

# Now You Know

*Fast Facts about Fort Drum and the North Country*

**ADVOCATED 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 5,156 jobs existed in our local economy during 2025 because of Fort Drum related activity; these are civilian jobs not on Fort Drum.

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.

Watertown International Airport (ART) is a modern and expanding aviation complex, featuring two runways with full parallel taxiways, advanced navigation aids, various instrument approach procedures, and real-time weather reporting.

The Airport also serves General Aviation needs with a commercial medical evacuation helicopter station, two flight schools, an Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting Station, a Full-Service Fixed Base Operator (FBO), and multiple storage hangars.

In 2025 a major terminal expansion was completed, along with expanded commercial aircraft parking, a jet bridge, automated baggage claim, and expanded circulation space.

ART, supported by American Airlines, provided commercial air service with two daily flights to and from Philadelphia International Airport (PA), to over 51,000 passengers.

The Adopt a 10th Mountain Platoon Program is how our communities help to reduce the adverse impacts of deployments on Soldiers and their Families. Since 1992, our local Association of the United States Army Chapter has ensured that every platoon that deployed from Fort Drum had a sponsor (business, school, church group, civic organization, etc.).

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.

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



Dry Hill Ski Area

In a historic move, U.S. Ski & Snowboard named the U.S. Army its first official armed forces partner, shining a spotlight on the **10th Mountain Division's enduring legacy in shaping America's ski and snowboard industry.**

As part of this partnership, athletes proudly wore **Army/10th Mountain Division patches during the 2025-26 World Cup season and the 2026 Olympic & Paralympic Winter Games**, honoring the Division's contributions both on and off the battlefield.



**The Division proudly claims 19 Olympians** – 16 athletes and 3 coaches—who competed in 7 Olympic Games (1932, 1936, 1948, 1952, 1956, 1972, and 1988)

# Education

Military families enrolled 3,266 children in Jefferson County schools, or 20.3% of all students enrolled during the 2025-26 school year.

The three largest school districts in Jefferson County have military student populations of 53%, 41% and 2%.

Approximately \$44.7M in Federal Impact Aid was received by local school districts to support education of students during the year ending September 30, 2025. Over the past three years, approximately \$122M in Federal Impact Aid has been received by local schools.

Fort Drum's STARBASE Academy allows local 5th grade students to expand their knowledge about the military, explore future careers within Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) all while enhancing the connection between Fort Drum and the local community.



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

Nearly 22% of Jefferson Community College (JCC) enrollment was Soldiers, Family Members and Veterans during the 2025 Fall Semester. With a dedicated support team for active duty service members and veterans, including a Veterans Center on campus, Jefferson's staff have the unique skills needed to assist our military and military-affiliated community

Educational offerings in the Fort Drum region include associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees, along with microcredentials, career training and pre-certification courses. 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 Center offers a mix of professional certifications, career training, leisure learning, and BOCES classes.

Clarkson University's top ranked Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC) programs strengthen teamwork, collaboration, and leadership skills. Army & Air Force ROTC programs train on and off campus and benefit from their relationship with the 10th Mountain Division.

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 Viqtory. Additionally, JCC is a 2024-25 Military Friendly Spouse School as designated by Viqtory.

**Syracuse University's** commitment to veterans and military students goes back at least as far as World War I and is **consistently ranked among the top private universities by Military Times for being the "Best Place for Veterans"**.





Photo by Spc. Samuel Shomento, 10th Mountain Division

# 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 2025, there were 13,320 Soldiers assigned to Fort Drum and about 3,698 civilians and contractors employed.

**Fort Drum's total spending for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025 generated a total economic impact of \$1,995,400,000 or \$227,785 per hour, every hour of every day).**

**In addition to the 17,018 Military and Civilian jobs on post, Fort Drum spending also supported 5,156 jobs off post.**

**Total military, civilian, retirees, and contractor payroll for FY 25 was \$1,935,875,000 or \$5,303,700 per day.**

In the 4th quarter of 2025, the Fort Drum community was comprised of 13,320 Soldiers and 22,736 Family members. The 36,056 members of the Fort Drum community represent 32.3% of Jefferson County's Population.

