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35TH SIGNAL BRIGADE COMMAND TEAM

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Brigade Commander

Lt. Col. R. Todd Stewart
Deputy Brigade Commander

Command Sgt. Maj. William J. Jordan
Command Sergeant Major

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Command team message



Lion Brigade Soldiers and families,

I am honored to be in your ranks. My wife, Terri, and I look forward to working with the Soldiers and families of the brigade as it builds on its great history! As the brigade continues to train and provide exceptional communications support to warfighters all over, I challenge those within our organization to focus on taking care of our Soldiers and their families. The Soldier is the greatest asset the Army has.

Taking care of the Army's greatest asset requires one thing, leadership! I expect leaders within the brigade to be reliable and responsible for everyone and everything in their reach. Our Soldiers deserve to be taught, coached and mentored by exceptional leaders who are legally, morally and ethically leading from the front and setting the example for their Soldiers on and off duty. Be someone that your Soldiers want to emulate! I am proud to be a part of such an amazing team! We are "THE Lion Brigade"

*L7, Command Sgt. Maj. William J. Jordan
Brigade command sergeant major
35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)*



Soldiers and families of the 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical),

With the arrival of 2015, the Lion Brigade added a new set of important missions of which several include the capacity for the 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) to reach globally, if called upon.

I am confident that this brigade, with its expeditionary units, is trained and ready to successfully accomplish all that our Army has assigned us to complete.

The beginning of this year has been an exciting year for the Lion Brigade, a time where comprehensive "leadership" and professional "ownership" serve as the cornerstones of unit readiness.

Our nation's sons and daughters deserve the best training, best equipping, best mentoring and best leadership possible; continue to strive for excellence.

There is no greater leader responsibility than, when our nation calls, for us to deliver exceptionally trained and highly motivated Soldiers in response.

This is done by devoting yourselves to standards based training; team by team and trooper by trooper. Leaders, your troopers will achieve exactly what you expect from them.

The Army operating concept is here. It is imperative that the 35th TTSB continues to rely on mission command with an eye towards winning the complexities of uncertainty.

This will be accomplished through increased decentralization down to teams.

Our capacity to provide decisive communication at home and abroad requires a constant emphasis on the force; your health, welfare and development.

We will increase momentum with leader development efforts across the brigade with a renewed emphasis on small unit training programs.

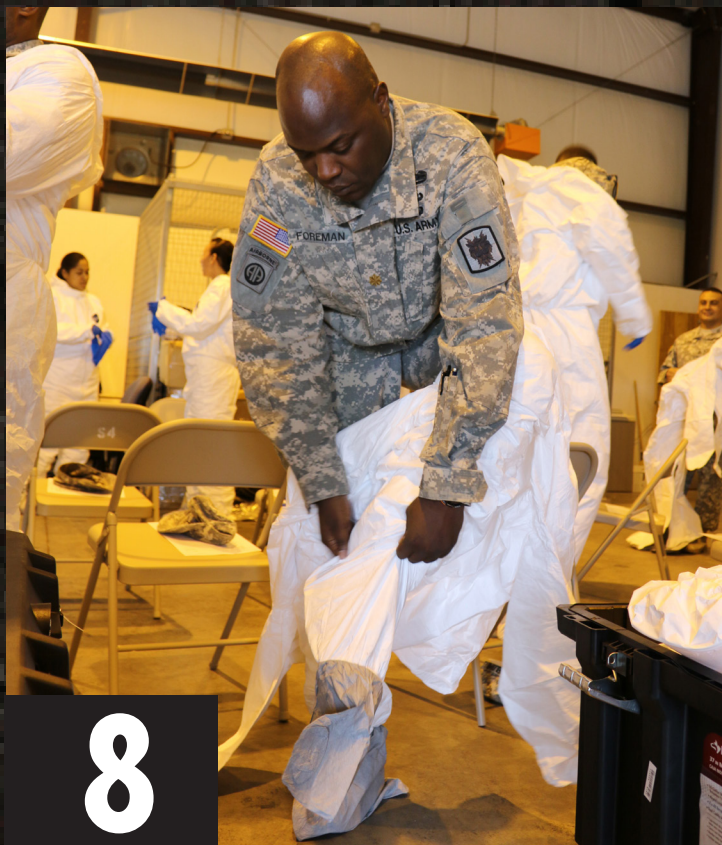
We will deliver on our mission by developing leaders, honing systems, prioritizing resources and mastering the fundamentals.

Great leaders have always given our Army the decisive edge.

We are professionals. Army Strong!

*L6, Col. Robert L. Edmonson II
Brigade commander
35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)*

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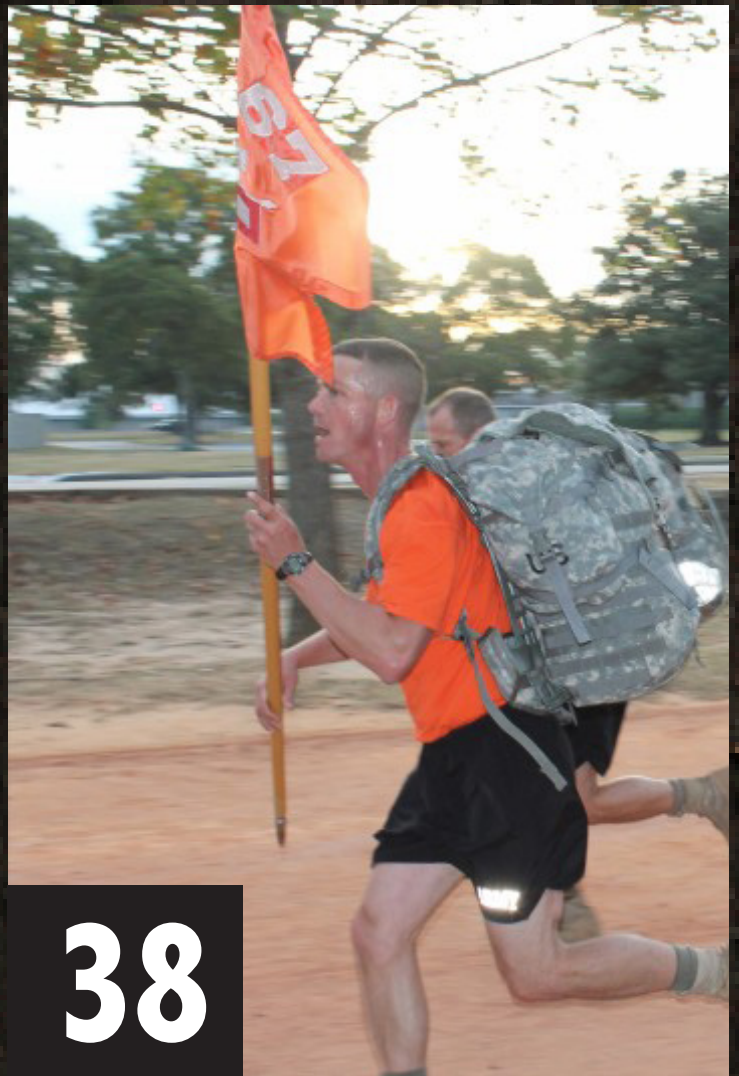
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Enable success



Photo by Spc. Carrie Selph/ 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Lt. Col. Michael Martel, right, outgoing commander of 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), inspects the Soldiers of the ESB alongside Col. Robert Edmonson II, center, 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) brigade commander, before passing command to Lt. Col. Tia Benning, left, incoming commander of 63rd ESB during a ceremony on Barton Field, Fort Gordon, Ga., Nov. 6, 2014.

The 63rd ESB steps into future

By 1st Lt. Joshua S. Anderson
63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

■ From the beginning of the 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), change has paved its history. With that experience the battalion and Soldiers in it ended 2014 and began the New Year prepared for transformation—starting with leadership and ending with a new home. ■

A new command team

A cool morning breeze lifted the fall leaves as Soldiers of the 63rd ESB prepared for a time honored military tradition at Barton Field, Fort Gordon, Georgia Oct. 17, 2014.

The battalion and the 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) bid farewell to Command Sgt. Maj. Aaron L. Prater after two years of outstanding service and welcomed in Command Sgt. Maj. Richard D. Knott as the new battalion command sergeant major.

“General Patton said it best in regards to Soldiers, the Soldier is the Army. No army is better than its Soldiers,”

said Prater.

During the ceremony Prater was acknowledged for being instrumental in numerous missions conducted by the 63rd ESB during his tenure. The battalion never deployed as a whole; though many of the companies and platoons deployed on smaller missions of equal importance.

“Sir, I’m ready to ruck up and join the fight,” said Knott just before he took over the formation and presented the battalion of Soldiers in his charge to the Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Michael P. Martel.

Martel joined Prater in departure when the battalion gathered on Barton Field again Nov. 6, 2014 for a change of command ceremony.

Martel relinquished command to Lt. Col. Tia Benning in a ceremony at Fort Gordon, Georgia, as the battalion prepared its relocation to Fort Stewart, Georgia.

“I truly enjoyed it; I enjoyed managing change, solving problems, helping leaders grow, and watching the team move in a positive direction,” said Martel. “I was comfortable with it and would do it two more years if the Army let me.”

He left the battalion to serve as the deputy brigade commander for the first cyber protection brigade.

Benning, his successor, however, is no stranger to the

35th TTSB or the Lion Brigade.

"I am honored yet deeply humbled to stand here today as the new commander of this outstanding organization," said Benning. "My introduction to the United States Army was as a specialist in the 35th Signal Brigade. So to rejoin its ranks to continue writing its great lineage as a battalion commander is especially heartfelt."

Benning comes to the 63rd ESB from the Human Resources Command in Fort Knox, Kentucky where she served as the Signal Corps Active Component Major's Assignment Officer for two years.

Her experience includes deployments to Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We will soon stamp our signature marking a new chapter within the footprint of the 3rd Infantry Division (Fort Stewart), 'Rock of the Marne', all while providing premier communications support anytime, worldwide," said Benning. "There is no place I'd rather be than serving with you and sharing in all that our future holds."

