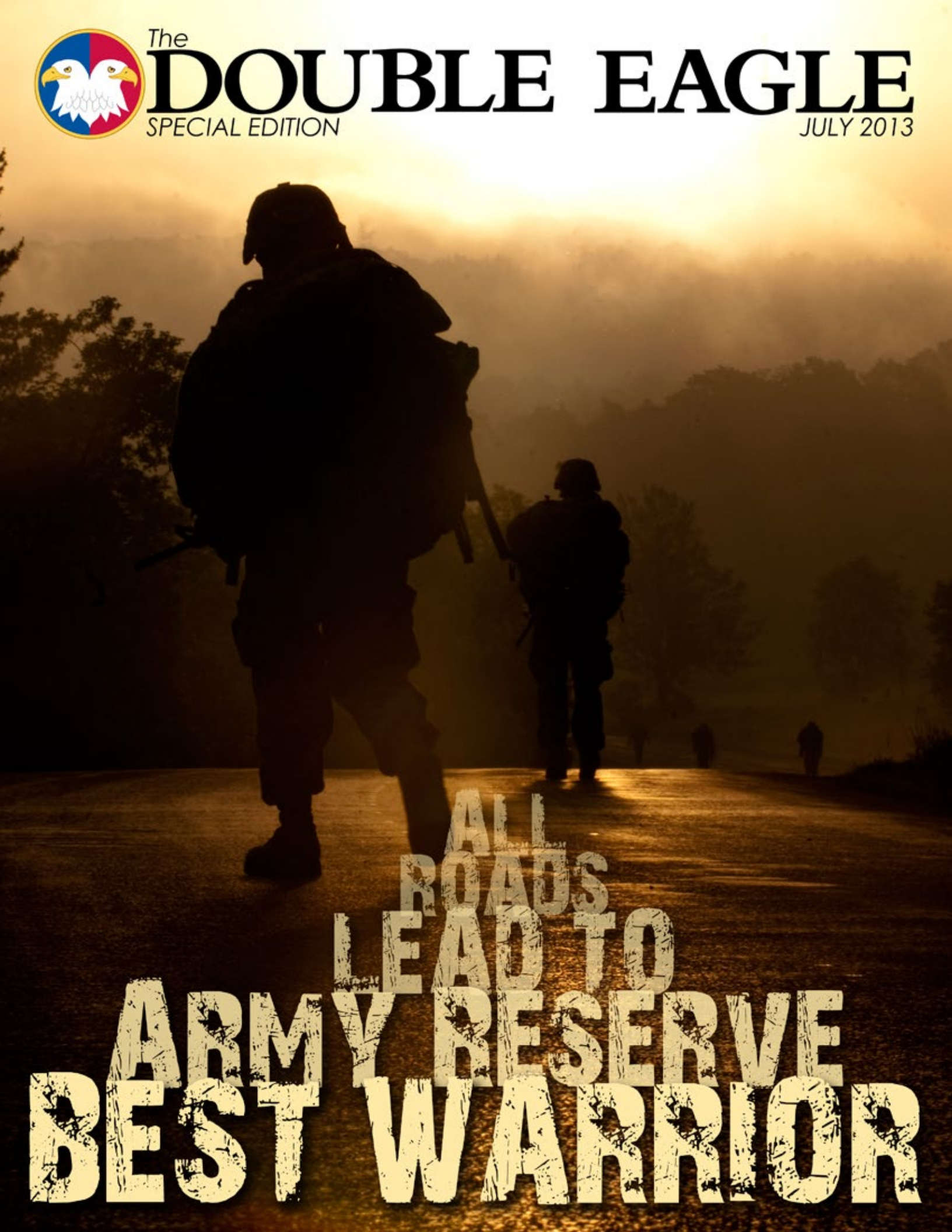




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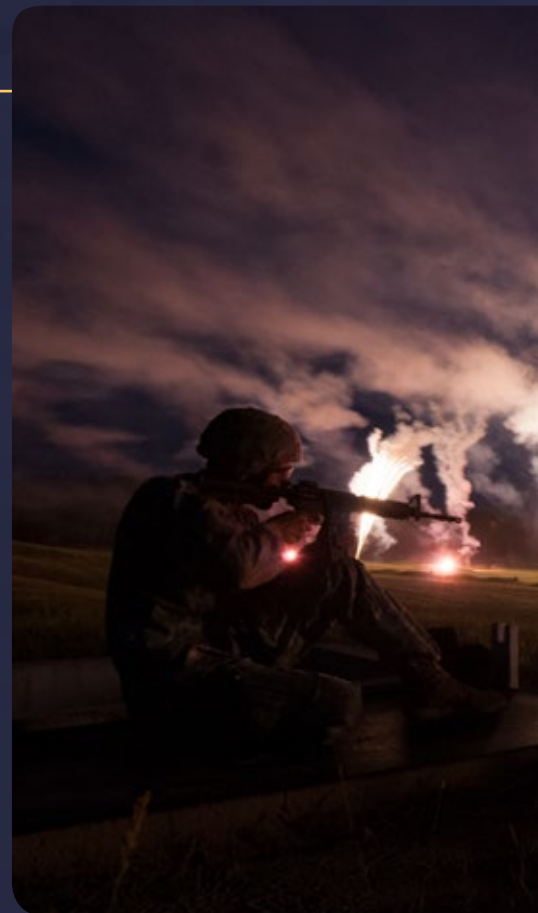
JULY 2013



ALL
ROADS
LEAD TO
ARMY RESERVE
BEST WARRIOR



Army Reserve Sgt. Blayne Peterson, a combat medic representing the Army Reserve Medical Command and native of Winamac, Ind., engages targets during the M4 Rifle qualification night fire event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



ON THE COVER:
U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior candidates walk along at a quick pace into the rising sun during the 10 kilometer road march at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Sgt. Carina Garcia/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

Soldiers load onto a CH-47 Chinook helicopter as part of an event for the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition held at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25th. (Photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



The DOUBLE EAGLE
"Twice the Citizen! Army Strong!"

**OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE, FORT BRAGG, N.C.**



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A Soldier organizes ammunition to be loaded in magazines for the M4 Rifle Qualification event at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Scott D. Turner/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



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Manella, Fromm named

*Story & photos by Timothy L. Hale
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - The U.S. Army Reserve Command announced the winners of the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition June 28 during a ceremony here at the Staff Sgt. Todd R. Cornell Non-commissioned Officer Academy.

Sgt. 1st Class Jason Manella was named the Army Reserve Noncommissioned Officer of the Year and Spc. Mitchell Fromm was named the Army Reserve Soldier of the Year.

Manella, a native of Fremont, Calif., is a Civil Affairs Specialist assigned to the 445th Civil Affairs Battalion in Mountain View, Calif. He represented the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) in the competition.

Fromm, a native of Marathon City, Wis., is a Combat Engineer assigned to the 428th Engineer Company in Wausau, Wis. He represented the 416th Theater Engineer Command in the competition.

After days of little sleep, rain that never seemed to end, and mosquitoes and gnats that incessantly swarmed around all of the Best Warrior candidates, Manella and Fromm now face an even more daunting task – preparing to represent the Army Reserve in the Department of the Army Best Warrior Competition at Fort Lee, Va. in October.

“It’s an honor to be selected and represent the Army Reserve in front of the entire Army,” Manella said. “I’ve been working hard at this for almost a year now ... and I am ready to move forward and give it the best I can.”

For Manella, not only did he have to overcome all that was thrown before him in the competition, but he also has made a tremendous recovery from several improvised explosive device attacks while deployed to Afghanistan in 2012.

To aid his recovery, Manella worked on regaining his short-term memory by learning the Army Study Guide.

For Fromm, competing in Best Warrior is just one more step in his professional development.

He volunteers for every training opportunity his unit has to offer, to include the Reserve Foreign Exchange Program. Fromm said he joined the military because he wanted to do everything, so he seeks out every class possible and accepts every opportunity forwarded to him.

Now, Fromm has another opportunity to succeed.

“I’m just going to take it real slow and keep learning something new every day,” Fromm said. “I expect a lot of movement, very little sleep and it’s going to be exciting. I like all those things.”

Fromm credits unit cohesion for his success throughout this year’s competition cycle.

“I’m not going by myself, I’m going with the whole 428th because every one of them have spent time with me and taken time out of their personal schedules,” Fromm said.

Even though there were only two overall winners, Command Sgt. Maj. Luther Thomas, Jr., the command sergeant major of the Army Reserve, challenged the NCOs and Soldiers competing this year to go back to their units and pass on what they learned this week.

“I need you to go back to your units and train up 38 other Soldiers who can compete at this level and make your own companies a great place to train,” Thomas said.

“Second, as you climb up through the NCO ranks, I need each one of you to lift up those behind you. To coach, teach, mentor, and encourage other Soldiers in your formations to compete in the Best Warrior competition. But more importantly, ensure your Soldiers are trained in the basics of Soldiering,” he continued.

“And third, I want you to continue to be an example for your Soldiers in our Army Reserve. I want you to remain committed to our profession of arms,” Thomas said.

The week started with candidates competing in Best Warrior Competition representing the 205,000 Soldiers serving in the U.S. Army Reserve.

