

# **Now You Know!**

*FAST FACTS ABOUT FORT DRUM AND THE NORTH COUNTRY*



# ADVOCATE**DRUM**

**FORT DRUM REGIONAL LIAISON ORGANIZATION**

# Quality of Life

Fort Drum and the North Country provide quality housing choices for Soldiers and Civilians, both on and off the installation.

An estimated 5,808 jobs existed in our local economy during 2023 because of Fort Drum related activity; these are civilian jobs not on Fort Drum.

**Clayton has one of the best small town arts scenes in the United States, according to USA Today's 10Best.**

The origins of Arbor Day (J. Sterling Morton), the Dewey Decimal System (Melville Dewey), the Five and Dime Store (F.W.Woolworth), the safety pin, Philadelphia Cream Cheese, Lifesavers and Thousand Islands Dressing, can all be traced to the North Country.

With a median age of 32.8 years, Watertown is ranked #2 among the "Youngest Metropolitan Areas in New York State".

Local transportation infrastructure has improved through Federal, State and Local investment. Significant improvements include Interstate 781-Fort Drum connector and Watertown International Airport. In 2018, NYS funded and built the \$7.6M Bompoto Bridge over NYS Route 26 connecting Fort Drum's main post to Wheeler Sack Army Airfield.

The Watertown International Airport (ART) features two runways, with full parallel taxiways, weather reporting and navigation aids including numerous instrument approach procedures. A terminal expansion project currently underway will add gate room capacity, a jet bridge, restaurant, automated baggage claim, and more circulation space to improve the customer experience. Completion is expected by March 2025.

The Airport serves the General Aviation and Commercial aviation needs of NNY, Southern Ontario & the Fort Drum region. Commercial Air Service is conducted by American Airlines with two flights daily to and from Philadelphia International Airport, PA with connecting opportunities with 22 airlines and 130 destinations worldwide.



There are fifteen NYS Parks in Jefferson County, many which offer scenic views of Lake Ontario or the Thousand Islands. In fact, two are only accessible by boat.

Operation Yellow Ribbon works with local community groups to highlight family focused events that support our Military Families through special recognition and/or admission discounts.

No matter what the season, outdoor recreation abounds in the North Country from fishing to boating, skiing hiking, hunting, and chasing beautiful sunsets.

# Education Impact

**Military families enrolled 5,100 children in Jefferson County schools, or 32% of all students enrolled during the 2022-23 school year.**

The three largest school districts in Jefferson County have military student populations of 48%, 40% and 20%.

Approximately \$33.5M in Federal Impact Aid was received by local school districts to support education of students during the year ending September 30, 2023. Over the past three years, approximately \$108M in Federal Impact Aid has been received by local schools.

Fort Drum's STARBASE Academy allows local students to expand their knowledge about the military, explore future careers within STEM all the while enhancing the connection between Fort Drum and the local community.



Photo by Sgt. Amber Edwards - 27th Public Affairs Detachment

Approximately 1,200 tri-county area school children from twelve school districts attended an Army Career Day at Fort Drum. The event will be held annually, and will expand to include school districts in the Central New York region.

**Nearly 25% of Jefferson Community College (JCC) enrollment was Soldiers, Family Members and Veterans during the 2023 Fall Semester.**

Educational offerings in the Fort Drum region include associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees, along with micro-credentials and career training. In addition, Jefferson offers credit-bearing classes on Fort Drum.

JCC, Lewis County and Jefferson-Lewis BOCES are partners in an Education Center in Lowville, NY. The facility includes 5 classrooms, a fabrication lab, mechatronics classroom, and a lab for BOCES instruction. The Center offers a mix of college credit classes, professional certifications, career training, leisure learning, and BOCES classes.

JCC is one of 102 schools selected for "gold" award status, and ranked 7th out of 80 small community colleges nationwide, for its leading practices, outcomes, and effective programs in the 2024-25 Military Friendly® School designation by Victory. JCC is a 2023-24 Military Friendly Spouse School as designated by Victory.

**2023 Military Times, Best for Vets: College rankings – JCC is the second highest ranked SUNY two-year college in the Northeast region.**



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Neysa Canfield - 10th Mountain Division Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Office

# Economic Impact

Fort Drum is the largest 'Single Site' employer in New York State.