Changing stations

Changes for the 63rd ESB culminated with the start of its re-stationing from Fort Gordon to Fort Stewart.

The move is the battalion's primary focus for 2015 and includes about 490 Soldiers and 700 family members.

The move is scheduled to be complete by July 16, 2015. The 63rd ESB is currently assigned to U.S. Northern Command and the 3rd Infantry Division will provide installation support to them as a tenant unit.

The re-stationing supports the Army's intent to co-locate a signal battalion with every active component division in order to allow for more robust support, training and communications and to reduce costs associated with traveling for exercise support and training.

Various department representatives from Fort Stewart gave Soldiers a taste of their new home during a town hall at Fort Gordon, Nov. 13, 2014.

"They mentioned a lot about MWR and hunting, which is something that I'm interested in," said Sgt. Joseph L. Kilbreth, Joint Network Node operator, B company, 63rd ESB. "It's events like this that make it a lot easier and a lot more positive. Associating offices and departments with faces, shaking hands and getting that one-on-one is a really big plus for me personally. I'm very grateful for whomever it is that set this up."

The battalion is occupying space at Fort Stewart made available by the inactivation of 2nd Brigade Combat Team and will be leaving space at Fort Gordon for the expanding Cyber Center of Excellence and two incoming military intelligence companies.

"Whether its 23 years of honorable service at Fort Gordon, or establishing a new chapter within the footprint of the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, communications support anytime, worldwide, will be provided with a level of professionalism and pride indicative of the rich history that speaks to our Signal Regiment," said Benning.

Moving lives

When a Soldier swears an oath to protect the constitution of the United States to fight for freedom or even pay the ultimate sacrifice of life, they are not alone with that burden when they have a spouse and family by their side.

Even without a rank, a spouse holds an important role in the Army. They the gears working behind the scenes that can help keep the military running smoothly.

When the 63rd ESB was given orders to move to Fort Stewart it came as a natural change to those in uniform, and for Spc. Brandon Patchett, a multichannel transmission systems operator and maintainer, B Co. 63rd, it was just that.

"I am looking forward to new training opportunities the battalion may have now being at Fort Stewart," said Patchett.

For his wife Brittani Patchett, the move was a bit more difficult.

"My initial thought was that I was pretty excited for our first move to another post," she said. "It's a chance for a new adventure and opportunity as a family."

Moving was a little more complicated for her as she had started a home business of making home décor wood signs.

She would also host craft parties where people were able to come and paint the signs they ordered at a discounted price. Part of why her business had become a success was due to building friendships with her clientele.

Rebuilding her list of clients is just one of the adjustments she will have to make in her family's move. Her business requires a list of crafting supplies that calls for numerous trips to the store to restock on inventory.

From her home in Fort Gordon it was a short 10 minute drive into town while it will now turn in to a 45 minute day trip to the nearest refilling station. Patchett is just one of many military spouses that willingly accept the implications of marrying a service member.

"As a military family, it's a surprise as to what will happen next," she said. "You have to adapt and more than likely it will turn out."

Change is an inherent part of military life and what is shaping the future for the 63rd ESB and it's Soldiers and families during 2015 as the battalion continues to break new ground. ■

Signal support for ebola aid mission

*By Capt. Ryan M. Putnam,
50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)*

*and Staff Sgt. Ashley M. Armstrong,
35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)*



Courtesy photo

On the eve of Veterans Day, Soldiers kissed their loved ones goodbye to join an unfamiliar battle for a unique cause. About 70 Soldiers left Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Nov. 10, 2014 for Senegal and Monrovia, Liberia to aid in a humanitarian mission to contain the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa.

The Soldiers were tasked with providing signal and communications expertise and equipment in support of that mission titled "Operation United Assistance".

The team was comprised of 20 Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical), out of Fort Gordon, Georgia, and about 50 from B Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), 35th TTSB, out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

The Soldiers from HHC, 35th TTSB provided

network operations support and the 50th ESB Soldiers were responsible for installing, operating and maintaining satellite communications.

"I'm excited to get this experience. It makes me feel good as a person and as a Soldier knowing that I'm doing something to help out with something bigger than myself," said Spc. Chadvis K. Cabbagestalk, native of Columbia, South Carolina, signal support systems specialist for HHC, 35th TTSB, before beginning the journey.

The Soldiers and their families prepared for OUA for nearly two months in anticipation for the official departure date. Leading up to their departure, all Soldiers received personal protective equipment and thorough training on proper wear, decontamination and disposal.

"I'm 100 percent confident in our Soldiers. Everybody who is going volunteered," said 1st Sgt. Felix L. Perez,



Photo by Staff Sgt. Charles Crail/ 18th Airborne Corps Public Affairs

Soldiers among the 70 from B Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) board their aircraft at Green Ramp at Fort Bragg, N.C. as they begin their journey to West Africa Nov. 10, 2014, where they support Operation United Assistance and to fight to stop Ebola.



Photos by Capt. Lindsay D. Roman/ 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) Public Affairs

Spc. Kristal Calderon, information technology support specialist, 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical), practices carefully donning and removing Personal Protective Equipment and mask during a class given by a mobile training team comprised of a biological officer and environmental safety specialist from the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases Safety Office, at Fort Gordon, Ga., Oct. 16, 2014.

native of Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico, and first sergeant for B Co. 50th ESB. “We will be ambassadors for the United States there and that’s the greatest thing we could do right now. I want to give back, that’s my purpose in life. I’m here to serve my Soldiers.”

Soldiers, families and friends, lined the sidewalk at the 50th ESB headquarters, waving as the buses departed, many with eyes swollen with tears, as they experienced and bared witness to the same kind of sacrifice and service that Veterans Day honors.

In the fight

In the midst of an international health crisis were Soldiers from the 35th TTSB linking every essential asset to the mission with their communications expertise and equipment.

“The second we touched down in Africa I was amazed,” said Spc. Kristal A. Calderon, an information



Photo by Sgt. Dani Salvatore/ Joint Forces Command–United Assistance Public Affairs

Spc. Kaleb Stewart, right, satellite communications systems operator and maintainer, and Sgt. Pierre Campbell, communications noncommissioned officer, both 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), validate signal equipment in Monrovia, Liberia, Nov. 14, 2014.



Photo by Sgt. Dani Salvatore/ Joint Forces Command–United Assistance Public Affairs

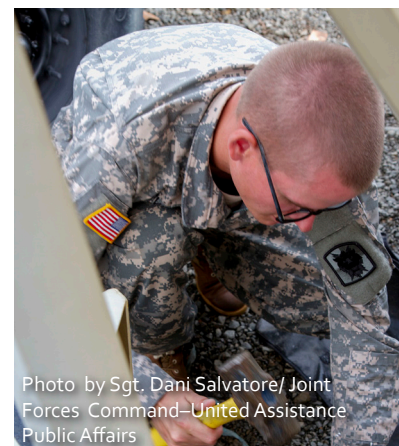


Photo by Sgt. Dani Salvatore/ Joint Forces Command–United Assistance Public Affairs

LEFT: Spc. Gene Johnson, a communications specialist, B Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) grounds his equipment in Monrovia, Liberia, Nov. 14, 2014. RIGHT: Spc. David Marvin, a communications specialist, B Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) grounds equipment during validation at Monrovia, Liberia, Nov. 14, 2014.

technology specialist, with HHC, 35th TTSB. “I got to learn a lot more about my job but on the tactical side. It was a real eye opener. I think we should all be thankful to have what we have and the opportunities we have been given.”

The Soldiers partnered with the 36th Engineer Brigade and the 86th Combat Support Hospital to accomplish two Department of Defense strategic objectives. The first objective— to build Ebola Treatment Units.

The ETUs were built to provide hygienically safe locations to treat Ebola. The second objective was to train personnel to work in them.

The Soldiers found themselves in an environment filled with uncertainty, ambiguity and complexity. It was their job to aid in providing structure to a complex problem, which required more than installing; operating and maintaining communication systems like most

Enable success

signal Soldiers are accustomed to.

"This mission was different because it was a humanitarian aid mission. We were there to support the lead federal agency, (U.S. Agency for International Development), and provide communications support to help stop the outbreak of the Ebola disease virus," said Sgt. Maj. Michael Conaty, who was the network operations sergeant major for JTF-UA in Monrovia, Liberia. "We knew we were making a difference to the people of Liberia, being away from family was the hardest part. We have great Soldiers who have a strong sense of duty."

This mission involved working closely with multiple agencies including the USAID, the World Health Organization, and JTF-UA commanded by the 101st Airborne Division headquartered in Monrovia, Liberia.

The 86th CSH Soldiers provided education and training for Liberian medical personnel to use in the fight against Ebola. To facilitate the training, the 36th Engineer Brigade from Fort Hood, Texas, transformed the Liberian National Police Training Academy into classrooms. The transformed NPTA, located in Paynesville, Liberia, also housed office space for the engineers to create plans to build ETUs.

Prior to 35th TTSB's arrival, the units in theater had minimal communication support, the entire 36th Eng. Bde. was supported by a Broadband Global Area Network, which was adequate for the initial occupation but as the brigade's main body arrived, the BGAN proved insufficient. The 35th TTSB's entrance into the region with HHC, 35th TTSB, and B Company, 50th ESB, quickly enabled mission command by providing a reliable network.

Soldiers of B Co. also worked closely with civil affairs teams. In Paynesville they aided in the fight against the secondary effects of the Ebola virus by partnering with team 8241 of the 82nd Civil Affairs Battalion, 85th Civil Affairs Brigade in their effort to improve social conditions in local communities by visiting two local schools.

Calderon added that due to health concerns and mission demands travel outside of the compound was

very limited, but they found ways to make the best of what they had.

