kind of doing the exact same thing. And there's there's nothing wrong with that that's important as well for their specific mission. But it's not as challenging sometimes to some of these are these these noncommissioned officers that come from doing something like that for an extended period into an organization where we're now asking them to work multinational Lonzo Ball out of what they currently know.

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And it's a challenge with the intellectual aspect of the organization, something that remains a challenge. But but we as an organization are committed to providing the appropriate level of training and care to our advisors to get them to where they need to be. And we've had great success globally doing so and success there. So can you tell me a little bit about this can be a, you know, strategic level about how best to operate or enable operate during the competition, the crisis and the conflict.

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Yeah. So the Security Force Assistance Brigade operates throughout the competition continuum. So, you know, when we're in the competition space, even though we're built for conflict, that is where we, in my opinion, earn are the bread and butter because it's in the competition space where deterrence is the most important. So previously I mentioned how having U.S. forces anywhere in the world acts as a deterrent for malign activity.

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It's in that space that we have an opportunity to build a relationship with a partner, identify their strengths and weaknesses. That's where we're assessing them, advising, supporting and liaising with our partners to get them trained, to build that capacity, to teach them our doctrine, to learn their doctrine, and set the conditions for them to succeed and ultimately to win in deterrence.

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If deterrence fails, where the fabs are extremely important, as we're already on the ground, you don't have U.S. forces that are that are you have U.S. forces on the ground that are knowledgeable about the area of operation. They're knowledgeable about the partner force. They've built relationships, important ties, relationships with that partner force. And what it does is in the crisis, in order to conflict face, it's having them on the ground to liaise multinational.

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It sets the conditions for the brigade combat team. Sure, the brigade combat team has to deploy to close or to destroy the enemy inside the conflict space. The fans are still important because our advisors, they're not just there to advise and competition. Our advisors are combat advisors. They're experts in their craft. We have the ability to direct fires, to work directly with our partner forces and help them engage the enemy utilizing their systems.

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But we also act as a partner on the ground that's directly connected back to the different enablers and assets that exist in theater that our advisors can employ to protect the partner force and again, set those conditions for the brigade combat team or the the c flic as they come over into conflict to fight with the enemy. Feel like you're teaching the doctrine.

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But in human language prejudice. All right.

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Okay. Let's talk about the soldier now. What you know you're a veteran of this matter. What are the characteristics that make a good stab at finding that many characteristics? Make a good stab advisor? A few that come come to mind is the one that the most advisors like to throw around the most, but they do so because it's important.

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Our advisors need to be comfortable being uncomfortable. They need to be. They need to be able to to operate in ambiguity or sorry, they need to be able to tolerate ambiguity. A lot of these teams are going to operate with a lot of autonomy. They're going to operate independent of their higher echelons. Orders are going to come, but they might not come in a way that they're used to.

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Sometimes orders may not come in. Our advisors need to be self-starters. They need to recognize that something has to happen and they were put there for a reason. So self-starters individuals who can operate in ambiguous situations tolerating that ambiguity, they have to be of good sound character, they have to be self-disciplined Again, our our advisors are operating, you know, sometimes by themselves in a 12 man team in a foreign country, and there's not going to be a leader over their shoulder.

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And we have to be able to expect that our advisor teams are going over there and they are representing the best of what we are, that they're maintaining that discipline, they're doing what they're supposed to do, and in that they are working hard and diligently to succeed no matter where they go. Families Can you tell me about the eight month, eight month, eight month rotation so they won't say, well, they must switch from the six months, which I didn't know when I wrote these questions.

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I thought it was six months. And it still is. It's still is. Hasn't changed yet. It's changing. Yeah, but I'll pretend that it changed. Okay. Perfect. Thank you. So. So currently, the way that the the the founders operate is they operate in what we call the re-arm cycle. These are three eight month phase windows. The first window that advisor when he comes to the organization will fall into is what we call our foundational window.

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It starting this foundational training window, this eight month cycle that our advisors are learning the key things to shoot, move, communicate, medicate and advise. It's really setting that foundational skill level for our advisors to be able to operate as independent advisors, but be able to support their teams effectively by identifying what needs to be trained, training on those things, and setting the conditions to move into the second eight month cycle, which we call our collective, is it's in our collective window what we refer to as our collective window.

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That eight months that the advisor team is really starting to come together. They're doing things now as a team and not just as an individual advisor. Some of the many things that they're going to accomplish in their collective window is they're going to do a mission rehearsal exercises. Specifically, they'll do live fire training, something that would be comparable to squadron to level live fire exercises.

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They're going to do situational training exercises that focus specifically on the competition space in the competition continuum. It's where the advisors have an opportunity to stand before contracted role players and go through some of the things that we've trained them up to this point to set the conditions for the validation exercise that will occur as the culminating event for that collective window.