The 23 NCOs and 16 junior enlisted Soldiers spent the week on a variety of Army challenges that tested the limits of their physical and mental capabilities to include: the Army Physical Fitness Test, night land navigation, urban orienteering, weapons qualifications, Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills, a 10km ruck march, a written exam and essay, a sergeants major board appearance, and a Modern Army Combatives tournament.

Their military backgrounds and experience represent the entire spectrum of the Army Reserve. Many have deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait. Their career fields include civil affairs, military police, healthcare, mechanics, human resources, intelligence, engineering, and musicians.

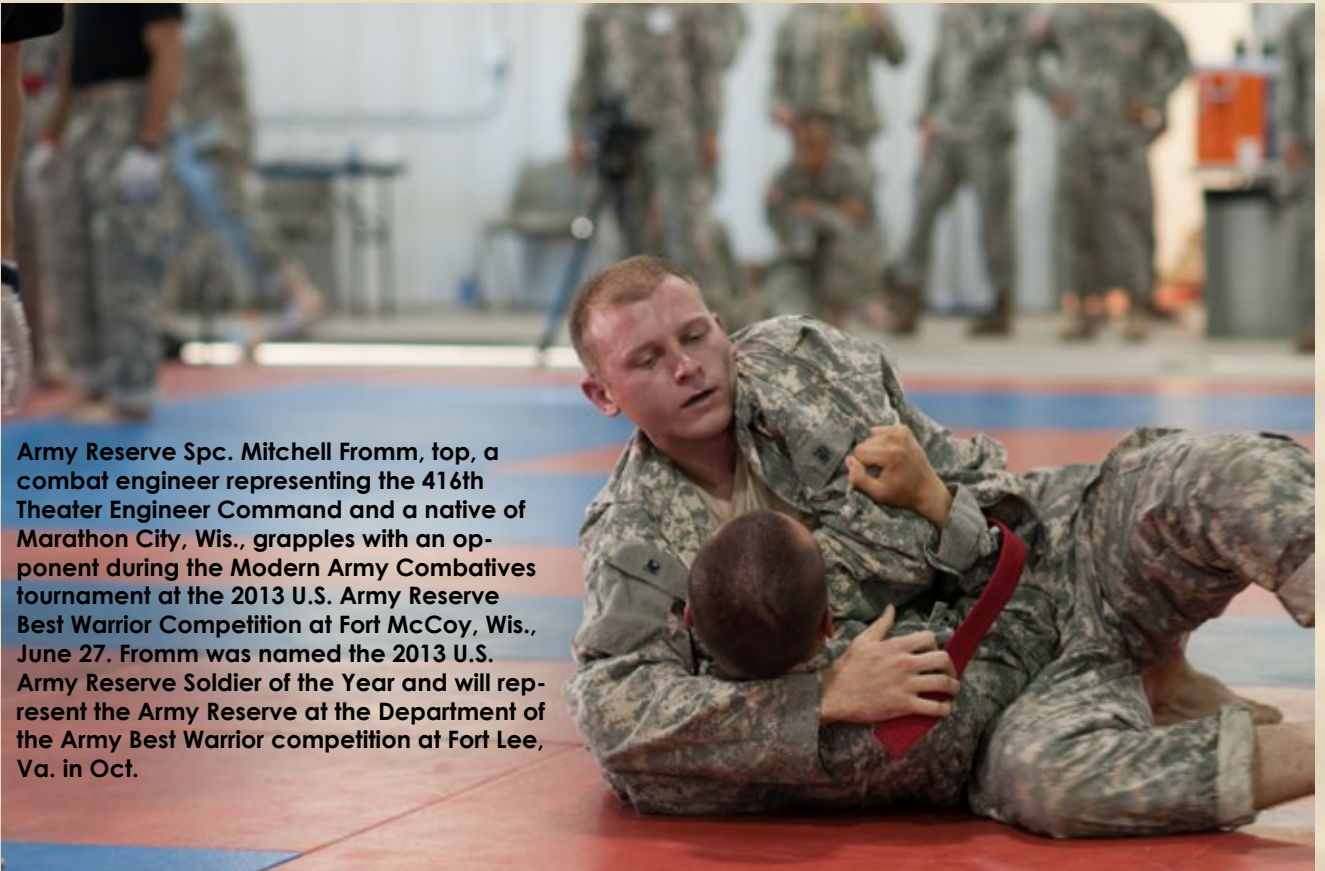
They are America’s Warrior-Citizens, representing a wide cross-section of communities from across the United States.

and Best in Army Reserve

Army Reserve Sgt. 1st Class Jason Manella, a civil affairs specialist representing the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) and a native of Fremont, Calif., competes in the 10km ruck march event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. Manella was named the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Noncommissioned Officer of the Year and will represent the Army Reserve at the Department of the Army Best Warrior competition at Fort Lee, Va. in Oct.



Army Reserve Spc. Mitchell Fromm, top, a combat engineer representing the 416th Theater Engineer Command and a native of Marathon City, Wis., grapples with an opponent during the Modern Army Combatives tournament at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 27. Fromm was named the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Soldier of the Year and will represent the Army Reserve at the Department of the Army Best Warrior competition at Fort Lee, Va. in Oct.



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Martin Jones, right, a drill sergeant assigned to the 108th Training Command, prepares Soldiers to search a detainee during a training event in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25.



Best Warrior candidates supported by the total force

*Story & photo by Staff Sgt. Amanda Smolinski
USACAPOC(A) Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. - "Your task here is to search a detainee according to performance steps, locate and confiscate all weapons, contraband and any items of intelligent value. Hooah! Do you understand what you must do?" asked Staff Sgt. Martin Jones, drill sergeant from the 108th Training Command in Charlotte, N.C.

Approximately 200 Army Reserve support personnel served as cadre and subject matter experts during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior competition held here, June 23-28, to include drill sergeants like Jones.

"We reached down to all of our major commands and pulled in our specialized unit personnel to include units like the 377th Theater Sustainment Command, because operations and training is their job," said Sgt. Maj. Richard Prater, the U.S. Army Reserve Command noncommissioned officer in charge of the competition.

"And who is always rehearsing Soldier skills?" he asked. "The drill sergeants. So, we pulled in the 108th Training Command.

"I think that everyone would agree, there is a certain 'air' about a drill sergeant. You see the hat, and it commands a certain level of respect," Prater said. "I wouldn't have anyone else run the skill level one events."

There were 39 Soldiers representing the major Army Reserve commands who were tested against one another on their basic Soldier skills to include warrior tasks and training, written exams, and the more physical events such as a 10km ruck march and the Army Physical Fitness Test. However, in

Prater's second year overseeing the competition, his goal was to ensure that repeat competitors experience a fresh and challenging competition.

"I added 10 mystery events this year," Prater said. "On the day the competitors were in-processing, they walked into a suicide awareness scenario, and not one of them knew that it wasn't real."

Well-rehearsed role-players from the 377th Theater Sustainment Command's chaplain office were staged in office buildings where each competitor was sent to in order to complete their in-processing checklist. However, when they walked into the building, they met role-players who portrayed individuals suffering from post-partum depression, a military technician facing the furlough with a wife who is threatening to take their kids and leave him, post-traumatic stress disorder, or infidelity.

"The feedback from that mystery event was fantastic," Prater said. "They won't forget it because they lived through it, not knowing that any of it wasn't real. Some Soldiers were so visibly upset, we had to sit them down and calm them because they were upset with themselves that they missed those signals, and they had potentially walked away from someone that was suicidal."

Sgt. Maj. James Stewart, role-player and 377th chief chaplain's assistant, said the invisible wounds such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorders are the hardest to identify because they are internal.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

Sponsors: the ultimate two-man team

*Story by Staff Sgt. Amanda Smolinski
USACAPOC(A) Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - "If you want to take on the challenge of taking care of Soldiers and being put in a position to really work as a team, a two-man team, (he pauses), this is it," said Sgt. 1st Class Karl Schirmacher, sponsor for Sgt. 1st Class Jason Manella, an Army Reserve Best Warrior competitor representing the 445th Civil Affairs Battalion, U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) in Mountain View, Calif.

With more than 27 years in the military, there is one characteristic, among others, that he lives by — selfless leadership.

Schirmacher has been serving on a civil affairs team since 2007, before he became the company first sergeant. He credits his experience as a civil affairs operator both in the small, four-man teams and the relationship building that takes place with key stakeholders in an area of operations, for his ability to step into the role as sponsor for the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition held at Fort McCoy, Wis.

"There are so many leaders driven by their ego and Soldiers getting left behind," Schirmacher said.

Schirmacher remembers when he first met Manella. He laughed and said that he looked like a 12-year-old kid and weighed about 125 pounds, but says that he had a lot of heart, always worked hard, and asked the right questions.

When Manella started coming up through the ranks, Schirmacher said that Manella has proven to be a "solid leader, task-master, and an extremely capable non-commissioned officer."

After experiencing several improvised explosive device attacks in 2012, Manella spent time in recovering in the traumatic brain injury clinic. He worked on regaining short-term memory by learning the Army Study Guide.