"It was my first time traveling away from home," said Calderon. "At first I was nervous and afraid but once I got there I made new friends and it made it a lot easier to be away. It was pretty cool getting to see the area as well as learn about some of their local culture. Of course no matter how comfortable you get there are still times you get home sick."

They provided a Joint Network Node to support the building of the last ETU in Liberia in Gbediah, a remote town located 100 miles from the NPTA in Paynesville, Liberia, and the Soldiers anticipated their mission's end sooner than expected.

Early welcome

Five months after hugging their families and friends goodbye at their home station, the last four of the 35th TTSB Soldiers sent to Africa exited the terminal at Augusta Regional Airport, Georgia and embraced their loved ones April, 14, 2015, signaling the end of 35th TTSB's support of OUA.

"The mission is over; all of our Soldiers are home safely," said Conaty who arrived home with the final group. "It's just a sense of relief, a sense of accomplishment. To have our families' welcome us home is just amazing."

The Soldiers started returning home in January 2015 after receiving medical clearance following a 21-day medical screening at designated installations across the United States. The last group of Soldiers arrived in Augusta after going through screening at Fort Bliss, Texas.

Conaty looked with glassy eyes as his son, Cody, 15, described how he felt when he saw his father coming down the corridor at the airport.

"I was really happy to see him. I was going to cry, and I think most people would have, but I guess I'm kind of use to him walking down a hallway to see me," said Cody, recalling his father's previous deployments. "It's just awesome to know that my dad does so much hard work every single day and I'm just so proud of him." ■



The 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) Soldiers of Operation United Assistance in Africa, pose for a team photo.

Photo courtesy of Joint Task Force-United Assistance



READY...Or NOT?

Summer is here.

TRAINING, DISCIPLINE AND STANDARDS

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formation. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice.

Lion Brigade,

Occupational Safety & Health Administration has develop an App that allows you to calculate the heat index for your area, and, based on the heat index, displays a risk level to outdoor workers.

It will also send you reminders about the protective measures that should be taken at that risk level to protect workers from heat-related illness-reminders about drinking enough fluids, scheduling rest breaks, planning for and knowing what to do in an emergency, adjusting work operations, gradually building up the workload for new workers, training on heat illness signs and symptoms, and monitoring each other for signs and symptoms of heat-related illness.

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/heat_app.html

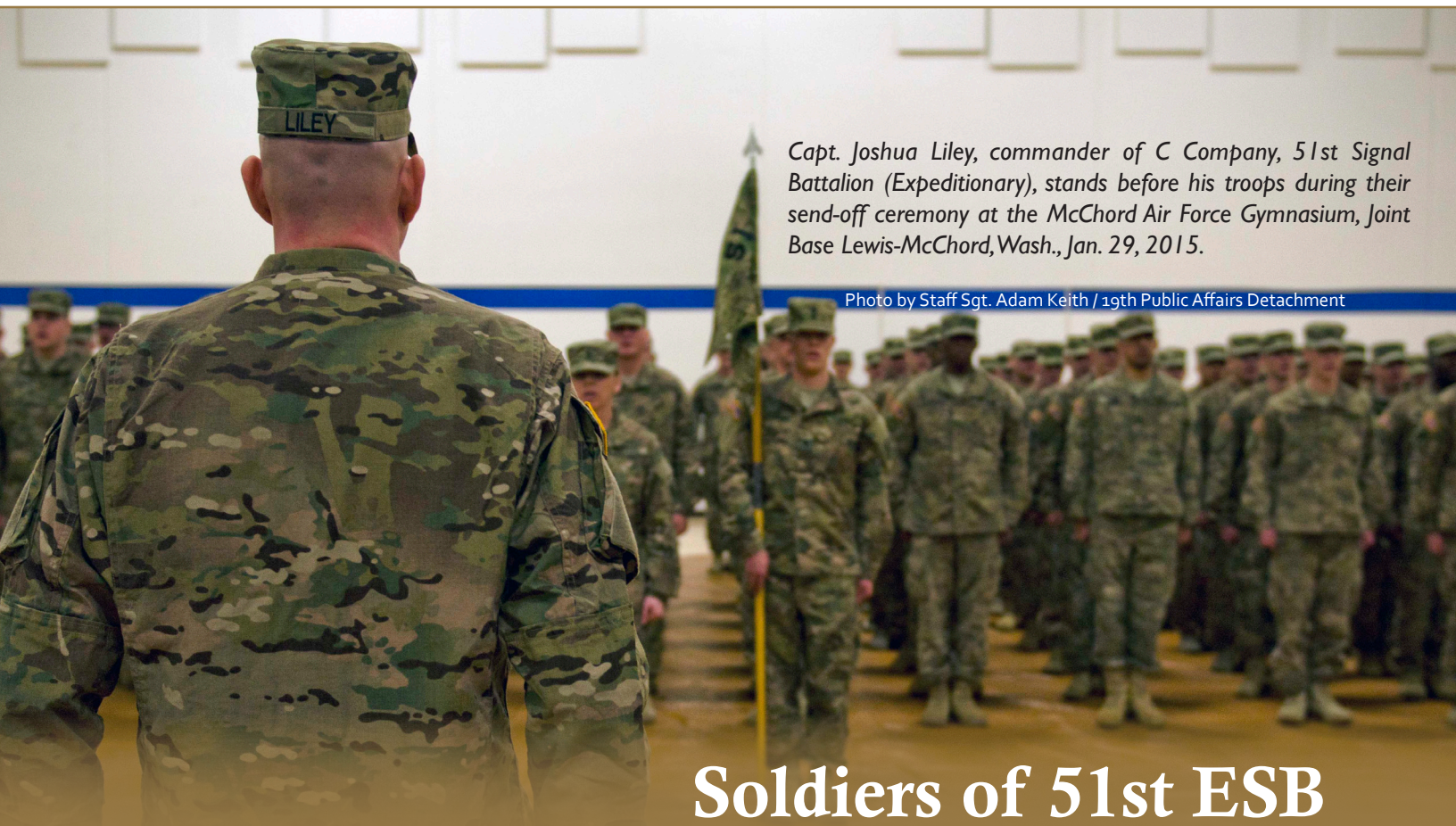


Army Strong.



MRS. VANITA FIEDLER
35th Signal Brigade Safety Manager
BLDG 25526
706-791-2978





Capt. Joshua Liley, commander of C Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), stands before his troops during their send-off ceremony at the McChord Air Force Gymnasium, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., Jan. 29, 2015.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Adam Keith / 19th Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers of 51st ESB

Deploy to Iraq

by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Spradlin, 19th Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from C Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), took the first steps in their nine-month deployment journey when friends, families and fellow Soldiers gathered for a send-off ceremony at the McChord Air Force Gymnasium, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, Jan. 29, 2015.

The unit, which is trained to support worldwide contingency operations, will assist the Combined Joint Task Force Inherent Resolve in Iraq with secure and non-secure voice and video communications capabilities.

"A commander is not a commander without communications or signal support. They can't relay

their intent if they don't have a way of communicating with their forces," said Lt. Col. John Meek, 51st ESB commander. "We will enable the commanders on the ground to conduct mission command so that they can build capacity for the Iraqi Security Forces."

Meek said he was confident the unit was ready to execute the mission because battalion leadership stresses a two-fold training priority: force protection and common Soldier tasks and core competency in all signal-related military occupational specialties. All Soldiers are trained to engineer, install, operate, maintain and defend network capabilities – in addition, C Co. was trained to meet

theater-specific training objectives as outlined by U.S. Central Command.

In short, he said, "They're ready to get on the airplane and get after this mission."

For the Soldiers of C Co., the turnaround on the notice and preparation for the mission was a brief 30 days, but with expeditionary in their name and part of their training philosophy, the Soldiers were ready to deploy and their families adequately prepared for the deployment. The unit hosted a town hall, where unit leadership walked the Soldiers and their families through a general timeline and installation representatives outlined resources available on



Photo by Staff Sgt. Adam Keith/ 19th Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from C Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), stand in formation during the company's send-off ceremony for friends, family and fellow Soldiers at the McChord Air Force Gymnasium, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., Jan. 29, 2015.

"We will enable the commanders on the ground to conduct mission command so that they can build capacity for the Iraqi Security Forces."

-Lt. Col. Meek

the installation throughout the deployment.

"The morale is very high," said Staff Sgt. Zachary Berghammer, C Co. headquarters platoon sergeant. "It's a mix of Soldiers who have been to Iraq before, but with the drawdown it has been several years, and they're ready to go back to help out, and Soldiers who have never gone before, and who are looking to earn their stripes."

Berghammer has deployed three times to Iraq and once to

Afghanistan. This is his first deployment as a signal Soldier.

He said that each deployment was different, and he looks forward to improving his own technical skill while continuing to lead Soldiers.

"My biggest advice was to stay flexible. Some of them are nervous. Maybe a little scared because it's new; I told them when you get boots on ground, things are going to change. Just keep track of each other, and we'll be fine," said Berghammer. ■



Photo by Staff Sgt. Adam Keith/ 19th Public Affairs Detachment

Capt. Joshua Liley, left, commander of C Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), and Lt. Col. John Meek, right, 51st ESB commander, change the company guidon to reflect the company's deployed status during their send-off ceremony at the McChord Air Force Gymnasium, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., Jan. 29, 2015.

518th TIN CO.

Soldiers finish deployment strong

By 1st Lt. James R. LeCraw, 518th Tactical Installation and Networking Company and Staff Sgt. Ashley M. Armstrong, 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)

During 2014, the 518th Tactical Installation and Networking Company, deployed all over the U.S. Central Command area of operations, to include Iraq, United Arab Emirates, and multiple bases in Kuwait and Afghanistan.

The company carried out their mission to provide physical network connectivity and communication support to customers ranging from civilian contracting companies to Special Forces Groups.

Every Soldier in the 518th TIN contributed to the unit's success, and each one was able to gain valuable experience performing their duties in a deployed environment.