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And this is where our advisor teams will deploy to either camp out of every Indiana to participate in operation combined victory, or they may actually participate in what we call a CTC Plus rotation at either the national training Center in Fort Irwin, California, or the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Johnson, Louisiana. And they will work independent of but with a rotational training unit from a force com unit.

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The culminating event for that being the Alex is the last thing they have to do before eventually they move into their the last of the three phases of their eight month training cycle which is the employment phase. And that's when our force packages will actually employ to the Central command and conduct assess, advise, start, correction, assess, support, liaise or advise advising with a foreign partner throughout the Middle East, the Levant, or the Castle region.

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I haven't asked as yet employed versus deployed. Why? Why the different word that in the middle of my communications, the communication from that platform, because I thought somebody mis misspoke the first time. Yeah, so that's fine. I just I could give you an answer, but it's going to be my own. I don't know if it would be a doctrine.

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The correct answer, though. That's okay. That's fine. I just didn't know if there was a difference. I don't think it's right. Like I know your take on this. Yeah. So So the difference between employment and deployment and we talk about deploying for for many, many years. You know, when an organization left, obviously as a part of the global war on terror, typically we refer to that as a deployment.

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Perhaps the reason that we've changed it to employment is when you think tactically, you know, as an individual that might be in combat, you don't deploy a weapon system. We employ, we see ourselves as professionals. And perhaps the reason that we're employing now is we are essentially setting the conditions to put us an adviser, which could be seen as a weapon in a place that's that's required in order to get after a strategic objective.

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So perhaps the reason that we do employ versus deploy is just to ensure that people understand the importance. Wow. I don't know what in the mind as a deployment you've come back from and it has it in. It might be that constant cycle. I don't know. I like yours way better and right. I don't know if it's right or wrong.

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Maybe don't put that in there. This is going to be reviewed by a ton of eyes. my gosh. Don't worry about it. All right. So have you deployed? I have deployed. Okay. And can you tell us where you've been? So I've deployed to Iraq and I have one with the third Armored Cavalry Regiment. That was when I was a young Sergeant E-5.

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I was a dismount squad leader. And we operate the al-Anbar Province. I deployed once again with the third Armored Cavalry Regiment from 05206, and I have three. I was the sniper team leader for my troop operating out of Tal Afar, Iraq, up the north. And then I had a long window between my last deployment and my next, which was 2011 or 2012 in Afghanistan, I was in the Arghandab River Valley down in the south west portion of Kandahar.

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That's when I was a platoon sergeant with four, four, four carve out of Fort Riley first. And then I deployed again to Afghanistan 2019 2020 with the third Security Force Assistance Brigade as the first sergeant. 1432 20 Correction 3320 a race that people would be mad with, you would see 3320 as a first sergeant. And my team was responsible for advising the 2/5 Corps of the Afghan National Army down in Kandahar.

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Amazing. So that deployment schedule can maybe we do or don't do that, so just do this. So could you give me a success story from your deployment, from the sounds of women? Yeah, sure. So I'd say like one one great success story that actually came out of that deployment with us were two 3322 down in Kandahar was proving that our team of 12, even though we were a captain, had the ability to echelon as high up as a corps, you know, being responsible me as a first out at the time, being responsible for personally advising the OR Fifth Corps command Sergeant major.

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We're talking about a corps that was responsible for about five different provinces throughout Afghanistan, and that was sustaining in excess of 20 plus casualties per week going in to that mission. Obviously, you know, we recognized the importance of trying to help the Afghan National Army establish some semblance of institutional viability. It was coming around the exact same time that there was talks and discussions about us pulling out.

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So we recognized early the importance of getting after the things that matter the most to try to help set the conditions to to transfer or transfer all of the things that we had been doing in the last 20 years directly over to the Afghan army. Throughout that process, we realized that there was just a lot of things that we thought we ought to be focused on, and we realized that our partners need help and they're really going to kind of hone in on the things that they think are important to them, not necessarily the things that we think are important to them.

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And it was only through building those relationships and that trust that we were able to identify the things that matter most and applying pressure where it was required to assist. A couple other things that that we realized throughout that process was sometimes the way that we do things are not always the right way, specifically when it comes to how we plan for our advising missions.

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We're always taught certain planning methodologies MDP or troop leader procedures or army design methodology. Sometimes those are good, but it's probably little, little tiny nuances from each one of those planning methodologies and pulling together to try to identify what's important for us. At the time, we were able to develop some things that worked and they worked well for us, you know, setting timelines with our partners, recognizing the importance of of establishing lines of effort, things that are advisors could focus specifically on identifying essential, advising, support tasks that that our advisors now know they have focused to, to get after certain things that are going to, you know, feed those lines of effort to get from

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a current state which wasn't good to a hopefully desired future end state. So I would say, you know, the ability to prove that our advisor teams, no matter where they go, no matter how hectic the situation they have, the right people at the right place to do the right things, to have great success. So that must have been very difficult at that period of time to be there advising.