Because he was in great physical shape, when he realized how quickly he was able to learn the material, he was inspired to come back home and pack up his bags to compete in the competition.

That is when he asked Schirmacher to be his sponsor.

"There was no way I was going to say no," Schirmacher said.

The role of sponsor throughout a BWC is sometimes loosely exchanged with the term, 'mentor.' As a mentor, Schirmacher has shared his experiences and knowledge as a sponsor for ultra-marathoners, and compares the support he gave them to the support he offers Manella.

"As a sponsor, you just do everything you can to support them to their get their goal accomplished," Schirmacher said.

"During 50 and 100 mile races and competitions like



Sgt. 1st Class Karl Schirmacher, right, 445th Civil Affairs Battalion, U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) in Mountain View, Calif., watches as his Best Warrior candidate, Sgt. 1st Class Jason Manella, is treated by the medic following a combatives event. Schirmacher sponsored Manella at the Army Reserve Best Warrior competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 24-28, 2013. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Scott D. Turner/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

Cpl. Jabriel Santos

*Story by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - For most families across the world, being in the military is considered an honor. For some, pride and honor can run very deep for family members that are the first to join the military, especially on the small United States Island Territory of Puerto Rico.

Seemingly quiet, and with a soft Puerto Rican accent, the tall, slender young Soldier said that the military has become his life's mission because of his passion, he has become a well-known Soldier in his unit and community. He may be the quiet type, but says during the combative event at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, he will become very fast.

Cpl. Jabriel Santos, a member of the 390th Transportation Corps Seaport Operations in Ceiba, Puerto Rico, is the first member of his family to join the military and says they are very proud of his accomplishments.

"I won't say I'm changing the family tradition, but we have nothing like that in our family history," said Santos.



[Click HERE for full story.](#)



Cpl. Jabriel Santos, right, a cargo specialist representing the 1st Mission Support Command and a native of Caguas, Puerto Rico, competes in the 10km ruck march event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. The Warriors had two and half hours to complete the course. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

Pfc. Edward Davila Walker

*Story by Sgt. Carina Garcia
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - Pfc. Edward Davila Walker, representing 973rd Quarter Master Company from Ceiba, Puerto Rico, said he is also proud to represent Puerto Rico at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior competition at Fort McCoy, Wis.

Excelling and winning at his qualifying competition in Puerto Rico, Davila Walker, with only 14 months in service, is the lowest ranking Soldier in the competition. Davila Walker was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for his performance.

"I was told about the 'Best Warrior' competition by my supervisor and after looking into what the competition consisted of and qualifying events I found it very interesting," Davila Walker said. "I like to be tested and give my all. I was told it was very demanding, and I liked that, so I began the process of training to qualify and be able to compete in the Army Reserve Best Warrior."



[Click HERE for full story.](#)



Pfc. Edward Davila Walker examines his tactical map during the Night Land Navigation event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25. Davila Walker, a Quartermaster and chemical equipment repairer, is representing the 1st Mission Support Command and is a native of Humacao, Puerto Rico. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



1ST MISSION SUPPORT COMMAND

Staff Sgt. Alberto Quintanaromero

*Story by Sgt. Carina Garcia
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*



Staff Sgt. Alberto Quintanaromero, a financial management technician representing the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support), and a native of Lawrenceville, Ga., programs coordinates on a Defense Advanced GPS Receiver, or DAGR, during the Urban Orienteering event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — Staff Sgt. Alberto Quintanaromero, of the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support), Fort Gillem, Ga., uses motivation from a friendly sibling rivalry to do his best at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis.

Many Soldiers have siblings who are also in the military and at times that can assist each other to push themselves to the limit.

“My brother is an active duty recruiter and we compete on everything from who had a child born first to reaching our goals in our military careers,” Quintanaromero said.

Quintanaromero, a native of Lawrenceville, Ga., is pursuing a degree in psychology, and with one year left, he plans on trying to become an officer in the Army before his brother does.

“We push each other and seek advice from each other, it really helps,” Quintanaromero said.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

Spc. Muhammad Ali

*Story by Cpl. Jeff Shackelford
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*



Spc. Muhammad Ali, a medical laboratory specialist representing the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support) and a native of Stratford, Conn., competes in the 10km ruck march event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. The Warriors had two and half hours to complete the course. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — Spc. Muhammad Ali, a medical laboratory technician, with the 405th Combat Support Hospital, 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support), West Hartford, Conn., is competing in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition June 23-28.

Ali has come to compete in ‘Best Warrior’ to prove to himself and others that he’s ready for the challenge.

“I just got out of Advanced Individual Training, AIT, in September, so this all started out as a way for me to prove to my unit that I’m already a good Soldier. Now that I’m here, it’s less about me and more about my unit and the people that helped me get here; from our sergeant major of my command to my sponsor, I’m representing them all,” said Ali.

Although training for and representing his unit at Best Warrior is an important part of Ali’s short-term goals, his long-term goal is helping others by obtaining a doctorate of physical therapy.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

3RD MEDICAL COMMAND (DS)



Sgt. Jeremiah Bruce

Story by Sgt. Carina Garcia

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

FORT McCOY, Wis. – Participants from all over the U.S. are focused on winning the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., including Sgt. Jeremiah Bruce from Fort Shafter, Hawaii.

With motivation to spare, Bruce is ready to win the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition. If he wins Best Warrior, Bruce hopes his unit, the 442nd Infantry Regiment, will send him to the International Top Sniper Competition later this year. Bruce would be the first Army Reserve Soldier to compete for that title.

Bruce, a native of Silverdale, Wash., feels his Afghanistan deployment as an infantry medic taught him how to better prepare and train. During his deployment he was awarded the Combat Medic Badge.

“My deployment absolutely helped me with better preparation, better training and understanding on where your motivation lies,” Bruce said.



[Click HERE for full story.](#)



Sgt. Jeremiah Bruce, an infantryman representing the 9th Mission Support Command and a native of Silverdale, Wash., programs coordinates on a Defense Advanced GPS Receiver, or DAGR, during the Urban Orienteering event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Public Affairs)

Spc. Justin Trusso

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

FORT McCOY, Wis. – Spc. Justin Trusso, a carpentry/masonry specialist with the 9th Mission Support Command, and a native of Yona, Guam, comes to the mainland to participate in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., being held June 23 – 28.

Trusso is one of two members of the competition from U.S. territories. He enlisted in the Army Reserve with his good friend from school. And now, almost five years later, he is working on becoming an officer when he completes his college degree.

“My dad actually drove me down to the recruiter station and told me to just go in there and see what they have to say, so I just went in and went with it and here I am now,” said Trusso.

Trusso is using the benefits the Army Reserve offers to attend the University of Guam, and is pursuing a bachelor of arts degree in finance and economics. He is currently working at Louis Vuitton, where he oversees the store’s daily operations.



[Click HERE for full story.](#)



Spc. Justin Trusso, a Carpentry/Masonry Specialist, 9th Mission Support Command, Yona Guam, qualifies with the M-9 pistol during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., June 24.



9TH MISSION SUPPORT COMMAND

Sgt. Jonathan Fair



Sgt. Jonathan Fair, right, an intelligence analyst with the 11th Aviation Command, makes a uniform adjustment on his sponsor, Sgt. 1st Class Dionicio Esquivel, prior to the command sergeant major board during the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 27, 2013. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Public Affairs)

*Story by Sgt. Carina Garcia
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — Sgt. Jonathan Fair, 11th Aviation Command, Fort Knox, Ky., hopes that by doing the best he can during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., he can motivate his Soldiers and inspire them to want to compete in future events.

“Soldiers such as Pfc. Joseph Potter from my unit, have inspired me and given me the motivation I need to succeed in this competition,” Fair said. “He was the junior competitor and for only being in the Army Reserve for 19 months, he is a very motivated Soldier and is going to go on to do great things.”

Fair’s supervisors at Fort Knox, Ky., have been very supportive by providing him the resources and tools needed to train. He credits his Crossfit workout regimen in making him well-rounded and assisting in his preparation.

Fair said he volunteered for this challenge and wants to take back the experience to the Soldiers.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

Spc. Eric Jobb



Sgt. Eric Jobb, a Richmond, Va., native and member of Echo Co., 5/159th General Support Aviation Battalion, based out of Fort Eustis, Va., looks on during a safety brief for a Chinook helicopter ride at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition held at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25th.

*Story and photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — “I really didn’t set any goals before joining the military, but now that I have joined, it’s opened up a whole different world for me,” said Sgt. Eric Jobb, a Richmond, Va., native and member of the 11th Aviation Command.

For some Soldiers, the Army Reserve is used as a stepping stone in life for a better career, the chance to get an education, or even the opportunity to enhance their physical fitness and mental agility.

Jobb, who’s been in the Army Reserve for four years, said that before joining the Army, he was jumping from job to job with no real purpose or goals for his life. He then made the decision to join and see where the Army took him.

“Before I actually joined, I didn’t really have any direction whatsoever. I had no idea,” he said. “I was kind of in a tight spot in my life and that is when I decided to join. I didn’t really have a career focus. I didn’t really have a foundation. I am not going to say the military did all of that, but it certainly helped me get in the right direction and plant my feet because it was a rocky road, but now, it’s good.”