At Camp Buehring, Kuwait the 518th TIN "Raiders" were attached to the 40th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), based out of Fort Huachuca, Arizona.

Tactical Installation and Networking teams provided cable remediation, network management, and administration of communications hardware for units on 3 different bases in Kuwait.

These services improved the communications capabilities for combat and support units, to include 1st Infantry Division, 4th Infantry Division, and 335th Signal Command (Theater) headquarters.

During their time at Camp Buehring, the 518th TIN was also able to take advantage of Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs activities, trips and classes.

Several Soldiers had the opportunity to leave the base and tour various locations throughout Kuwait City. Others participated in or lead athletic events, dance classes, religious activities and game nights.

On Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, a large portion of the 518th TIN was attached to 25th Signal Battalion, where they worked under heat, rain and in some cases, threat of enemy fire.

Regardless, the Raider Soldiers successfully completed dozens of missions digging trenches, installing fiber and performing cable remediation.

The 518th's involvement at Bagram and surrounding forward operating bases and air fields vastly enhanced the theater's communications network.

Some of their missions were in direct support of units such as 335th TSC and 5th Special Forces Group.

They also had the chance to work with Air Force Engineering and Installation, gaining valuable experience from a different team with a similar skill set.

"Being able to work with the Air Force E and I team on Bagram provided valuable work experience, and it was a privilege being able to share time and knowledge with service members from a different branch," said 1st Lt. Jason T. Merten, platoon leader, 518th TIN, native of Roscoe, Illinois.

During the second half of the deployment, one 518th TIN cable team from Kuwait was ordered to Iraq to support forces there. The team was assigned to trace and map underground fiber as well as perform indoor cable installation and repair.

Just like the Soldiers in Kuwait and Afghanistan, these Raiders significantly improved the communications



Photo by Sgt. Kalie A. Jones/ 40th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Staff Sgt. Kenneth James, information management officer of the 518th Tactical Installation and Networking Company, rehearses a vehicle movement plan to Soldiers of 518th TIN and 40th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) during a convoy live fire exercise on one of the training sites at Camp Buehing, Kuwait on Nov. 20, 2014.

capabilities of the combat units in their area of operation.

Several Soldiers received praise and recognition for their hard work by important visitors including Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, commanding general, 18th Airborne Corps, which signified their mission success.

Welcome home

All seats were full, walls lined and corridors packed as the happy chatter of eager family and friends filled the U.S. Army Reserve Center of Fort Gordon, Georgia, Jan. 18, 2015.

After nine months and several thousand miles, nothing but a door separated the Soldiers from the crowd and ceremony celebrating an end to their deployment to the Middle East.

Finally the wait was over; the doors opened and out marched more than 100 Soldiers of 518th TIN presenting themselves in front of their cheering loved ones, some holding handmade signs and balloons, wearing custom shirts or waving American flags.

As soon as 3-year-old Emma Jones laid eyes on her father in the front of formation she ran to his side unwilling to wait a moment longer.

"It was awesome," said Staff Sgt. Kyle D. Jones, Emma's father, and information technology specialist for 518th TIN. "It was cool that she was right there by me. It was different because she's bigger and even her voice changed. She's always liked to be right there by me."

That wasn't the only significant moment for the Jones family, as it was also Jones' first time holding his youngest daughter Sofia who is only a few months old.

"It's been a long time coming," said Jones' wife Cynthia. "I couldn't believe it that he's finally here. It's great to have him back."

The ceremony was also a first for Sgt. Sean M. Owens, cable systems installer and maintainer, 518th TIN, who held his two-month-old son for the first time.

"I've been looking forward to this for a very long time," said Owens, smiling at his son cradled in his arms.

During their deployment, the Soldiers of the 518th TIN, a company in 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical), supported Operation Enduring Freedom in Kuwait, Afghanistan and other locations under Central Command.

Their mission was to provide network installation utilizing a user-provided bill of materials, troubleshooting, quality assurance testing and hand-off coordination to enable transition from tactical to semi-permanent automation support for Army Service Component Commands, Geographic Combatant Commanders, Signal Command (Theater) Commanders

and Joint Task Force or Coalition Headquarters.

"The Soldiers of the 518th TIN grew tremendously, personally and professionally, during this deployment and were the sole reason for the success of the company," said 1st Lt. Jason Merten executive officer, 518th TIN. "Whether it was in Kuwait assisting the 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion and the 160th Signal Brigade or in Afghanistan supporting the 335th Tactical Theater Signal Command and the 25th Signal Battalion, the Soldiers went above and beyond what was expected to accomplish the mission."

The 518th TIN's Family Readiness Group also received recognition at the event for sending consistent care packages for the Soldiers and providing support to their fellow 518th TIN company families.

"We wouldn't have been successful without the support of all of the families here at Fort Gordon and back home," said Merten. "We would like to extend our thanks to all of them."

Once the Soldiers complete their 10-day reintegration, they will be granted an opportunity to take leave and will return to normal training mid-February.

After nearly a year supporting and defending each other from afar, the 518th TIN family is reunited and able to find comfort in a mission well done. ■



Photo by Sgt. Kalie A. Jones/40th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Staff Sgt. Kyle D. Jones information technology specialist for 518th Tactical Installation and Networking Company, holds his daughter Sofia for the first time at the U.S. Army Reserve Center, Jan. 18, 2015, after completing a nine-month tour to the Middle East.

CROSS COUNTRY SIGNAL

By Sgt. Jamye Mort, Spc. Taylor Archer, both 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) and 1st Lt. Michael E. Smith, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Soldiers of the 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) extend their support across the country through vital communications that aid combat elements with mission success. As the year 2014 came to an end, Soldiers of 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) extended their signal expertise to the fight in the sky supporting Air Defense Artillery at Fort Bragg, North Carolina while 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) made Fort Polk, Louisiana home for a few months during back-to-back rotations at the Joint Readiness Training Center.

Iron Patriot Games

Redundancy is vital to air defense missions, as any lapse in communication between two sites can have a catastrophic impact, resulting in significant friendly civilian or military casualties.

Soldiers of C Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), provided necessary redundancy by

implementing the Internet Protocol data cable to send and receive data and voice between older model line of sight shelters during 1st Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 108th Air Defense Artillery Brigade's pre-deployment validation exercise, "Iron Patriot", Oct. 20-31, 2014.

This was the first time since early 2014, that Soldiers of the 50th ESB successfully established a high capacity line of sight link between two shelters during an active support mission. It was also the first time the teams ever utilized the IP data cables with their systems.

"It was a phenomenal training opportunity," said Sgt. Matthew Turner, transmission system operator and maintainer, C Co., 50th ESB. "We treated this like any other support mission; we get tasked and accomplish the task. That's what we do."

The Soldiers provided more than 50 Non-secure Internet Protocol Router network drops and Secure Internet Protocol Router network drops to more than five locations to include two simulation centers and three training areas around Fort Bragg, North Carolina.



Photo by Sgt. Jamye Mort/
50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Spc. Daniel Ortizolivo, transmission system operator and maintainer, C Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), adjusts the direction of a 15-meter antenna mast during a pre-deployment validation exercise at Fort Bragg, N.C., Oct. 21, 2014.

The Soldiers maintained the communication capabilities that led to mission success at the exercise. Soldiers provided all the services using Command Post Node systems, Satellite Transportable Terminals, and Line of Sight Version-1 shelters.

“Taking the LOS(V)1 to the field for a redundant link is a great concept,” said Sgt. Jamye Mort, senior transmission system operator and maintainer. “With proper training and sufficient personnel it can be a vital way to ensure communication is consistent, even if one STT stops functioning. Training on this type of link is the key.”

After receiving the requirements just two days prior to the mission was set to begin, C Company Soldiers drew communication security keys, obtained the satellite access authorization, executed a communications exercise and packed their equipment in just one day.

“They received the mission and responded quickly and effectively, providing communications to 1-7 ADA with commendable praise from

the command,” said Mort.

The company assumed the mission last minute after the Soldiers of B Company, who were originally tasked to support, received orders to deploy to Africa in support of Operation United Assistance.

While B Co. was implementing their quick reaction force for a real world mission, C Co. received a small dose of training for quick reaction scenarios by assuming their support mission for an adjacent unit exercise.

“Receiving the mission so close to the execution time was just more proof at how ready and capable C Company, 50th Signal Battalion Soldiers are,” said Mort.

Soldiers of 1st Platoon, C Co. supported the B Company “Bandits” and D Battery “Dragons” of 1-7 ADA with only three team members ensuring mission success.

“Once the Soldiers quickly brought up their services, they worked night and day implementing the LOS(V)1 utilizing the IP data cables,” said 1st Lt. Kara Wilson,



Photo by Sgt. Jamye Mort/
50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Soldiers of C Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) establish their signal site during exercise “Iron Patriot” on Fort Bragg, N.C., October 21, 2014.

platoon leader 1st Platoon, C Co.

“This was a new concept to them and everyone in our company, but they persisted and became successful, all while also ensuring their customers of 1-7 ADA were taken care of.”

Three days into the mission the power from the STT began spiking, causing the system to lose signal.

The Soldiers of CPN Team 57146, 1st Platoon, immediately troubleshooted the problem, replaced the faulty part from their spare equipment, and put the system back online within 35 minutes.

Throughout the mission 1st Platoon Soldiers were given the opportunity to tour and learn about the 1-7 ADA Patriot missile defense systems and radar systems.

The validation exercise involved multiple challenging firing tables for the air defenders that simulate a possible rogue nation missile attack.

“Touring the Air Defense Artillery equipment was a learning experience that showed our CPN personnel just how important it is to work hard to maintain communications on the battlefield,” said Mort. “Knowing we are the link to success in times of training and in times of war.”



Photo by Sgt. Jamye Mort/
50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Spc. Taylor Archer, transmission system operator and maintainer and Spc. Christopher Humann, information technology specialist, C Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), test their Voice over Internet Protocol services within their Command Post Node as they support 1st Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 108th Air Defense Artillery Brigade on Fort Bragg, N.C., Oct. 21, 2014.