- 5,017 single, junior enlisted Soldiers are required to live in the barracks on Fort Drum
- 185 Soldiers live in unaccompanied housing on-post,
- Overall, 67% of Soldiers live on post, and 33% live off-post.
- 47% of Soldiers with Family members live on-post and 53% live off-post.
- Fort Drum had a Transient Training population of 15,147 personnel comprised of non-resident units of Fort Drum, U.S. Army Reserve, foreign allied military units, federal/state/local law enforcement agencies and others.

**Fort Drum has the largest defense community in the Northeast.**

Over the past 10 years (2015-2025), the median price for a home increased while available inventory decreased. The median price increased 67% in Jefferson & Lewis Counties. Median price in 2015 was \$150,000 and was \$225,000 in 2025. The number of homes for sale has sharply decreased over the years, in December 2015 about 1250 homes were for sale but in December 2025 only 500 were on the market. Inventory is tight throughout the area. Days on market are increasing, on average in 2023 homes marketed for 43 days as opposed to 2025 when homes marketed for 54 days. Sellers are still realizing about 97% of their asking price at closing. About one third of the homes sold in the area are financed with VA loans.

**Indirect and Induced Job Impact by Industry In Tri-County Region**



FY 2025 Fort Drum construction, supplies and services totaled approximately \$97.5M and was predominately spent in New York State.

Over \$83M was specifically spent in the area surrounding Fort Drum.

For the year ending December 31, 2025, Taxable Sales in the tri-county region was:

| Jefferson County   | Lewis County      | St. Lawrence County |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| \$310,150 per hour | \$56,928 per hour | \$236,140 per hour  |

In response to NYS's Food Donation Organics Recycling law, Fort Drum donated 46.8 tons of food in 2025.

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 \$37.8 billion dollars.**

# Healthcare

Fort Drum is the only military installation with a division that does not have a hospital on post. Since the 10th Mountain Division arrived in 1985, Fort Drum has relied on the local community for urgent, emergency, in-patient, and some specialty services. Directly in line with the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), this model has established a military-civilian integrated healthcare delivery system.

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

- Hospitals in the Fort Drum region annually support outpatient visits - 1,100,000; emergency room visits - 96,000; hospital admissions -15,000; babies delivered - 1,800.
- As reported in the Fort Drum Economic Impact Statement for Federal Fiscal Year 2025:
- The Fort Drum healthcare model has contributed more than \$104.4M to the economic stability of the region.
- In FY25 approximately \$1.1M in dental treatment 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 731 personnel. Its economic contribution included \$6.6M in supplies, equipment, and contracts; \$33.9M in Tricare; and \$62.8M in payroll.
- Nearly \$4.6 million for behavioral health initiatives, including increased access to care, opioid use disorder treatment, and suicide and substance abuse prevention since 2013
- More than \$7.8 million for health workforce support, which has yielded several new health education programs and hundreds of new healthcare professionals.
- Approximately \$2.8 million to improve coordination of Emergency Medical Services, including air medical services since 2015.
- At least \$7.4 million in population health investment to conduct community health assessments and improvement activities since 2015.

We are planned, positioned, and proven, innovatively working together to ensure a high quality, patient-centric system.

Photo by Sgt. Jean Sanon, U.S. Army South  
ANTUCO, BiO-BiO, CHILE, 08.25.2025



# Fort Drum Facts

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



March 2, 2026, Staff Sgt. Michael H. Ollis of the 10th Mountain Division was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

The Division has participated in 16 Division Headquarters (HQ) deployments (Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Uzbekistan, Iraq, Poland, Europe, and the U.S. Southern Border). The Division also supported 48 separate unit deployments to Afghanistan, 41 separate unit deployments to Iraq, and 2 separate unit deployments to Cuba and Africa.

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 14,000 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. With 47 range facilities, 2 active drop zones, plus 18 major training areas and 2 urban terrain sites; allowing all weapons fielded by the Army to be fired at Fort Drum.

Fort Drum Joint Air-Ground Bombing Range provides training opportunities that integrate Close Air Support with ground maneuver live fires, supporting up to 2,000 lb. Aerial delivered bombs and fixed wing strafing scenarios; and three (3) Joint Threat Emitter sites designed to replicate a large-scale integrated air defense system. Combined 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.

**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.**

