

## Blood Donor Center Answers Call

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By Mark Salcedo, Blood Donor Recruiter, Fort Leonard Wood, MO



*Spc. Danielle Hume, Fort Leonard Wood Blood Donor Center, helps a Soldier in training donate blood. Photo by Mark Salcedo.*

Most people know there are several blood types — A, B, AB, and O — and some may even know what their type is. What many people don't know is how they fit into the big picture when it comes to blood donations.

The Armed Services Blood Program, the official military blood program, needs all blood types to care for patients in military hospitals, as well as troops injured overseas.

As one of the 22 Department of Defense blood donor centers worldwide, the Fort Leonard Wood Blood Donor Center stands ready to do its part.

“Blood donated to the ASBP goes directly into the military’s worldwide health care system,” said Capt. James Burke, blood donor center officer-in-charge.

Spc. Danielle Hume, Fort Leonard Wood Blood Donor Center, helps a Soldier in training donate blood. Photo by Mark Salcedo.

“At Fort Leonard Wood, the donor center owes its growing success to the committed blood donors within the post’s military community, command teams who directly support the blood donor center and a dedicated staff,” Burke said.

Last year, the Fort Leonard Wood Blood Donor Center collected more than 6,700 pints of blood for military hospitals.

Since January 2008, blood donations have increased by 35 percent on Fort Leonard Wood.

In March, the donor center staff broke a previous monthly high collection record by collecting 909 units. The previous record was 868.

“Our nation’s military depends on the ASBP to provide a sustained and safe blood supply across the country and around the world,” said Col. Steve Beardsley, Army Blood Program director.

“Not only does the ASBP support our combat troops worldwide, it also supplies the military’s stateside and overseas hospitals with blood products for daily operations,” Beardsley said. Deployments have decreased the number of available military blood donors at some ASBP installations, making it a challenge to recruit a continuous supply of donors.

But Beardsley said Fort Leonard Wood — being a training installation with a continuous crop of potential donors — clearly makes it the biggest opportunity in the Great Plains Region to expand blood collections to support deployed troops.

“Our training bases are strategic donor assets that must be harnessed for the ASBP, which ultimately benefits all servicemembers and their families,” he said.

“Because of this, the Fort Leonard Wood Blood Donor Center is always looking for new blood donors — military organizations, active Army, Reserve, and National Guard, and family readiness organizations — to help meet the center’s blood requirements established by the ASBP.”

There are five ways people can help the Fort Leonard Wood Blood Donor Center and support America’s troops and their families:

- Give blood
- Organize a blood drive
- Volunteer at an ASBP blood drive.
- Help a friend by watching their children while they go donate
- Spread the word

To find out more about volunteering opportunities or to schedule a blood donation appointment, visit [www.militaryblood.dod.mil](http://www.militaryblood.dod.mil).

To find out more about the Fort Leonard Wood Blood Donor Center, call Mark Salcedo at 596.5385.