Tag me in

Soldiers of the 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), left a lasting impression at JRTC in Fort Polk, Louisiana, after supporting the 1st and 2nd Brigade Combat Teams of the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) during back-to-back rotations Jan. 7, 2014 to March 5, 2015.

The JRTC rotations served to train and prepare the BCTs to deploy to Afghanistan later this year.

Finishing rotation of 15-03, in March Sgt. Ian Hobson's six-Soldier Command Post Node team from A Company, 51st ESB, was embedded with the infantry battalion headquarters for the duration of the three-week exercise.

During that time, they provided both Non-secure Internet Protocol Router network and Secure Internet Protocol Router network services, as well as Voice over Internet Protocol capabilities to more than 20 subscribers.

The battalion jumped locations several times, maintaining mission command at each site thanks to the hard work of the signal team.

Things heated up during the force-on-force portion of the exercise; as simulated casualties mounted, the 2nd Platoon, A Co., 51st ESB Soldiers added their weight to defensive fires, helping repel aggressors from the opposing force who attempted to overrun the headquarters' location.

Meanwhile, two more teams from 2nd Platoon, A Co., 51st ESB, arrived for the next rotation.

The platoon's Joint Network Node and another CPN performed as necessary communication enablers for 2nd BCT, 10th Mountain Division.

The JNN provided NIPR and SIPR services for the Florida National Guard's 927th Combat Service Support Battalion, while another CPN team provided the same services for the 2nd BCT's



Photo by 1st. Lt. Michael Smith/
51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Sgt. Johnathan Navis, senior nodal network systems operator and maintainer, A Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), validates his equipment Feb.3, 2015 at Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La.

Combat Aviation Battalion.

The two sites are almost fifty miles apart, meaning that the platoon leadership had to leverage the CAB's "ring-route", a steady stream of Black Hawk and Chinook helicopter flights circulating among the forward operating bases of the installation, to monitor their Soldiers during the exercise.

The 927th CSSB operated out of Intermediate Staging Base Alexandria, a small base adjacent to the Eponymous Airport outside of Fort Polk.

The small, crowded base presented challenges that the team met eagerly.

The team's lone cable specialist, Pfc. Michael Krueger, cable systems installer and maintainer, A Co., 51st ESB, 35th TTSB, ran over 5,000 feet of fiber optic and Ethernet cable to support the more than fifty unique customers in 12 different offices across two separate buildings.

"We don't get to do work like this very often. It's great to start such a big project from scratch, to support so many users," said Krueger about the project.

The site, carefully planned in conjunction with the supported unit, will become a permanent part of the site's infrastructure, useful to many future rotations.

Setting up in Fort Polk's FOB Forge, a team was embed into the CAB's operations center, augmenting the aviator's own signal assets for the rotation. They served as replacements for the organic signal team whose equipment was unable to participate in the exercise.

The team also arranged an aggressive schedule of cross training between their team and the CAB's signal Soldiers.

The team demonstrated the "ESB" method of field signal support, while receiving first hand training on aviation tactical communications systems the CAB signal Soldiers do not normally get to experience or train with.

From the rotations the Soldiers earned and shared their experience for mutual gain and used their knowledge to leave improved and enduring value to JRTC at Fort Polk.

Quality signal support is a part of the 35th TTSB mission along with providing Soldiers who will give the utmost of their ability to the mission.

It's that kind of service that leaves an impression of professionalism and reliability that makes the Soldiers of the Lion Brigade in high demand for mission support. ■



U.S. ARMY

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ALL THINGS THROUGH *DIGNITY & RESPECT*

There is an indisputable link between how Soldiers are treated and how they perform their duties. In order to foster a healthy work environment, we must treat one another with dignity and respect. We will achieve better morale, greater commitment, increased trust and cohesion and better performance.

SFC Damon C. Jenkins

35th Signal Brigade EOA

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Office: 706-791-9305



The **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM** is about **ARMY VALUES**.

Lion's character

January 2007
Signal Battalion (EXP)
"The Key to Command"
"Who shall I send and who will go for us?
Then said I, Here I am, Send me."
Isaiah 6:8

IN MEMORY OF **MAJOR MICHAEL J. DONAHUE**

November 20 1972 - September 16 2014

OEF 2005-2006

OIF 2007-2008

OEF 2013-2014



50TH ESB Executive Officer
August 2012 - June 2013

"KEY TO COMMAND"



A stone in front of the 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C. is dedicated to Maj. Michael Donahue, during a ceremony March 5, 2015, a former battalion executive officer who died in action Sept. 16, 2014.

Photo by 2nd Lt. Kate Linman/ 50th Signal Battalion

A HERO'S TRIBUTE



MICHAEL J. DONAHUE
CONFERENCE ROOM

Photo by 2nd Lt. Kate Linman/ 50th Signal Battalion

A conference room in the 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C. is dedicated to Maj. Michael Donahue, a former battalion executive officer who died in action Sept. 16, 2014, during a ceremony March 5, 2015.

By 2nd Lt. Kate Linman,
50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Soldiers of 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) commemorated the sacrifice of a former battalion member who died in combat through a ceremonial tribute to the life of a hero.

The 50th ESB honored the memory of Maj. Michael Donahue during a dedication ceremony, March 5, 2015, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where a memorial stone was unveiled and the battalion conference room was named in his honor.

Donahue served as the 50th ESB executive officer from August 2012 to June 2013. He was assigned as the 18th Airborne Corps G6 network operations officer during 2013 and deployed to Afghanistan as the forward J6 Afghan National Security Force development officer when he was killed in action Sept. 16, 2014.

The ceremony memorialized Donahue's service, sacrifice, leadership and lasting impact on the 50th ESB said Lt. Col. William McDowell, 50th ESB battalion commander. McDowell added that the memorial stone and conference room, which now bear his name, will "forever etch his deserving place in this unit's proud history."

The stone sits in the memorial garden in front of the battalion, which holds memorial stones dedicated to nine officers and Soldiers who were killed in action.

Donahue mentored, coached and grew the lieutenants and captains of the 50th ESB, some of which are still in the unit's formation today, McDowell said. His impact on the lieutenants can be seen in 1st Lt. Sarah McFarland, who was a platoon leader when Donahue was the executive officer. She said Donahue devoted a lot of time mentoring the junior officers and she learned many lessons from physical training, Friday closeout walk-throughs and maintenance meetings.

"He held everyone to the same standard and demanded nothing less than the best from each of us," McFarland said. "For that, I am very grateful that I got to serve with him."

His presence was felt throughout the 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical), as he was assigned to the brigade headquarters and with the 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) in addition to his time at the 50th ESB.

Donahue also influenced the lives of Soldiers outside the brigade. As the Assistant Professor of Military Science at Liberty University's Reserve Officer Training Corps program, Donahue mentored young cadets, including current 50th ESB officer, 1st Lt. Stephen Page. Donahue was Page's instructor during his sophomore year of ROTC during 2008 and 2009. Donahue constantly encouraged the cadets, and he influenced Page to want to join the Signal Corps, Page said. He said Donahue instilled the idea of "lead by example" in him. Donahue's mentorship of Page continued even after Donahue and Page moved on to their next assignments.

Donahue's wife, Sherri, and two of their three children attended the dedication ceremony and helped unveil the memorial stone. The room was still as Sherri spoke about her husband.

"For so many of you who did serve with him you knew him as a leader and a mentor, and that's good — but he was my husband," she said.

She talked about his love for the challenges that his job as executive officer presented to him, and she encouraged those in the room to break through challenges and build new paths for the Soldiers who come after them. Sherri asked the Soldiers to not just remember his name, but remember him as a person and to keep his legacy going.

"Some people may say my husband is a hero," Sherri said. "He didn't become a hero September 16 — he became a hero the day I met him, to me, and he became a hero to many other people the day they met him." ■

Soldiers of 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) run in honor of Maj. Michael Donahue, a former battalion executive officer who died in action Sept. 16, 2014, as part of a dedication ceremony at Fort Bragg N.C. in his honor March 5, 2015,

Photo by Spc. Marlonbrandon Arellano/ Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)





Sgt. Syretha Crawford, a food service operations noncommissioned officer, 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), prepares a meal on the set of *The Rachael Ray Show* in New York City, Nov. 11, 2014

Photos by Master Sgt. Dean Welch/Office of the Chief of Public Affairs-Northeast

FOOD AND FAME

SOLDIER EARNS PLACE ON COOKING SHOW

By Staff Sgt. Ashley Armstrong
35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)

While toughing through long missions with days and nights of extreme weather and little comfort it's often the simple things that bring the most joy—like a nice plate of food.

It's those smiles on worn faces of Soldiers eating chow that Sgt. Syretha Crawford a food service operations noncommissioned officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), says brings her the most joy.

"Food makes people happy. When you have a full Soldier you have a happy Soldier," she said with a grin.

It was Crawford's passion for cooking and award-winning skills that earned her a place representing the U.S. Army on *The Rachael Ray Show*, a day-time cooking show, Veterans Day special filmed in New York City, which aired Nov. 11, 2014.

"That was the best feeling in the world because in my mind out of every (food service specialist) in the entire

United States Army I was able to stand in the forefront for us all and I think that was the most humbling experience ever," said Crawford. "It was an experience I would never trade for the world."

Crawford had recently arrived to Fort Gordon, Georgia when she was selected to appear on the show after winning an Iron Chef Competition at the Culinary Arts Center at Fort Hood, Texas in 2013.

During the episode titled "An Armed Forces Cook-Off to Honor Our Veterans," Crawford and other participants prepared a 30-minute meal.

"It was pretty cool we got to go on set where her culinary team put everything out for us once we gave them our recipes," said Crawford.

On the show she prepared the same dish, shrimp and avocado bisque, which won her the Fort Hood competition.

"I thought 'it's going to be cold in New York so let's

go with a soup-and-sandwich,' and I threw the shrimp in there just to kick it up a little bit," she said.