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

11TH THEATER AVIATION CMND.



Staff Sgt. Joshua Skelton

*Story & photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — Staff Sgt. Joshua Skelton, a human resource sergeant, with the 75th Training Command, from Jemison, Ala., arrived at Fort McCoy, Wis., to participate in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition that started June 23.

His mother encouraged him to join the military and he has now been in the Army Reserve for nine years. Because of his service, he has been able to attend college, and he sought experiences that will transition into the civilian work force. He is now striving to become a sergeant major.

During his Army Reserve service, he has been able to obtain a bachelor's degree in business administration specializing in accounting from the University of Montevallo where he graduated *magna cum laude* and is currently pursuing of a master's in business administration. One of his future goals is to become a certified fraud examiner.

"I was able to get a lot of professional experience following the military that transitioned to my civilian side and gave me an idea that I wanted a professional job," said Skelton.



Staff Sgt. Joshua Skelton, Human Resources Sergeant, 75th Training Division, Jemison, Ala., tries on an advanced combat helmet during supply issue at 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 23. Competitors were issued all the equipment they needed to be successful in the competition.



[Click HERE for full story.](#)

Spc. Ivan Pimentel

*Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. - It's not often that Soldiers, who spend almost one year training for a Best Warrior Competition, return the following year for another crack at being number one.

But the 2012 Army Reserve Best Warrior runner-up was not satisfied with that finish and has been determined to make a return in the 2013 competition at Fort McCoy, Wis. — to win.

"For me, it's a great honor to compete at this level again, and, of course, it's nerve racking for sure. But I know some of the areas where I needed improving, and I think I am better prepared for this competition," said Spc. Ivan Pimentel, member of the Headquarters and Headquarters Command, Pacific Division, 75th Training Command at Camp Parks, Calif. "It's one way that I measure myself up against the best of the best in the Army Reserve and how I get better experiences and training opportunities."

Pimentel does admit that during competitions he gets nervous to the point of being pretty high strung, but does his best not to show it.



Spc. Ivan Pimentel, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Pacific Division, 75th Training Division, at Camp Parks, Calif., performs push-ups during the Army Physical Fitness Test portion of the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 24, 2013.



[Click HERE for full story.](#)



75TH MISSION COMMAND (TD)

Staff Sgt. Christopher Tubrick



Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Christopher Tubrick, a wheeled-vehicle mechanic representing the 79th Sustainment Support Command and a native of Omaha, Neb., competes in the 10km ruck march event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. The Warriors had two and half hours to complete the course. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Public Affairs)

*Story by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — Staff Sgt. Christopher Tubrick, wheeled vehicle mechanic, 79th Sustainment Command, reported to the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 22 with the goal in being named the Best Warrior in the noncommissioned officer category.

Placing second at a previous competition in 2012, Tubrick became a U.S. Army Reserve Command staff member for last year's Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition. After watching the Soldier who beat him in the earlier round of the USARC competition finish as a runner-up, all he could think of was that could have been himself.

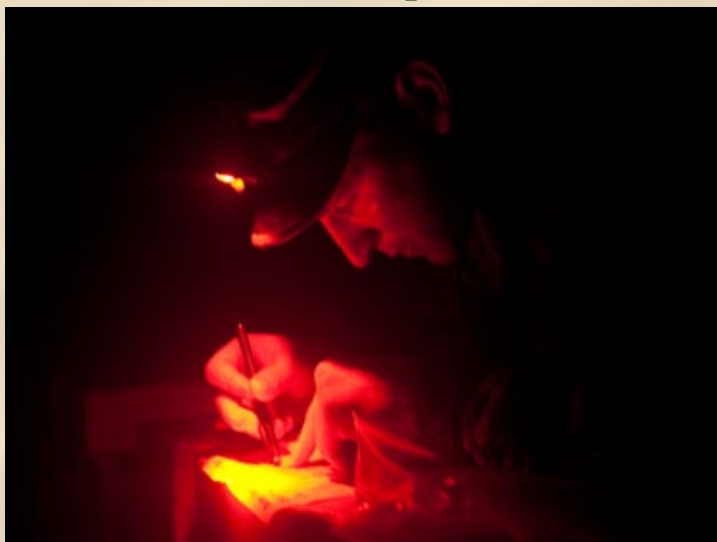
"This year, I have unfinished business," said Tubrick.

When Tubrick enlisted in the Army Reserve, he wanted to be a firefighter, but that was not available, so he became a wheeled vehicle mechanic. Like many young men and women in the service, he joined to get help with the expenses of going to college.



[Click HERE for full story.](#)

Spc. James Singer



Spc. Devin J. Singer, a Morris, Ill., native and member of the 79th Sustainment Support Command, finishes writing down his land navigation points during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition as he completes the night land navigation course, June 25th at Fort McCoy, Wis. (Photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald/Army Reserve Public Affairs)

*Story by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — Spc. Devin J. Singer, food service specialist, 79th Service Sustainment Command, native of Morris, Ill., competes in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., June 23–28, to test his knowledge and to gain new experiences.

Singer joined the Army Reserve when he was only 17 and needed his parent's permission. His dad stated to him that he was his own man, and if that's the direction he wanted to go, then he would support him. However, his mother had a different opinion. She was a little more reluctant to allow him to join, but ultimately give her permission.

"I kind of felt it was my sense of duty, since both of my grandparents had been in. When I decided that the military was the route for me, I knew it had to be the Army," said Singer.

Singer has now been serving for three years and has put his Army Reserve service to good use by participating in the U.S. Army Connelly Award Program, a cooking competition that tests Army food service specialists' skills in the culinary field.



[Click HERE for full story.](#)

79TH SUSTAINMENT SUPPORT CMND



Staff Sgt. Kathleen Briere

Story by Sgt. Carina Garica

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

FORT McCOY, Wis. - Staff Sgt. Kathleen Briere, an instructor for the Human Intelligence Collector course at Fort Devens, Mass., is representing the 98th Military Intelligence Battalion at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis.

Briere, a native of Lowell, Mass., says she does not see herself as just a female, she sees herself as a Soldier who is here to do the best she can during this week in this phenomenal and unique experience. Win or lose, she feels she did well and represented the U.S. Army Reserve.

"Being a Soldier can be a physically and mentally challenging profession," Briere said. "We must maintain a high level of proficiency in our warrior tasks and drills in order to always be combat and mission ready."

Being an eight-year veteran of the Army Reserve and deployed twice, Briere would like to become a warrant officer, attend language school and continue on to get operational experience.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.



Staff Sgt. Kathleen Briere, a human intelligence collector representing the 80th Training Command and a native of Newton, Mass., programs coordinates on a Defense Advanced GPS Receiver, or DAGR, during the Urban Orienteering event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25. The Warriors had three and a half hours to find four points scattered across post. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

Spc. Luis Melendez

Story by Cpl. Jeff Shackelford

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

FORT McCOY, Wis. - Spc. Luis D. Melendez, human resource specialist assigned to the 5/95th Civil Affairs Battalion, 80th Training Command, Lubbock, Texas, is competing in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition June, 24-28.

Melendez, who was born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, moved his family to Lubbock after accepting his current job as an Active Guard Reserve Human Resource Specialist for his unit.

Melendez is very family oriented, and though he misses the land of his birth, he was very happy that he was able to obtain the AGR position in Texas and raise his family in the United States.

Melendez's peers nominated him to compete in the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition shortly after his arrival to the unit. Without the stress of his family living in a high crime area, Melendez was able to get the support of his family and compete for Army Reserve Best Warrior.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.



Spc. Luis Melendez, Human Resource Specialist, 80th Training Command, native of Lubbock, Texas, places zip cuffs on a suspect before he demonstrates his knowledge of search and seizure during the Warrior, Task, and Training portion of the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, at Fort McCoy, Wis., on June 25. Physical restraint prior to a search protects the Soldier from the individual while inside a confined area. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey U.S. Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

80TH TRAINING COMMAND (TASS)



Cpl. Francis Kvarta



Cpl. Francis Kvarta, a Johnstown, Pa. native and member of the 99th Regional Support Command based out of Fort Dix, N.J., competes in the combatives tournament during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition held at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 27th.

*Story and photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — For Soldiers like Cpl. Francis Kvarta, a Johnstown, Pa., native, the Army Reserve has become more than a “one weekend a month, two weeks out of the year” obligation. It has become his chosen full-time career path.

Kvarta, currently a supply specialist with the 99th Regional Support Command, based out of Fort Dix, N.J., joined the Army Reserve in October 2010 and is currently on orders with the 99th as the supply sergeant.

So far in his career, Kvarta said one of his hardest achievements was completing the level two combatives course because of its physical demand. Kvarta also pursues mixed martial arts and ju jitsu outside of the Army Reserve.

“I got second place in the Naga tournament I just did,” he said. “It’s ju jitsu and grappling. That was literally the day after the Best Warrior competition back in New Jersey. I felt pretty good about that one.”