Fort Drum is the largest employer in Northern New York. As of September 2023, there were 14,645 Soldiers assigned to Fort Drum and about 3,785 civilians employed.

Fort Drum's total economic impact for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2023 was \$1,907,310,047 or \$217,730 per hour, every hour of every day.

In addition to the 18,430 military and civilian jobs on post, Fort Drum spending also supported 5,808 jobs in the local community.

The top five indirect and induced job sectors are: Construction; Health and Social Services; Educational Services; Agriculture & Natural Resources; and Retail Trade.

Total military, civilian, retirees, and contractor payroll for FY 23 was \$1,548,070,302 or \$4,241,288 per day.

In 2023, the Fort Drum community was comprised of 14,645 Soldiers and 16,269 Family members. The 30,914 members of the Fort Drum community represent 26.9% of Jefferson County's Population.

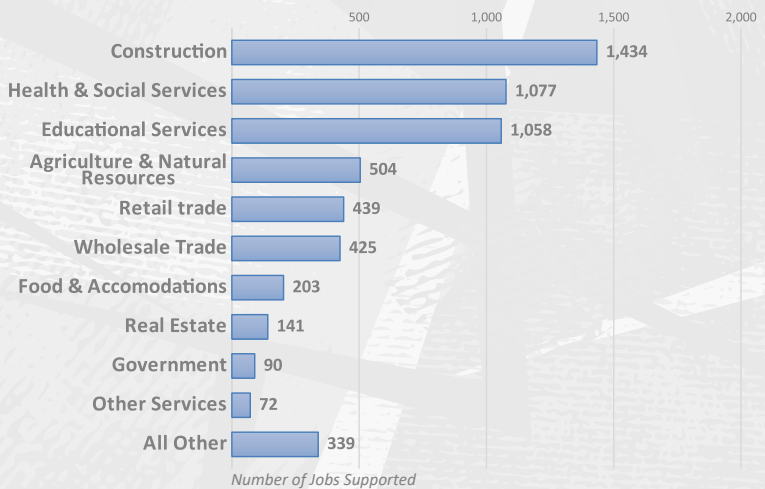
- 3,671 Families live in housing on Fort Drum,
- 4,583 single, junior enlisted Soldiers live in the barracks on Fort Drum, and
- 186 Soldiers live in unaccompanied housing on-post,
- 13,703 Soldiers are eligible to live in either housing location: 8,440 live on-post (61.5%) and 5,263 live off-post (38.5%)
- Of the 15,914 family members, 7,883 live on post (49.5%) and 8,031 live off post (50.5%)

Fort Drum is the largest defense community in the Northeast.

Over the past 10 years (2014-2023), the median price for a home and the number of homes sold in the tri-county area surrounding Fort Drum has steadily increased while the time a home spends on the market has plummeted. The median price over the period has increased 37% in Jefferson County, the number sold is up 26%, and time on the market is down 68%. In Lewis County, the price is up 53% with a 7% increase in single family homes sold and a 61% reduction in the time it takes to sell a home. The price is up 51% in St. Lawrence County, the number sold up 28%, and marketing time is down 55%.

According to realtor.com, financially-savvy Generation Zers are successfully becoming homeowners. Many of the metros on their list have strong military connections. Watertown is No. 6.

## Indirect & Induced Job Impact by Industry In Tri-County Region



FY 2023 Fort Drum construction, supplies and services totaled approximately \$159M and was predominately spent in New York State. Over \$135M was identified specific to the tri-county area.

For the year ending March 31, 2023, Taxable Sales in the tri-county region was:

Jefferson County	Lewis County	St. Lawrence County
\$292,707 per hour	\$53,515 per hour	\$233,778 per hour

In response to NYS's Food Donation Organics Recycling law, Fort Drum donated 13.53 tons of food in 2023.

Through a Public/Public/Public partnership, the Development Authority of the North Country and the City of Watertown provide water and sewage transmission and treatment services to Fort Drum and surrounding communities.

**Since the reactivation of the 10th Mountain Division, the direct financial impact of Fort Drum in the North Country is \$34.0 billion dollars.**

# Healthcare

Since the 10th Mountain Division arrived in 1985, Fort Drum has relied on the local community for hospital services. The Army and local hospitals work collaboratively to provide inpatient capabilities since there are no hospitals on Fort Drum.