Crawford didn't always plan to be an Army cook but chose the job because she knew how to do it and thought it would be fun, she said.

"What I enjoy most about my job is cooking for Soldiers," she said. "In the Army we work with very limited resources and I like taking the simplest ingredients and making it look like a \$100 plate even though it may only have only cost \$5."

Dining facilities, staffed by military cooks, are the primary source of food for many service members on a regular basis and food in field and combat environments is most often prepared by military food service specialists.

"I can remember putting out beef pot roast one time and it was a Soldier's favorite food and he had been in the field for a while," Crawford recalled. "I was still in the kitchen cooking and my senior came and got me and was like, 'somebody wants to speak with you' and it was the Soldier and he said 'that tasted like my mom cooked it.' Those moments are very important when we are putting out food."

Crawford spends most days now at Dining Facility 13 practicing meals for culinary competitions though she

says cooking is not only a job for her but also a means of bonding with her 6-year-old daughter.

"For me it's another way to spend time with my daughter. We can make a mess baking cake pops, she doesn't know that she's learning she just thinks we are making a mess in the kitchen," said Crawford.

In the future Crawford plans on obtaining a degree in pastry and baking from Le Cordon Bleu culinary college in Atlanta, Georgia, and eventually opening up her own chain of restaurants once she completes her service in the U.S. Army.

"The majority of my inspiration for cooking comes from a love of food. I like trying stuff. You've got to burn some stuff and try it over again and it's fun," said Crawford who described savory dishes as her specialty. "I want to do pastry because it's more of a challenge. I want to do something that isn't easy that doesn't come so natural."

Crawford's experience in cooking has inspired her to have a positive outlook that she intends to carry with her wherever she goes.

"Cook with your heart, no matter what you do, cook with love," she said. "You're going to make mistakes but you learn from them. Just try it. Don't ever be limited by what you think you can do." ■

SHRIMP AND AVOCADO BISQUE



Directions

Cut avocados in half. Discard pits. Spoon avocado meat into small bowl. Chop cooked shrimp and sautee in butter. In a medium saucepan, combine avocado, chicken broth, whole milk, lemon juice, and chopped onion. Heat slowly to boiling, stirring frequently. Add chopped shrimp (optional), along with salt and pepper. Heat through, but do not boil. Remove from heat. Adjust seasonings to taste. May be served hot or cold.

Ingredients

- 3 medium-size avocados
- 1 (14.5 oz) can chicken broth
- 2 cups milk or heavy cream
- 1 tsp lemon
- 2 tsp minced onion
- 1/2 lb cooked shrimp (optional)
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp ground black pepper

Lion's character

I am a reliable leader; one who is accessible and can always be counted on.

I am responsible for readiness of myself, Soldiers and their equipment under my charge; no one knows more about my Soldiers than me.

I will teach, coach and mentor; lead and uphold the high standards of my rank position.

LEADERS

commit

By Staff. Sgt. Ashley Armstrong,
35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)

"An Army leader is anyone who by virtue of assumed role or assigned responsibility inspires and influences people to accomplish organizational goals," as defined in Army Doctrine and Training Publication 6-22, Army Leadership.

"Army leaders motivate people both inside and outside the chain of command to pursue actions, focus thinking and shape decisions for the greater good of the organization," the definition concludes.

Most Soldiers are required to demonstrate knowledge of such leadership doctrine, creeds and philosophy before becoming leaders but putting that knowledge into practice doesn't always come natural.

The 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) command team called leaders in the brigade to action through a

campaign that started May 3, 2015 by challenging them to embody the qualities outlined by Army doctrine and provide their subordinates the quality leadership they are entitled to.

"Today marks the beginning of a renewed dedication to our profession within the Lion Signal Brigade," said Col. Robert L. Edmonson II, brigade commander, 35th TTSB, in the campaign announcement. "Start now to encourage those around you to 'lead from the front,' and to choose the hard right over the easy wrong. Build irreversible momentum. The next generation is already inside your formations."

The campaign asks leaders to make a commitment to be reliable and responsible mentors by signing the pledge on a leadership card; a physical reminder of ownership of their role.

"I'm asking leaders to sign that card and do what it says on that card at a bare minimum," said Edmonson.



to restore profession

“We are trying to become decentralized and more expeditionary and the only way to do that is to have trained and ready junior leaders.”

The brigade has supported four short-notice deployments in the past four months, all requiring less than a company to deploy, which is why Edmonson says he puts so much emphasis on junior leaders with the campaign.

“I’ve asked some subordinate leaders how many could have used better leaders and a bunch of hands went up and I said fine don’t be them,” said Edmonson. “I believe this campaign will influence change by challenging leaders to step forward and to do something that may be a little bit different from what they are familiar with.”

The main inspiration behind the campaign is readiness with the intent of preparing Soldiers by paving the path to enduring success, added Edmonson.

“I hope to see greater independence at the junior

level, increased initiative and ownership at all echelons,” Edmonson said, as a mark of the campaign success. “I hope Soldiers see reliable, confident leaders standing in front of their formations that understand time management, training management and unit readiness all in support of highly training Soldiers.”

Edmonson said that he hopes the campaign brings out qualities in leaders that they will carry with them for the rest of their careers and pass on to those who take their place.

“We have many leaders in the formation that are doing this right now, everything that I’m talking about every single day, and they are doing a great job at it,” he added. “My definition of success would be that the leadership campaign becomes an enduring quality of this brigade where leaders are always trying to step forward and challenge themselves on behalf of their Soldiers all in the name of readiness.” ■

X SGT Maran Hancock

lead by example

By Staff. Sgt. Ashley Armstrong,
35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)

Doubt is often a cause for defeat, but when seen differently it can also be a source of motivation.

"I think that taking on challenges is always going to be part of the developmental process for leading," according to Sgt. Maran E. Hancock, whose determination, dedication and selfless service drove her transformation from military spouse to the award-winning paralegal noncommissioned officer that she is today.

In 2012, after traveling across the world from Colorado and Texas to Vicenza, Italy, by her husband's side, Hancock decided she was ready for a different challenge.

"I've always been very patriotic, very inspired by people who have served, but I never thought that I could do it. I thought that I didn't have what it took physically and a lot of people didn't think so either," said Hancock, referring to her petite physique. "When I got to know the people in the service and I got to know the vast variety of jobs you could do for the Army I knew it was time for me to join."

With a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communications from University of Utah, Hancock, a native of Wendover, Utah, considered joining the Army as a commissioned officer but ultimately decided it didn't feel right to her.

"I thought that I might have some problems leading Soldiers right off the bat," said Hancock adding that she was also concerned that expectations would be higher for her because she joined at an older age. "I believe you should follow before you should lead and that's why I've chosen the path that I have."

It only took her a little over a year as a follower to give her the confidence and knowledge to officially become a leader through promotion to sergeant. She attributes much of that success to the mentorship provided by good leadership while serving in the 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary).

"I've done my best to live my life by the Army values. I find that if you strive to embody those values and if you work hard at everything you do, people will notice," she said. "I've had great mentors and great leaders, a



Sgt. Maran E. Hancock, paralegal noncommissioned officer, 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical), shakes the hand of Brig. Gen. Charles N. Pede, commander and commandant of the Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School after she was named the 2015 recipient of the Sgt. Eric L. Coggins Award for Excellence in military law during a ceremony at the Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, Charlottesville, Va., June 12, 2015.

lot of people to bounce ideas off of whether that be enlisted mentors here in the service, my husband, my family, even commissioned officers who have been kind enough to give me their time."

She also attributes her rise in success to the spirit of competition and camaraderie.

"I'm a naturally competitive person so during my deployment to Kuwait, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2013 they were doing competition boards on a monthly basis and I knew that I really wanted to do it," said Hancock. "At first I was told no, I haven't been in long enough, and that they wanted to see me prove myself more, which served as a drive."

That inspiration encouraged her to join her comrades in study sessions to help them win in the name of her company, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 67th ESB, and to get more knowledge and experience to better prepare herself.

"I knew eventually that if I was patient I would have

my chance,” said Hancock about anticipating competing in a Soldier of the month board. “I did and I was successful at that board and then success breeds more success. As long as you’re willing to put in the work you can go as far as you want.”

Her military knowledge and successful board performances earned her the title of the Fort Gordon NCO of the Year for 2014.

Despite the time spent preparing for boards, Hancock never lost sight of her responsibilities as paralegal NCO. Her hard work and expertise in her field earned her the 2015 Sgt. Eric L. Coggins Award of Excellence that was presented to her June 9, 2015 at Charlottesville, Virginia.

“You need to know what you’re talking about. If people don’t doubt your knowledge then they don’t question your directives,” said Hancock about how acquired experience and education contributes to her role as a leader. “If you’re not striving for more than what you already know then you are going to stop growing and I think subordinates wouldn’t respect that.”

Hancock added that it’s important to her to instill team spirit in Soldiers and create an atmosphere of mutual respect.

“I think a collaborative environment and an

environment where people feel they can trust you, where they feel they can be their best self, where they feel comfortable enough to strive for something that they might otherwise be afraid to do, that’s the impression that I hope to impart on my Soldiers,” she said. “I think in today’s Army what subordinates want to see is leaders who are adaptable, leaders who are willing to alter direction in order to pursue a greater course for the team.”

Hancock’s board performances and legal expertise influenced the former 35th TTSB command sergeant major to select her to fill the position as the brigade legal NCO, a position above her pay-grade, that gave her leadership over all the battalion-level legal specialists.

“Sometimes in the day-to-day with daily demands it can be easy to forget that leadership is the hallmark of a professional Soldier,” said Hancock. “You don’t start there but it’s always the eventual goal. To be able to lead, to be able to inspire people to follow you, to inspire people to contribute to the unit in a way that’s meaningful and give them a sense of pride in their work.”