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

Spc. Daniel Lyons



U.S. Army Reserve Spc. Daniel Lyons, with the 99th Regional Support Command, and a native of Rochester, N.Y., is graded by a drill sergeant during the Warrior Task Training portion of the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., on June, 25.

*Story and photo by Sgt. Andrew Guffey
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. — Spc. Daniel Lyons, band member, 99th Regional Support Command, native of Rochester, N.Y., arrived at Fort McCoy, Wis., to compete in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition from June 23 – 28.

With only a year in the Army Reserve, Spc. Daniel Lyons enlisted after attending college, has demonstrated maturity over some of the younger Soldiers.

“Spc. Lyons came into the unit with a lot of discipline,” said Staff Sgt. Allison Huyck, Lyons’ sponsor.

Lyons joined the Army Band for his love of music. He has a master’s degree in music from the Southern Methodist University and is currently working on pursuing a doctorate degree. His love for music stems from his family, both of his parents and all his siblings enjoy playing instruments.

After college, Lyons became a music teacher for middle and high school students prior to his current university teaching position. When not teaching at an institute for learning, he enjoys giving private lessons from his home.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

99TH REGIONAL SUPPORT CMND.



Staff Sgt. Joshua Allen

Story by Sgt. Carina Garcia

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

FORT McCOY, Wis. – A Soldier's physical and mental fitness is pushed to the limit while participating in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior competition at Fort McCoy, Wis.

Staff Sgt. Joshua Allen, representing the 98th Training Division, North Charleston, S.C., will use his strength, endurance, time management, and multi-tasking skills to try and overcome the challenges of the events.

Allen, a native of Durhamville, N.Y., has been in the Army for 12 years, both in the active duty and reserve components. During his active duty time, Allen spent three years in Recruiting Command, where he was awarded the Gold Recruiters Badge for recruiting a high number of new Soldiers.

As an infantryman with the 101st Airborne Division, Allen deployed to both Afghanistan (2002-2003) as a team leader in weapons squad and Iraq (2003-2004) as a team leader in a line rifle squad.

"My biggest accomplishment was taking care of my Soldiers and making sure they came back home all right," Allen said.



U.S. Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Joshua Allen, an infantryman representing the 108th Training Command and a native of North Charleston, S.C., appears before the Command Sergeants Major Board at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 27. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



[Click HERE for full story.](#)

Spc. Russell Williams

Story and photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

FORT McCOY, Wis. – To say his road to success has been tough would be an understatement. Nevertheless, this Westville, N.J., native has managed to remain in high spirits as he continues to compete in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior.

Spc. Russell Williams, 42, is a member of the 108th Training Command based out of Blackwood, N.J., He is the oldest competitor in this level of the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition. He is in the same category as Soldiers half his age, yet he shows the same competitive spirit they do and says he has a few reasons for being here.

"I re-enlisted a year ago, February," Williams said. "My intention is to go to drill sergeant school and to earn an Airborne slot."

Williams said he served previously for four years, but had to take a 15 year break in service because his dad became ill and he needed to take care of him. He has now re-enlisted to complete the goals he had then.



Spc. Russell Williams, a Westville, N.J., native and member of the 108th Training Command, gets ready to ride in a CH-47 Chinook helicopter as part of the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition on June 25th at Fort McCoy, Wis. At 42 years old, Williams is the oldest Warrior in the competition.



[Click HERE for full story.](#)

108TH TRAINING COMMAND (IET)



Sgt. Marshall Gross



Sgt. Marshall Gross, a Mesa, Ariz. native and member of the 200th Military Police Command, rides in a Chinook helicopter during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25th.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

*Story and photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - Normally, Sgt. Marshall Gross has six other team members to rely on during rugby football competitions; however, for the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Gross' only team member is himself.

Although it is a very different type of competition, Gross said playing Rugby helped him prepare for the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, being held here, because it involves a lot of cardiovascular exercise.

"(In Rugby,) not only do you have to tackle people, you also run around and organize offenses and defenses at the same time," said Gross, a Mesa, Ariz., native, representing the 200th Military Police Command based in Scottsdale, Ariz. "So it really keeps you on the balls of your feet the whole game time. It is an extremely physical sport, so that kind of plays into the Army and having to do multiple things at once."

Although a typical rugby game is approximately 90 minutes long, the Best Warrior Competition lasts four days and consists of many rigorous events. Gross said this is his first time competing for the Best Warrior competition and it has provided him with several opportunities so far.

Spc. Derek Hanna



Spc. Derek Hanna, a Rome, N.Y. native and member of the 361st Military Police Co., reviews his orientation map during the night land navigation course at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition June 25th at Fort McCoy, Wis.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

*Story and photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - With less than two years in the Army, Rome, N.Y., native and member of the 200th Military Police Command, Spc. Derek Hanna, reveals his competitive nature as he competes in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition.

"People don't like to play mini-golf or anything with me," joked Hanna. "It's too competitive."

Hanna, who won an Army Commendation Medal for winning the 200th Military Police Command's Best Warrior Competition, said that he has spent a lot of evenings studying skill level one warrior tasks and drills and has been working out five to six days a week to prepare for the Army Reserve level of the competition.

"I'm looking forward to all of the physical events; combatives, the [physical fitness test], the ruck march, shooting, everything I guess," he said.

Watching videos of previous competitors and seeing what their achievements have gotten them has helped motivate Hanna to push forward in the competition levels, he said. He stated his family is also a huge motivating factor and he wants to make them proud.

200TH MILITARY POLICE CMND.



Sgt. Devron West

*Story by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - Representing your command at a high profile and difficult competition is considered an honor, but being asked for a second opportunity is personally satisfying, and one that this Soldier could not pass up.

Sgt. Devron West, a member of the 300th Chemical Biological Radiation Nuclear Company, located in Morgantown, W.Va., has been anticipating the opportunity to compete in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., since being approached for another shot at number one.

"I was asked to compete a few years ago at the local level, and didn't do as well as I wanted," said West. "When asked if I want another chance this year, I jumped on it and said 'yes' right away. I had the opportunity to try again and prove how far I could push myself, so I put everything I had into it, and here I am."

Before the competition, West took the opportunity to work on temporary military orders and work as the platoon sergeant for the Mountaineer Challenge Academy for at-risk youth in Kingwood, W.Va.



Sgt. Devron West (top) competes against Sgt. Blayne Peterson in the combatives tournament at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition held at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 27th. (Photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



[Click HERE for full story.](#)

Spc. Brett Hawley

*Story and photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - "My overarching plan was to join the Army Reserve out of high school to understand what it's like to be an enlisted Soldier, learn a Soldier's job and then from there I would come into the ROTC program as a cadet, eventually commissioning into the active Army," said Spc. Brett Hawley. "So I felt the Army Reserve was a good basis to become a better leader."

Hawley, a Loveland, Colo., native and member of the 98th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, has been in the Army Reserve for three years now and said he is still working toward this goal.

He is currently enrolled in the ROTC program at Colorado State University.

"I think the Army has, more than anything, given me the mental fortitude and this ability to achieve any task," Hawley said. "If I put my mind to do something, I will do it and I will do it well and that is something I didn't have before joining the Army."



Spc. Brett Hawley, a Loveland, Colo. native and member of the 98th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, waits to qualify with an M4 rifle during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, June 26th at Fort McCoy, Wis..



[Click HERE for full story.](#)



335TH SIGNAL CMND. (THEATER)

Sgt. Ryan Veltman



Staff Sgt. Ryan Veltman, an Ammunitions Specialist, 377th Theater Sustainment Command, Sunshine La., loads a magazine during the M9 pistol qualification mystery event at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., June 24.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

*Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. – Staff Sgt. Ryan Veltman, ammunition specialist, 377th Theater Sustainment Command, native of Sunshine, La., is competing in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., from June 23 to 28.

Veltman finished second at the 377th TSC portion of the competition but at the last minute was called to compete at the U.S. Army Reserve Command level. Veltman concentrated on building up his endurance enabling him to compete at a higher level. “If it wasn’t for my command I wouldn’t be able to compete at this level, it was truly a team effort,” said Veltman.

In December 2000, Veltman enlisted in the Army Reserve when he was 17. During land navigation in basic training the twin towers were destroyed. Shortly after he completed training, his unit was deployed. “It took me from being a child who wanted college money to an adult who was willing to serve my country in any way I can,” said Veltman.

After serving in the Army Reserve for five years, Veltman made the decision to go active duty and serve his country full time.

Spc. Logan Walz



Spc. Logan Walz, Cargo Specialist, 377th Theater Sustainment Command, native of Sebewaing, Mich., fires from the kneeling position during M4 rifle night fire qualification event at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. Flares and artillery explode around the range to simulate battlefield situations.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

*Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. – Spc. Logan Walz, Cargo Specialist, 377th Theater Sustainment Command, native of Sebewaing, Mich., participated in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, at Fort McCoy, Wis., that started June 23, and concluded June 28.

Walz intends to make a career out of the Army Reserve and originally wanted to become an officer, enrolling in Reserve Officers’ Training Corps, where he received mentorship and direction from his school’s instructors to enlist first to gain experience as an enlisted Soldier.