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We are expert in this area and I see me as an advisor in Vietnam towards the end of the war and he was saying that one of his buddies was also an advisor, his counterpart, once they found out we were pulling out, would no longer speak with him at all. Completely cut off the advisor. My question to you, that is how did how did the Afghan counterparts, how did they react to your work there?

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So our our Afghan counterparts were were for the most part, receptive. They treated us with great dignity, respect. They protected us. They understood that that one of the greatest threats at the time when we were over there in 2019 and 20 was not necessarily the threat of Taliban, but it was that internal insider threat. Any time that we were planning operations, we reach out to our counterparts and they were pretty quick to assure that they they secured weapons that didn't necessarily need to be employed and set the conditions for our arrival.

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They understood why we were there. You know, they they had worked with us for over 20 years. They just didn't necessarily work with people who were Brown Berets, but they realized the expertise that we were bringing. And and I think it was more of advising as your sole purpose as opposed to prior deployments where, you know, you were you were conducting counterinsurgency operations, but you might have a counterpart that you were working with and you were advising in increments.

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But to develop an organization with the sole purpose of advising, supporting, liaising and assessing those units, I think they realized the importance of that and they really gripped on to us. So it helped us by being able to help them. And they absolutely saw the benefit. We saw the benefit. So the partnership that we created over there was was was really good, a really good partnership.

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And we got after things and nothing but respect from both sides. That's awesome. You had mentioned about imposing a core level, which is incredible. How does how does Sam prepare an advisor to try to advise a higher ranking counterpart? Know so one of the one of the big challenges of trying to prepare our advisors to to potentially advise somebody that's you know two echelons above you know their current position is that prior to coming to the organization, he or she has probably been a great success story at whatever capacity, whatever job they were doing.

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But the unfortunate truth is we are no longer necessarily operate at the tactical level. Our advisors are going over to whatever whatever region they're operating in and they're being expected to operate at the operational or strategic level. We can't expect the advisory council, the organization to know those things. We understand that. So we train training is perhaps the biggest benefit for that advisor when they first show up and arrive.

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We do this through a LPT sessions. We have what we call soft skill on the West training. That's where these these cross-functional teams, whether it be our engineer teams or our fires teams, where the experts reside in the organization, they will set up specific training events where you're going to pull in your sustain ERs or your intel folks from the other teams, and they're going to do training to learn things at a much higher level than what they learned at AIG or even what they learned while they were currently in the position they were in before they came to us.

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We have to do that because they are the me and, you know, if we don't prove ourselves in front of our partners and specifically in our air operation in CENTCOM, we're working with foreign partners that have come to our schools. You know, these are officers that have graduated. Really, when I went to the Sergeant Major Academy, there was there was foreign students there from countries like Jordan.

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So they're very intelligent. They understand how to operate as an army. But they're also going to understand if we put somebody in front of them, that's supposed to be the subject matter expert, that person fails. It's going to have a negative or a counterproductive impact on what it is we're trying to do. So we set the conditions early.

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We ensure that that each one of our advisors understands the warfighting function that he or she is going to be participating in, in advising it. And we do everything that we can to to increase their level of knowledge, to increase their overall capacity to go over there, succeed.

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If, if you if you are recruiting someone to come join you, what would you tell them? I think recruiting is probably one of the most important things to this organization. Obviously, we're not a direct fill unit. We're an organization that that requires people to want to come. So sharing a story about the sound to our future advisors is is without a doubt one of the most important endeavors we have.

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When I would try to tell future advisors is that the goal and I think we commit to this goal is that you're going to leave our organization better than when you came to this organization. And that's a reality, you know, depending on what, what or not, not depending. But regardless of what MLS he or she is, when they come to us, it's that cross-functional training that he or she is going to receive.

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When they're a member of the team, they're going to learn about things that they wouldn't learn. They're going to see, hear, read, and they're going to operate in environments that they're not used to operating in. And we are truly turning churning out a much better product to force when we talk about this being a tactical broadening assignment, it truly does broaden the individual.

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And the expectation is that when an advisor leaves here, that advisor is going to go back to the force. They're going to go back and join another team and they are going to be able to operate at a much higher level, sit down in a room with with officers and seniors and articulate things at a level that their peers are not operating at.