With a hunger for knowledge, commitment to unit pride, and drive to achieve greatness, Hancock not only leads with inspiration but also serves to epitomize it with her character. ■

X 1SG Felix Perez

lead with knowledge

By Capt. Ryan Putnam,
50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

In the blink of an eye, Operation United Assistance came to a close. All the Ebola Treatment Units were built and the healthcare workers were trained to work in them. The rapid decline in the number of Ebola cases reported a day prompted a much earlier redeployment than anticipated.

The mission Soldiers of B Company 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), was to provide communication support for the operation.

Although the Soldiers of B. Company, “Red Bulls”, 50th ESB, were largely successful in their mission to provide communications, one member was successful in communicating a different message through his passion for history told through philatelic displays.

For most members of B Co., it is common knowledge that their senior enlisted noncommissioned officer, 1st Sgt. Felix Perez, has a passion for stamp collecting, but the act of collecting itself is not the significance of his endeavor.

“Leaders have the opportunity to positively impact lives



1st Sgt. Felix Perez, first sergeant in B Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) presents one of his stamp displays in honor of Hispanic week at Charlotte, N.C.

by sharing their knowledge and mentoring those around them. Philately has enabled me to do this, by giving me the opportunity to share the knowledge that I have acquired through my research and study of stamps, to reach out to others regardless of cultural differences, to give back to our community and to be a positive role model,” said Perez.

Perez is a proud native of Puerto Rico, whose heritage is very important to his life's work. He was born in Newark, New Jersey but raised by his parents in Puerto Rico when they returned to their native land when he was a child. Later, he returned to New Jersey to attend high school where he enlisted in the Air Force and later transitioned to the Army.

Luckily for B Co., OUA was Perez's fourth deployment to Africa. His first dated back to 1992 when he took part in Operation Provide Relief in Somalia, where he served as an airborne command and control communications operator for the Air Force. They provided security to ensure the safety of personnel arriving in theater.

It was during that time that Perez began his practice of philanthropy, defined by Merriam-Webster's Dictionary as "goodwill to fellow members of the human race; especially active effort to promote human welfare.

He began mainly because of the history told through the images contained in the stamps he collects. His magnificent collection gained attention during OUA when he made the effort to have his wife send him part of his African American History collection, which he put on display during Black History Month at the National Police Training Academy in Monrovia, Liberia.

Perez was a featured speaker during the Martin Luther King Ceremony, during which he highlighted some of the stamps depicting African American success stories including several politicians, entertainers and athletes who overcame struggles of oppression to make huge contributions to society.

In this regard, his displays offer a snap shot through time of many famous and sometimes not so famous, stories of people who have made positive impacts in America.

One particular stamp he says he is especially fond of is the Roberto Clemente stamp issued by the U. S. Postal Service to honor his achievement as the first Hispanic professional baseball player to be inducted into the Major League Hall of Fame.

"Roberto Clemente was once quoted as saying, 'any time you have an opportunity to make a difference in this world and you don't, then you are wasting your time on this earth,'" said Perez.

Perez explains that this stamp is very important to the Puerto Rican community not only because of his success on the baseball diamond, but more specifically because of his efforts as a humanitarian.

In fact, Clemente died while conducting a humanitarian mission just two days before Christmas in 1972 when his plane crashed shortly after takeoff from the San Juan Puerto Rico Airport.

A second trip in early April 2015 took him to the

"Leaders have the opportunity to positively impact lives by sharing their knowledge and mentoring those around them."

-1SG Perez

Nation's Capital to see the unveiling of the stamp honoring Dr. Maya Angelou. This stamp drew the attention of the likes of Oprah Winfrey and America's first lady, Michelle Obama, who attended the ceremony.

Perez's passion for sharing humanitarian achievements and endorsing the values of these dignitaries is important to junior leaders in the formation.

It inspired him to be instrumental in organizing a trip to the Dakar Hotel where he explained the significance of the hotel during Liberia's early history. He even displayed a stamp of the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the current Liberian president, who is the first female president of an African country. Furthermore, he educated junior Soldiers on Liberian history and America's involvement in Liberia during the post-Civil War Era.

Perez publishes a weekly article that portrays a stamp in his collection on his Facebook page. In this way, other collectors can read his article and he can respond to their questions.

His philanthropic work takes him across the United States and other countries to display his collection and affords him the opportunity to connect with other members of the philatelic community. In addition, he makes trips to the National Postal Museum in Washington, D. C. to conduct research to improve his practice.

Perez's ability to emulate the values of the people illustrated in his stamps is making a positive impact, both inside and outside of the Army.

He often gets invited to local shows and he has made several trips to elementary and high schools to discuss his work with children.

"I hope to continue to do this upon retirement, by opening a non-profit cultural center, where people can meet and learn about stamps from around the world," said Perez.

Until retirement, Perez intends to continue to share his talents in order to encourage civic responsibility and promote good citizenship. ■

X MSG Gary Smith

lead by experience

By Spc. Marlonbrandon Arellano,
Headquarters and Headquarters Company
35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)

“No one is more professional than I. I am a noncommissioned officer, a leader of Soldiers,” are the first sentences of the creed engraved into the character of an NCO.

Though the creed is memorized and recited, it’s through quality leaders that the words find their true meaning.

“A leader’s actions sometimes have more of an impact on a Soldier than his or her words ever will,” according to Master Sgt. Gary F. Smith, a senior telecommunications operations chief, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical), whose 29 years of service have given him perspective on what it means to be a leader worth following.

Integrity and the willingness to do hard work are the traits he says he holds paramount.

“I place integrity first as I feel it is the cornerstone of all values, Army or civilian,” added Smith. “To me, the willingness to do hard work is equally important. I feel that no leader should ever be above getting into the foxhole with the Soldiers and coming out just as sweaty and dirty as they are.”

The HHC, 35th TTSB, change of responsibility on Barton Field, Fort Gordon, March 20, 2015 marked the end of four years that Smith served as a first sergeant in the brigade and signaled the start of his transition into retirement.

“What I liked most about being the first sergeant, plain and simple, was the Soldiers. I have now been a Soldier myself for almost 60 percent of my life, and have experienced no greater joy than meeting, working with and spending downtime with fellow Soldiers,” said Smith who served as the first sergeant for A Company, 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) before assuming responsibility of HHC. “There is nothing better than knowing your Soldiers, what motivates them and makes them tick, and then affording them the opportunity to go out and succeed.”

During the ceremony Smith was credited with providing exemplary leadership and instilling a lasting impression for Soldiers to emulate.



Photo by Capt. Lindsay D. Roman/35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical)

The former Headquarters and Headquarters Company First Sergeant, 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical), Master Sgt. Gary F. Smith, a senior telecommunications chief in HHC, 35th TTSB, stands with his wife Michele before being relinquishing his position during a change of responsibility ceremony on Barton Field, Fort Gordon, Ga., March 20, 2015.

“Mission first, Soldier always” I heard this the first time as Pfc. Smith during my first assignment. It took a while for me to understand, but having been a noncommissioned officer for 26 years now, I have defined it as simply possessing a genuine concern for all Soldiers and ensuring that their needs are constantly met, on and off duty,” said Smith. “When you do these things and Soldiers fully realize that you genuinely care for their wellbeing the mission will always take care of itself.”

Smith, a native of Petrolia, Pennsylvania, plans to rejoin the workforce once retired and pledges to remain a part of the Army through supporting organizations as long as he is able.

“My father is loyal to a fault, often placing the wellbeing of his Soldiers before his own needs, whether at the office or across the world on a tour of duty,” said Kurt, Smith’s eldest son. “He is equally as dedicated to his family at home, for whom he has worked tirelessly to provide a safe and comfortable life.”

Smith’s qualities as a leader reflect in his life at home as well while raising three boys with his wife Michele. “My family has always been why I do what I do,” said Smith. “Michele and I have always preplanned for our assignments to ensure that where we live and worked

Lion's character

benefitted the whole team. From good schools, safe neighborhoods, recreational opportunities, she and I have always sacrificed to maybe travel a little further to work each day to ensure our family had the best we could offer.”

Smith's son Dylan, 22 years old, recalled his fondest childhood memories spent with his father playing games and sports, adventuring outside, among other things. Smith's retirement will afford him less time away from

home and more time with his family.

“Despite all the time his work in the Army required of him, my dad always found time for us as well, always,” said Dylan. “I admire my father's sense of responsibility, integrity, hard work and pride. At work and at home, my dad is a role model, setting the bar for all whom he leads. My dad makes me proud to be an American because of the incredible career he has had in the United States Army and my dad makes me proud and honored to be his son.” ■

X CPL Matthew Berry lead with presence

By 2nd Lt. Haydn G. Giannoni,
51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

As opposing forces threatened the tactical operations center of the 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team during a training scenario, Cpl. Matthew D. Berry didn't hesitate to step away from his role as a tactical satellite technician and put his warrior skills in action when the fight needed him.

The odds seemed stacked against them, as Berry and another Soldier disabled an enemy tank before it was able to destroy the TOC, which saved the 86th BCT from a huge loss, during their rotation to the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana, in June 2014.

A few months prior to JRTC Berry, a tactical satellite team leader in B Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, proved his knowledge of tactical manuals and dedication to excellence by winning the battalion Soldier of the quarter board and JRTC gave him a chance to put that knowledge to the test.

After Berry's return to JBLM from JRTC, his knowledge and leadership earned him the position of acting section sergeant of the medium network team from July-October 2014, until Staff Sgt. Jeremy F. Thibault arrived to take the position.

“Berry is an excellent junior (noncommissioned officer) who shows a great deal of initiative. I was not surprised to hear that was instrumental in the success of the JRTC operation,” said Thibault.

Prior to arriving at the 51st ESB, Berry worked in the S6 section of 5th Corps in Germany.