Shortly after Walz graduated from Advanced Individual Training, he sought advice from his noncommissioned officers and asked what he could do to get the most out of his time while with the unit. They suggested in competing for Army Reserve Best Warrior.

“When I got to basic, I just fell in love with the life style, with the work-horse attitude, and “lead from the front” attitude,” said Walz.

377TH THEATER SUSTAINMENT COMMAND



Sgt. Daniel Ryan

*Story by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - As an Army Reserve noncommissioned officer, leading by example and training Soldiers to work as a team is one reason why the NCO is called the "Backbone of the Army," according to the Army Values.

"This competition is a great learning experience throughout the entire process," said Sgt. Daniel Ryan, member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 335th Engineer Battalion located in Schuylkill Haven, Pa.

"But it doesn't matter how successful I am here, it only matters if I can turn it around and train my Soldiers with what I learn. What you can give back to your troops is one way of leading by example. That's really what I care about," he said.

Caring about Soldiers, leading and training merge well with many occupations outside the Army. A passion for teaching and helping others go hand-in-hand with the real love of his life, his daughter, Hannah.

"Our first child is an 18-month-old girl and I had no idea she would grow so quickly," said Ryan.



Sgt. Daniel Ryan, a Woodridge, N.Y., native and member of the 365th Engineer Battalion, turns in his night land navigation points as he finishes the course during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25th. (Photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



[Click HERE for full story.](#)

Cpl. Martin Norment

*Story and photo by Cpl. Jeff Shackelford
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - Cpl. Martin Norment, a Brockport, N.Y. native, assigned to the 479th Engineer Battalion, 366th Engineer Company, is competing against 38 other Army Reserve service members during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, here, June 23-28.

Being in a demanding environment like the Best Warrior Competition is one of many things Norment likes about being in the Army Reserve.

"The Army has always provided me with good challenges," said Norment, "So when I heard about the Best Warrior Competition, I knew it was something I wanted to do."

Norment said although he enjoys pushing himself, juggling school and the Army Reserve is difficult at times.

"I may have a paper due the day after I have been in the field for three days," said Norment. "I just have to work harder than most students and get it done. I enjoy the pressure cause it keeps me focused."



Cpl. Martin Norment, Combat Engineer, assigned to the 479th Engineer Battalion, 366th Engineer Company, assembles a 9mm pistol while performing the assembly, disassembly and functions check of a 9mm during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, June 24.



[Click HERE for full story.](#)



412TH THEATER ENGINEER CMND.

Cpl. Lance Clifford



Cpl. Lance Clifford, a Helena, Mont., native and member of the 301st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, loads onto a Chinook helicopter during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25th. (Photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

*Story by Cpl. Jeff Shackelford
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. – Cpl. Lance Clifford, intelligence analyst, 301st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 416th Theater Engineer Command, McCord, Wash., is competing in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition June 23-28.

Clifford, a graduate of Carroll College in Helena, Mont., with a Bachelor of Arts, joined the Army Reserve to serve his country and learn valuable skills.

“The Army has allowed me to develop confidence and leadership skills I wouldn’t have found in the civilian world,” said Clifford.

Clifford decided to compete in the Best Warrior Competition back in January, because he was feeling complacent in his day-to-day activities.

“I needed to do something challenging,” said Clifford. “So when I heard about the Best Warrior Competition, I knew it was for me.”

Although Clifford is focused on overcoming the daily rigors of competing to become the Best Warrior, his troops back home are always on his mind at the end of the night.

Spc. Mitchell Fromm



Spc. Mitchell Fromm, assigned to the 428th Engineer Company, runs toward the finish line of the 10 kilometer road march during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

*Story and photo by Sgt. Carina Garcia
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. – Spc. Mitchell Fromm represents the 428th Engineer Company, in Wausau, Wis., at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior competition at Fort McCoy, Wis.

“I chose to compete to test my skills and knowledge as a Soldier,” Fromm said. “This competition represents the quality of Soldier I strive to be and represents my pride in my unit.”

As a combat engineer, he volunteers for every training opportunity his unit has to offer, to include the Reserve Foreign Exchange Program. Fromm said he joined the military because he wanted to do everything, so he seeks out every class possible and accepts every opportunity forwarded to him.

“I want to learn and pass everything I can to everyone else, so as long as I keep advancing and doing new things I will stick it out for the long haul and make the Army a career,” Fromm said.

A native of Marathon City, Wis., and a firefighter with the Stevens Point Fire Department, Fromm is dedicated to working with the community.

416TH THEATER ENGINEER CMND.



Staff Sgt. Michael Siler

*Story by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - Since attending Basic Combat Training, Staff Sgt. Michael Siler, member of Bravo Company, 256th Combat Support Hospital in Twinsburg, Ohio, has heard about the many competitions the Army Reserve has to offer.

He has a strong appetite for competition but has not been assigned to a unit that was actively participating in any Best Warrior competitions before joining his present unit.

"I enjoy the physical aspect of competition, so I thought it would be cool to be the Soldier of the year," said Siler. "I like being around others that like competition because it helps me up my game. Other Soldiers inspire me when it gets tough but it was harder than I thought it would be to get here."

Continuing education has been a top priority for Siler. Using his Army Reserve benefits, he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in social work and says it would have been very difficult without the help of those benefits.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.



Staff Sgt. Michael Siler, Supply Sgt., Bravo Company, 256th Combat Support Hospital, straps on the Dismounted Soldier Training System during the DSTS competition portion at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis, June 24, 2013. The DSTS provides an immersive virtual training environment to conduct dismounted Soldier operations in an Operational Environment. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Scott D. Turner/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

Sgt. Brian Sunderman

*Story by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. - Sgt. Brian Sunderman, Army Reserve medic, 807th Medical Command, Temple, Texas, has reached the final phase of the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, at Fort McCoy, Wis. The competition began June 23 and continues through the June 28.

"I wanted to participate in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition to bring the best out in myself," said Sunderman.

Sunderman joined the Army Reserve four years ago to help pay the expenses of going to college. He is currently enrolled at Southwestern University, where he is studying psychology and kinesiology and an associate in sociology from Temple College. After college Sunderman would like to teach high school and coach track and field. One day he hopes to coach at the collegiate level.

"Being a citizen-Soldier means that I must not only know my civilian job and perform as a student, but that I must also know my role as a Soldier and fulfill those roles," said Sunderman.



Sgt. Brian Sunderman, a combat medic representing the 807th Medical Deployment Support Command and a native of Temple, Texas, competes in the 10km ruck march event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Click [HERE](#) for full story.



807TH MEDICAL DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT COMMAND

Sgt. Blayne Peterson

*Story by Cpl. Jeff Shackelford
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*



Sgt. Blayne Peterson, a combat medic representing the Army Reserve Medical Command and a native of Winamac, Ind., programs coordinates on a Defense Advanced GPS Receiver, or DAGR, during the Urban Orienteering event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

FORT MCCOY, Wis. - Sgt. Blayne A. Peterson, Combat Medic, 5502nd U.S. Army Hospital, Army Reserve Medical Command, Obart, Ind., native of Winamac, Ind., is representing his unit at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition June 23-28.

Peterson joined the military like many others in his family before him. He has been in the Army Reserve for four years and plans to stay until he retires.

"The military is a family heritage," said Peterson.

"Both my brothers have served. They are veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Between the three of us we have 50 months of overseas experience. Both of my grandfathers have served, one in World War II and the other In Korea," he said.

When Peterson is not in uniform, he is a physician substitute at Saturn Biomedical, a blood and plasma collection center, where he specializes in the collection of normal source plasma and various antibody programs for research. He attributes the Army for aiding him in building his work ethic and he said he is glad to be a Soldier.

Spc. Nicholas Peterson

*Story and photo by Cpl. Jeff Shackelford
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*



Spc. Nicholas Peterson, Combat Medic assigned to the 5502nd U.S. Army Hospital, Army Reserve Medical Command, Aurora, Colo., Native of Lakewood, Colo., loads a 9mm pistol before competing on the 9mm pistol qualification range during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, June 24.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

FORT MCCOY, Wis. - Spc. Nicholas Peterson, Combat Medic assigned to the 5502nd U.S. Army Hospital, Army Reserve Medical Command, Aurora, Colo., Native of Lakewood, Colo., is competing in the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition June, 24-28.

Peterson felt inspired to join the Army after he saw the positive impact the Army made on a friend of his who had joined the military.

"I had a buddy who was in the military previous to me and he was kind of a bad character," said Peterson, "After he returned home I could tell he was different, and that kind of inspired me to join. I thought I could get some direction and build some character in the Army."

In addition, Peterson, a native of Lakewood, Colo., who is attending University of Northern Colorado, said that he joined because GI Bill is a great way to pay for school, and is currently majoring in athletic training. He will graduate next year.

"The GI Bill pays for almost all my school, and that frees me up to concentrate on school because I don't have to work," said Peterson.

ARMY RESERVE MEDICAL CMND.



Sgt. 1st Class Sean McClenachan

Story by Cpl. Jeff Shackelford

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

FORT McCOY, Wis. – With 14 years of experience Sgt. 1st Class Sean McClenachan brings knowledge, leadership and unbridled determination to the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition. He started his Army Reserve career as a private, battling his way up the ranks to become a leader, and is now a competitor Soldiers can rely on.