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That's going to that's going to, you know, truly make them shine and it's going to help them progress even further. So if I was to tell a future advisor, one thing as far as recruiting campaigns is that this organization is going to make you a better soldier or a better NCO, ultimately setting you apart from your peers. Hello.

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I'm ready. I'm coming to me cause I'm ready to go. Okay, let's talk about we're we're almost last third year some challenges and the future for us. So you have a great a vast amount of experience which is awesome. We've asked that. So what would you say are the biggest external challenges that face the biggest external challenges as far as Face is demanding, It's getting people to want to come to the stand.

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I think that there's a couple different obstacles that are in the way. You know, again, we're not a directional organization, so, you know, the many slew of different branches that exist out there, they have requirements. You know, soldiers can only move when soldiers are allowed to move in the manning cycle. And some of the things that those soldiers are going to be required to do as far as drill fills is things like drill sergeant and recruiter being an instructor, so on and so forth.

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So we're competing against the different branches who may or may not be trying to convince soldiers that this organization is an organization that's going to put them on a pedestal, a step above their peers. That is a challenge. So we have to get ahead of that early through our recruiting campaigns, getting ahead of the movement cycle, you know, Brown Berets actually getting away from, you know, the installation that they're on and taking trips to other installations to get out in front of people and tell them our story and explain, you know, how this organization truly does broaden you and make you a better soldier, better NCO, better officer in the future.

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But until know until, you know, the manning itself changes and the army the size of this, this organization is so important, you're going to start filling it, which is also not not what we want either because, you know, we want to make sure that we're selecting the best and the brightest. But but Manning is is without a doubt right now.

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It's the it's the hardest challenge. And specifically for for the fabs that are having great success regionally. You know, our SDC commanders want more of us and obviously we want to get out there and we want to work more. We want to do more. We want to be more places. But until our manning, you know, fixes that, cliff no longer is a cliff.

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I'd say that's our greatest challenge right now. Fabulous. Perfect. Yes. Yeah, yeah.

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Classes earlier and I wish I'd asked more people this question, but does each does Egypt have its own culture? So I throw a curveball. Engineer I don't I don't think each US fab has its own culture. I think that there are going to be certain things within each organization that are going to to reflect is different based on where they operate.

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So depending on which ascribe you're in is going to determine, you know, where your global partner resides. So understanding how to build partnerships and relationships might you know, there might be challenges, cultural challenges that do distinguish on as ASVAB from another. But as far as the advising, what we as an organization do, what we represent, I think the the plan and the direction that we're going in is, is trying to define our identity, to define our culture so that we can actually truly operate with interoperability that every one of our organizations, no matter where we come from, can go any place or work with any other fab in the globe.

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We all say the same thing. We see the same thing, we do the same thing. So culturally, I don't think the organizations are different, but we do operate within different cultures based off of where we are regionally. And there might be some significant changes with that or our significant differences in that. Very interesting. This is the one I want you to throw the softball down and knock it out of the park.

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Why does the United States Army need espouse? The United States Army needs us because without the security force assistance brigades, the brigade combat teams whose sole focus is to train, train and equip those be seats to to fight potential future conflicts are going to lose their leaders. Those leaders are going to be responsible for going back to the old teams of.

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Yes, fat with with very little opportunity to train together, to work together, to learn together, to go execute a mission that's extremely important to the United States. And that mission is to partner persistently with our global partners and regions that we see as important strategically. That's why the United States Army needs the help that, you know, I'll get on that flip side of that coin.

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Tell me, why does the world need espouse the world needs security force assistance brigades? Because there are individuals in the world that seek to do destruction to incur on countries that we see as important. And it's the Seahawk war. This it's the it's the mission of the security Force Assistance brigade through that persistent presence in that partnership to deter and competition to set the conditions for crisis in conflict and ultimately win.

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So that we can prevent malign actors from trying to do malign activities in areas that are important to us.

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year. You can start after that because people think that they get the whole and you're going to cut it.

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You move it around, they got to

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go and just saying, That's all right. Yeah. So in 2018 and 2020 are deployed as the first sergeant with you. 32. God dang it. Yeah. Why do I keep saying 32? 32. All right. 33. man. That's I'm saying they're got to be like, dude, what are you doing? All right. 20, 19, 2020.

00:32:37:11 - 00:32:45:14

I deployed with the third Security Force Assistance Brigade as the first sergeant for Cat 3320 in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

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Campaign today to win tomorrow. Little more. Good. What Little more? We are. Really? Yeah, man, you seem pretty laid back. So it's going to be a stretch for an ad

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campaign today to win tomorrow.

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That's good. All right. Victorious together. Victorious together.

00:33:09:15 - 00:33:18:22

You want me to say that, right? The camera. Just that. That's it. red, white and blue. He's Captain America,