*Photograph provided courtesy of Samaritan Medical Center*

As reported in the Fort Drum Economic Impact Study for Federal Fiscal Year 2023, the Fort Drum healthcare model has contributed more than \$127.5M to the economic stability of the region.

In FY2023 more than \$1.3M in dental care was provided to Soldiers through the local civilian dental provider network.

Fort Drum MEDDAC, which provides outpatient healthcare services on post, maintains 27 facilities and a workforce of 806 personnel. Its economic contribution included \$6.2M in supplies, equipment, and contracts; \$47.2M in Tricare; and \$72.7 million in payroll.

Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization works to strengthen the healthcare system by leveraging resources to address identified gaps. In partnership with the Military Treatment Facility, they focus on emergency medical services, behavioral health/substance use, healthcare workforce recruitment/retention, care coordination, health information technology, telemedicine, and population health.

Hospitals in the Fort Drum region annually support: outpatient visits – 693,000; emergency room visits – 72,000; hospital admission – 11,000; babies delivered – 1,900 approximately.

FDRHPO has coordinated more than \$15.5M in savings (a 76% overall discount) for local healthcare providers to access expansive fiber-optic networks since 2010.

Approximately \$4.4M invested for behavioral health and substance abuse prevention and treatment.

Over \$2M to improve coordination of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), including air medical services since 2015.

Over \$5.7M in population health investment to conduct community health assessment and improvement activities since 2015.

More than \$7M for health workforce support, which has yielded several new health education programs and hundreds of new healthcare professionals since 2014.

Directly in line with the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), **this model has established a military-civilian integrated healthcare delivery system.** We are planned, positioned & proven, innovatively working together to ensure a high quality, patient centric system.

# Fort Drum Facts

**The 10th Mountain Division is the Army's most deployed division since 1992.**

The Division has participated in 11 Division Headquarters (HQ) deployments (Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Uzbekistan, Iraq, and Europe). The Division has also supported operations with 48 separate unit deployments to Afghanistan and 39 separate unit deployments to Iraq.

Fort Drum is a Department of the Army designated **Regional Collective Training Center** that provides full-spectrum training and base operations support to all service branches to include U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard organizations from 12 states as well as members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Annually, Fort Drum provides training and base operations support to over 15,600 members of the U.S. Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC), as well as Federal, State, and local Law Enforcement agencies.

Fort Drum and Wheeler-Sack Army Airfield lead the Unmanned Aerial Systems operations in support of the warfighter and joint and national initiatives to integrate UAS operations within the National Airspace System. Fort Drum was the second location in the Army selected to field and integrate the Gray Eagle (MQ-1) into operations.

Fort Drum is comprised of 108,733 acres; 75,600 acres of that land is used for ranges and training areas.

Fort Drum has 47 range facilities, 2 active drop zones, plus 18 major training areas and 2 urban terrain training sites; this allows all weapons fielded by the Army to be fired at Fort Drum.

Fort Drum has a Joint Air-Ground Bombing Range which provides training opportunities that integrate Close Air Support with ground maneuver live fires. This facility supports up to 2,000 lb. Aerial delivered bombs and fixed wing strafing scenarios. The installation is equipped with 3 Joint Threat Emitter Sites that are designed to replicate a large-scale integrated air defense system. This capability is unmatched in the Northeast and places **Fort Drum as the premier training site for all aviation platforms along the east coast.**

Fort Drum has numerous virtual training suites to assist Soldiers in the preparation for live training and real-world missions. This includes a Mission Training Complex, Small Arms Weapons Simulators, Rotary Wing Aircraft Simulators, Combat Trauma Medical Simulators, Vehicle Route Clearance Simulator, and Artillery Simulations.

Fort Drum has the longest military runway, 10,000 feet long, by 150 feet wide, in the northeast United States, with maximum on ground space for nine – C-17 Aircraft (174 ft long and has a wingspan of 169 ft, 10 inches). The airfield also has a 1,200 Soldier capacity passenger terminal and is home to 123 rotary-wing aircraft.

**Fort Drum is a premier training facility, and the Division is the training partner of choice for New York, Ohio, Vermont, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Delaware, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Maine & Massachusetts Reserve & Guard units.**