McClenachan, an intelligence analyst assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Command, Military Intelligence Readiness Command, Fort Belvoir, Va., also served in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He said that while he was living in New Jersey he served as a noncommissioned officer for his unit in Maryland and did not make enough money to warrant the long drive. However, he felt compelled to be there for his troops and complete the mission.

“I didn’t get paid to travel but I knew Soldiers relied on some of the things I could provide for them on battle assembly weekends,” said McClenachan. “You have to drive on.”



Sgt. 1st Class Sean McClenachan, a Deptford, N.J. native and member of the Military Intelligence Readiness Command, loads onto a Chinook helicopter during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25th. (Photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



[Click HERE for full story.](#)

Spc. Christopher Delk

Story by Sgt. Carina Garcia

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

FORT McCOY, Wis. – “I come from a military family so I knew I wanted to be in the military since I was five years old,” said Spc. Christopher Delk, representing the 378th Military Intelligence Battalion, Fort Sheridan, Ill., during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis.

Military service is a tradition in the young specialist’s family. Having a great-grandfather and grandfather who served, his father serving as a master sergeant in the U.S. Army, and a younger brother who just enlisted, definitely gives Delk the highest level of motivation he needs to be successful during the four-day competition.

“My family is all very proud of me being in this competition, and support me in everything I do both in the military and with school,” Delk said.

Delk a native of Highland Park, Ill., is also a full-time student at Illinois State University, studying to get his Bachelor of Science degree in Information Technology Security.



U.S. Army Spc. Christopher Delk, a Military Intelligence Signal Analyst with 378th Military Intelligence Battalion, Fort Sheridan, Ill., prepares his 9mm pistol during the pistol qualification event for the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, held at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 24, 2013. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

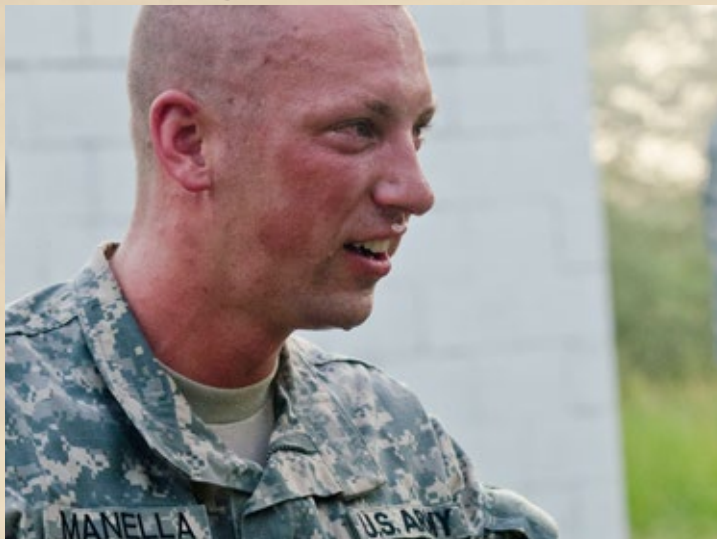


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MILITARY INTELLIGENCE READINESS COMMAND



Sgt. 1st Class Jason Manella



Sgt. 1st Class Jason Manella, USACAPOC(A), removes his M40 protective mask after entering the nuclear, biological and chemical chamber as part of a mystery event at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis. June 25. (Photo by Staff. Sgt. Amanda Smolinski/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

*Story by Cpl. Jeff Shackelford
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. - Facing the possibility of a medical discharge, Sgt. 1st Class Jason J. Manella made an internal decision that changed his path as a warrior in the Army Reserve.

Just 10 months ago, an improvised explosive device blast in Afghanistan, altered Manella's life forever.

He said his convoy was on patrol when his vehicle was hit by an IED. The explosion caused him to suffer a traumatic brain injury.

After that fateful day, Manella, who is a civil affairs specialist assigned to Bravo Company, 445th U.S. Army Civil Affairs Battalion, 351st Civil Affairs Command, U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Command (Airborne), found himself in a traumatic brain injury clinic and rehabilitation center for one week, and another eight weeks of therapy overcoming speech problems, memory problems, other balance related issues.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

Spc. Zachary Sharpe



Spc. Zachary Sharpe, with the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, Southfield, Mich., walks along the road during the 10 kilometer road march at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Sgt. Carina Garcia/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

*Story by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. - Being a competitor in any event takes preparation, both mentally and physically. Whether you are a marathon runner or hiking up Mount Everest, it can take a year or more of preparation to be in top-notch mental and physical shape.

The 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., is one of those competitions that takes a lot of time, organization, and plenty of self-motivation to be ready for an intense week of long hours, written exams, and physical challenges that are not experienced as a civilian.

"The Best Warrior Competition means a lot of hard work, preparation and takes a lot of motivation to complete these task at this competition level," said Spc. Zachary Sharpe, a member of the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion in Southfield, Mich.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.

U.S. ARMY CIVIL AFFAIRS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS COMMAND (AIRBORNE)





63RD REGIONAL SUPPORT CMND.

Sgt. Camille Kleparek

Story by Sgt. Carina Garcia

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

FORT MCCOY, Wis. – “When I tell people I am in the Army, they’re like, ‘oh that’s really cool’; when I tell them I am in the band, they’re like, ‘oh, you’re just in the band,’” said Sgt. Camille Kleparek. “They don’t always understand that, yes, we go through basic training like everyone else, and we have to do all of the warrior training like everyone else.”

Although times are changing, being a bandsman isn’t the only prejudice Kleparek, a member of the 191st Army Band, based out of Camp Parks, Calif., has to overcome. She also faces the stigma given to women in the military in general.

“I think the Army has made a lot of good advancements as far as women in the Army goes,” Kleparek, a Pleasant Grove, Utah, native said. “They have recently opened the doors for women to go into more fields and I think that’s a positive thing because if a woman wants to do a job, and she is capable of doing it, she should be allowed to do it.”



Click [HERE](#) for full story.



Army Band member, Sgt. Camille Kleparek, 191st Army Band, Dublin, Calif., shows her muscle flex while taking a break at the Dismounted Soldier Training System during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Ft. McCoy, Wis., June 24. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Scott D. Turner/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



ARMY RESERVE CAREERS DIV.

Sgt. 1st Class Richard Silva

Story by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins

Army Reserve Command Public Affairs

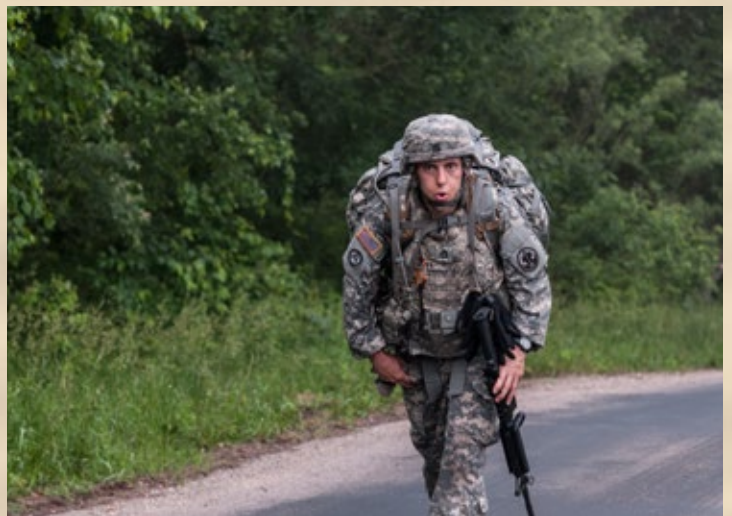
FORT MCCOY, Wis. - It is common for some Soldiers to realize they miss the “military life” they experienced prior to leaving. According to the Army program “Blue to Green,” Soldiers who separated can re-enlist in the military and in some instances, start where they left off and continue to pursue their career.

Sgt. 1st Class Richard Silva, member of the 11th Battalion, Army Reserve Careers Division located in Los Alamitos, Calif., did just that. After serving for 10 years and separating to pursue a civilian career, he re-enlisted in the military to continue the career and lifestyle he enjoyed before.

“The civilian job didn’t grow as I thought it would, and I missed the friends and job I had in the military, so I re-enlisted,” said Silva. “Since then I have taken every opportunity to better myself both personally and for my military career, doing everything I can to separate myself from my peers.”



Click [HERE](#) for full story.



Army Reserve Sgt. 1st Class Richard Silva, a career counselor representing the Army Reserve Careers Division and a native of Merced, Calif., competes in the 10km ruck march event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



ARMY RESERVE READINESS TRAINING CENTER

Staff Sgt. Israel Guerrero

*Story and photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald
Army Reserve Command Public Affairs*

FORT McCOY, Wis. – Nine years ago, Staff Sgt. Israel Guerrero, a Sanger, Calif., native and member of the Army Reserve Readiness Training Center, took two giant steps in life: he joined the Army Reserve and he got married.

“Make sure you take the time to spend with the people that support and love you,” said Guerrero, who is currently serving an Active Guard and Reserve position at the Noncommissioned Officer Academy. “Because when things get tough, they’ll be the ones by your side. Whether it’s your family, friends, girlfriend, boyfriend, battle buddies, you can’t do it by yourself.”

Throughout his Army career, Guerrero said his wife, Monique, has been by his side since the moment he signed the paperwork and left for basic training. Guerrero has also been deployed to Afghanistan and attended several military schools in the last nine years.



Click [HERE](#) for full story.



Staff Sgt. Israel Guerrero, a Sanger, Calif., native and member of the U.S. Army Reserve Noncommissioned Officer Academy, smiles while getting to ride in a CH-47 Chinook helicopter during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition on June 25th, held at Fort McCoy, Wis.

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this Best Warrior Competition, they are in a stress-induced environment and mentally, they sometimes forget what they need.”

During this competition, it’s my job to take the weight off of his shoulders and ensure he gets through the physical events so he is balanced enough that he can accomplish the intellectual events.”

Schirmmacher says he washes Manella’s clothes while he sleeps so that he can have clean, dry clothes for the next event. “That is where the sponsor needs to be,” he said.

Manella and Schirmmacher have worked together in the civil affairs battalion for more than five years and he said he is glad that Schumacher is here.

“He is definitely helping me to stay on top of what he calls, energy management, by giving me salt tablets with electrolytes and even if I’m not hungry at the time, he will force me to eat,” Manella said.

“Throughout the day I never have that low blood sugar feeling or feel fatigued. This morning we did a 10 kilometer ruck march and I feel great,” Manella said.

Throughout the week-long competition, the rainfall was heavy and Manella explained that after the night land naviga-

tion course, Schirmmacher exchanged his boots with a dry pair and went back to the barracks to start drying the wet pair in front of a fan so they were ready for his next event.

“Take the show *Survivor*, a Tough Mudder race and a spelling bee, and put it together in one event and you get the best warrior competition, you don’t find it just anywhere. This is the marathon and the event to aspire to,” Schirmmacher said.

“But it takes a handful of various knowledge to compete best at it, that is why you enlist help to get from point ‘A’ to point ‘B,’ you have to work as a team,” he said.

“If you care about your Soldiers, you are not going to back down from it,” Schirmmacher said. “This is the ultimate leadership-- being self-less. You become a better Soldier and person just by taking on the challenge and experiences that will help you to become something bigger.”

There are approximately 205,000 Army Reserve Soldiers, and about 80 percent of those Soldiers are enlisted. At the end of the Best Warrior Competition, only two Soldiers advance to the Department of Army level competition.

Schirmmacher said there may only be two winners this year, but the experiences he and Manella have shared this week will last a lifetime.

DAY-BY-DAY: MONDAY



Soldiers start the two-mile run portion of the Army Physical Fitness Test during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 24. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Spc. Derek Hanna, left, 361st Military Police Company, Ashley, Pa, gets ready for the Dismounted Soldier Training System portion during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Ft. McCoy, Wis., June 24. The DSTS provides an immersive virtual training environment to conduct dismounted Soldier operations in an Operational Environment. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Scott D. Turner/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

Day one of the competition included:

- **APFT**
- **Mystery Event - M9 pistol qualification**
- **Mystery Event - RVTT/EST2000 and DSTS**
- **M249 & M240B Assembly & Function Check**



Sgt. 1st Class Sean McClenachan, a native of Deptford, N.J., Intelligence Analyst assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Command, Military Intelligence Readiness Command, Fort Belvoir, Va., fires his 9mm pistol at pop-up targets during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, June 24. (Photo by Cpl. Jeff Shackelford/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Spc. Devin Singer, Food Service Technician, 851st Transportation Company, participates in the Reconfigurable Vehicle Tactical Trainer competition at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Ft. McCoy, Wis., June 24. The RVTT is a set of four vehicle simulators used for combat convoy training and provides Soldiers with comprehensive and realistic combat experience before deployment. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Scott D. Turner/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

DAY-BY-DAY: TUESDAY



Spc. Devin Singer, a Morris, Ill., native and member of the 79th Sustainment Support Command, finishes writing down his land navigation points during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition as he completes in the night land navigation course June 25th at Fort McCoy, Wis. (Photo by Cpl. Charlotte Fitzgerald/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers board a CH-47 Chinook helicopter at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25.

For many of the Best Warrior candidates, it was the first time riding in an Army helicopter. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Day two of the competition included:

- Night Land Nav.
- Mystery Event - Helicopter Lift
- Mystery Event - Warrior Tasks
- Urban Orienteering
- Mystery Event - CBRN Chamber
- Mystery Event - ASU Deficiency



Spc. Eric Jobb, a Motor Transport Operator with the 11th Theater Aviation Command and a native of Richmond, Va., searches a vehicle during the Warrior Task Training event at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., on June 25. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Spc. Nicholas Peterson, 5502nd U.S. Army Hospital, removes his M40 protective mask after entering the nuclear, biological and chemical chamber as part of a mystery event at Fort McCoy, Wis. June 25, 2013. At this point in the competition, competitors experienced a lack of sleep and fatigue from the physical demands of the competition. (Photo by Staff. Sgt. Amanda Smolinski/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers wait for instructions to program their Defense Advanced GPS Receiver, or DAGR, during the Urban Orienteering event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 25. The Warriors had three and a half hours to find four points scattered across post. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



DAY-BY-DAY: WEDNESDAY



U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior candidates pause during the 10km ruck march event at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

Cpl. Martin Norment, walks along the road during the 10 kilometer road march at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Sgt. Carina Garcia/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Day three of the competition included:

- 10km Ruck March
- M4 Rifle Qual. - Day
- Mystery Event - Reflexive Fire
- Mystery Event - Live Shoothouse
- M4 Rifle Qual. - Night



Staff Sgt. Israel Guerrero, representing the Army Reserve Readiness Training Center, takes aim on Range 31A during the M4 Rifle Day Qualification at the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition, Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Scott D. Turner/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Tracer rounds bounce off the ground as Soldiers attempt to shoot pop-up targets during the M4 Rifle Night Qualification event during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior candidate, Sgt. Camille Kleparek, 63rd Regional Support Command, fires her M4 Rifle Night Qualification event as sounds from explosions, and the color of tracers filled the sky at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 26. (Photo by Staff. Sgt. Amanda Smolinski/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



DAY-BY-DAY: THURSDAY



Staff Sgt. Israel Guerrero, a fire support specialist representing the Army Reserve Readiness Training Center and a native of Sanger, Calif., jokingly tries to absorb the last bit of knowledge from a study guide prior to the Command Sergeants Major Board Appearance at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 27. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

Staff Sgt. Joshua Allen, an infantryman representing the 108th Training Command and a native of North Charleston, S.C., appears before the Command Sergeants Major Board at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 27. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



Day four of the competition included:

- **Written Exam & Essay**
- **Command Sgts. Major Board Appearance**
- **Modern Army Combatives Tourney**



Cpl. Francis Kvarla, 99th Regional Support Command, uses an arm bar on Staff Sgt. Joshua Skelton, 75th Training Command, to end the match during the noncommissioned officer portion of the Modern Army Combative Tournament during the 2013 Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 27. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Gary Hawkins/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)

Cpls. Jabriel Santos, right, and Francis Kvarla, fight for a dominating position during the Modern Army Combatives tournament at the 2013 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 27. Santos is a cargo specialist representing the 1st Mission Support Command and is a native of Caguas, Puerto Rico. Kvarla is a supply sergeant representing the 99th Regional Support Command and a native of Johnstown, Pa. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/Army Reserve Command Public Affairs)



2013 ARMY RESERVE BEST W

2013 ARMY RESERVE NCO OF THE YEAR SGT. 1ST CLASS JASON MANELLA USACAPOC(A)



Sgt. 1st Class Jason Manella is presented the winner's trophy by Command Sgt. Maj. Luther Thomas Jr., the Command Sgt. Maj. of the U.S. Army Reserve, for winning the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year at the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition held at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 28.

2013 ARMY RESERVE SOLDIER OF THE YEAR SPC. MITCHELL FROMM 416TH TEC



Spc. Mitchell Fromm is presented the winner's trophy by Command Sgt. Maj. Luther Thomas Jr., the Command Sgt. Maj. of the U.S. Army Reserve, for winning the Soldier of the Year at the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition held at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 28.

WARRIOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

NCO OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP



SGT. 1ST CLASS RICHARD SILVA
ARMY RESERVE CAREERS DIV.

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP



SPC. ZACHARY SHARPE
USACAPOC(A)

NCO MAC TOURNEY WINNER



CPL. JABREIL SANTOS
1ST MISSION SUPPORT COMMAND

SOLDIER MAC TOURNEY WINNER



SPC. DEVIN SINGER
79TH SUSTAINMENT SPT. CMND.

WEAPONS QUALIFICATION WINNER



SGT. JEREMIAH BRUCE
9TH MISSION SUPPORT COMMAND

APFT WINNER



SPC. MUHAMMAD ALI
3RD MEDICAL CMND. (DS)



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*Produced by military and civilian personnel from:
U.S. Army Reserve Command Public Affairs
343rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
345th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*