“I really enjoyed Florence, in Italy. The museums were the best part,” said Berry about the travel he did



Photo by 2nd Lt. Haydn G. Giannoni/ 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Cpl. Matthew D. Berry, team leader, B Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) leads his fellow platoon members during a formation at the company headquarters on Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., April, 7 2015.

while stationed in Europe. “But I was also happy to be stationed back here in the United States. It felt good to return home and be able to see what I am fighting for every day I drive to work.”

Berry, a native of Bakersfield, California said he also enjoys long distance running, reading and building computers in his free time when he's not working toward completing a bachelorette degree. After Berry returned to his team leader role, Thibault added that Berry continues to epitomize the battalion's motto of “Always Constant”. ■



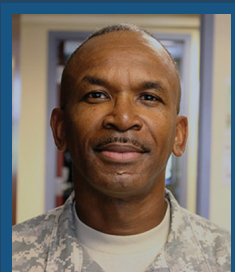
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SFC Christopher Matthews
Master Resilience Trainer
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Fit to fight

Soldiers of C Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) conduct a hot load training demonstration for the company from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter at Simmons Army Airfield, N.C., Dec. 2, 2015.

Photo by Sgt.1st Class Dan McDonald/ 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)



TRAINING SHARPENS WARRIOR SKILLS

By Sgt.1st Class Dan McDonald and 2nd Lt. Mike Laquet,
50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Soldiers of C Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) returned from Thanksgiving and promptly took on the task of commander's week, where they worked to sharpen their warrior skills at a training site in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Dec.1-5, 2014.

Members of the "Predator" and "Spartan" platoons engaged in land navigation, military operations in urban terrain training, and honed key satellite communications and line of sight competencies, but air movement training was the highlight according to the Soldiers.

The 50th ESB Soldiers worked with 1-169th General Support Aviation Battalion, an Army Reserve unit stationed at Simmons Army Airfield, North Carolina.

The Soldiers received hands on training on air movement and medical evacuation operations.

The air movement training took place in three stages on an overcast morning of Dec. 3. The first stage was familiarization with the aircraft and flight line procedures.

For example, headgear is not worn on the flight deck as it may fly off due to the force of the engines and become a safety hazard.

The second stage consisted of doing dry runs on loading and unloading the helicopter.

"I had never seen seatbelts like this before, so it took some getting used to," said Pfc. Stency Johnson, transmission systems operator, C Co. 50th ESB, about the training. "They're a little more complicated than the ones in a car. We also pointed our weapons down, that way it wouldn't go through the blades in case of misfire."

Once the Soldiers were proficient in loading as a team,



Soldiers of C Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), simulate clearing a building at a training site at Fort Bragg, N.C., Dec. 3, 2014.

Photo by Capt. Mark Saurer/ 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

they put their training into practice with the rotors in motion.

Soldiers gained experience in loading and unloading rotor wing assets, and the special considerations of flight deck safety. Sgt. Jonathan Bennett, a Command Post Node team chief in C Co., 50th ESB, said this type of training is really important to expeditionary nature of the 50th ESB.

“Aviation assets give us an additional capability to move or sling load equipment anywhere missions dictate we provide communications to the Warfighter,” said Bennett. “It is essential that our Soldiers are comfortable using those assets.”

The aviators also showed how their air communication equipment, such as single channel ground-to-air radio system and high frequency radios, can communicate air-to-ground. These capabilities were demonstrated by calling 9-line medical evacuation reports from a ground station to a compatible radio being utilized by the pilots.

“We took advantage of some incredible training this week, and to challenge the teams with such a diverse set of objectives and to come out so successfully is a huge accomplishment,” Bennett added. “(The) company is postured well for 2015 and we will continue to improve as we have already begun to spin up for several future missions.” ■

Soldiers of C Company, 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical), set up a 15-meter mast at a training site at Fort Bragg, N.C., Dec. 2, 2014.

Photo by 1st Lt Kara Wilson/ 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)



Fit to fight

Fitness Tips

Physical fitness and readiness are crucial aspects of being a combat ready Soldier and promotes a better overall quality of life. According to an U.S. Army Public Health Command article published in January 2015, non-battle injuries led to more medical evacuations in combat zones than battle injuries. Those injuries often result from overuse, improper form and a general lack of physical fitness knowledge according to the article. Following a few tips to healthy fitness can make all the difference.

Know the technique

Performing exercises properly will reduce the risk of joint and other injuries. The push-up is a common exercise where poor form encourages injuries to the rotator cuff or elbow joint. Such injury can be avoided by keeping the hands in line with shoulders and bending back with the elbows along the body.



Lift with Legs, not back



When lifting weight from the ground; keep feet flat on the ground, bend at the knees, keep chest and head up, abdominal muscles tight and lift with leg muscles. This method prevents injuries to the lower back and promotes leg and core strength.

Focus on form



While running keep a balanced forward posture, with chest forward, shoulders back, and avoid bending at the waist. Alternate arm and leg with short, compact, relaxed movement of arms forward and backward. Land softly underneath bent knee with light and quick movement. Good running form reduces chance of injuries like shin splints.

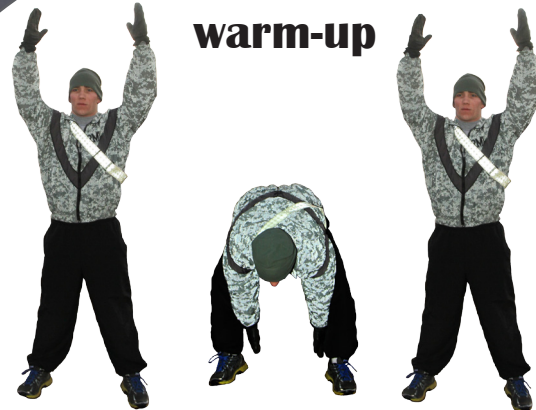
promote health and avoid injury



Avoid unnecessary strain

Sit-ups can put a lot of strain on the neck from pulling the back of the head while sitting up. To prevent injuries to the neck keep the hands on the top of the head while focusing on using the abdominal and hip flexor muscles. The repetitive spine flex can cause bulging or herniated disc in the spine that can be avoided by straightening the back throughout the exercise.

Dynamic stretch warm-up



Before exercising do dynamic stretches that support movement-based flexibility. These movements should take the joints through the full range of motion and include stretches like the bend-and-reach used in Physical Readiness Training, as seen above. Include mobility exercises to warm up muscles, tendons, ligaments, and fascia that include exercises like the verticles of PRT also known as the 'high knees'.

Static stretch cool-down



Do static stretches to cool down that involved holding a position that allows the joint or muscle to be slightly strained. The focus is to relax and increase flexibility. Include stretches like the overhead arm pull, as seen in the picture to the left. Hold these stretches for 20-30 seconds. Only do static stretches after exercising as the held stretch prevents the muscle from being used to it's full capability for some time.



Runners of the first wave take off during the Army 10-miler at the Pentagon in Arlington, Va. Oct. 12, 2014.

Courtesy photo

Running the Army 10-miler

By Pfc. Andrew J. Wise
63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

As the sun rose on our nation's capital, thousands of footsteps could be heard crossing some of our nation's most profound landmarks in an attempt to win the Army 10-miler.

This was my first participation in the Army 10-miler in my short career and it was an experience that I will never forget.

Prior to my enlistment in 2013 I never considered myself a runner even though many people would describe my lean 6' 3" frame as a body built for a runner. When I crossed the finish line on my first physical fitness test in basic training at 12:45, I realized that I just scratched the surface to something even bigger.

I arrived to the Lion Brigade in January 2014 and quickly acclimated myself to the upbeat tempo of the brigade. When I moved to the command team as the

battalion commander's driver in July 2014, my progress as a runner escalated drastically.

The HHC First Sergeant, 1st Sgt. Todd Daniel has a wide reputation within the battalion of transforming Soldiers from weak runners to strong runners. The typical regiment would include running hills, interval trainin, and distance running always at an intense pace. With these challenging cardiovascular workouts I found myself pushing harder than I had before and the results were paying off.

I tried out for the Fort Gordon team at the end of July and placed 14th overall (9th active duty). I missed the team by 3 places. It was disappointing being so close to representing Fort Gordon but to fall short. Everything worked out in the end as my battalion was putting together a team and asked that I run with them. The journey would continue.

Over the next few weeks we trained hard as a team. All of us were struggling through injuries, some more severe than others, but with perseverance and encouragement we made it to the race.

About 35,000 people from around the world gathered outside the Pentagon on the morning of the Oct. 12, 2014 to race in the Army 10-miler. It was a cold morning that caused my body to tighten before the race. For my warm up I ran up and down the road admiring the sheer multitude of people that I considered my competition.

As the cannons sounded, preparation time was over,



Photo by 1st Lt. Joshua Anderson/
63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

Pfc. Andrew J. Wise, a Soldier with 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) runs in the Army 10-miler at the Pentagon in Arlington, Va. Oct. 12, 2014.

and the race began whether I was ready or not. The first half mile of the race felt like dodging traffic as I attempted to find my stride while meandering through the people in front of me.

As I crossed over the Arlington Memorial Bridge and passed by the Lincoln Memorial I started passing the wounded warriors who had started at the first leg of the race. Seeing these veterans running with one, sometimes no legs was humbling and gave me a sense of gratitude for their sacrifices to this country and continued strength to run on through adversity.

At the midway point of the race I hit a mental wall, my breathing was good and my legs were strong but I still felt completely overwhelmed. At this point I had a solid pace but my internal doubt was attempting to drag me down. I found strength from the numerous supporters in the crowd that traveled the same distance as everyone else just to cheer us on as well as the fellow runners who were pushing through just as I was.

The final two miles of the race were the most challenging. It seemed like the finish line was just around the corner yet we kept on running. I picked up the pace once I saw the last mile marker and crossed the finish line at 1:09:07, a new personal record.

I felt a deep sense of honor being able to participate in a race in one of the most beautiful and historic cities in our country. Over the next year I plan to train even harder and bring my time down to an hour. Running has become more than a simple exercise to me now. It is a passion. ■



Runners keep pace during the Army 10-miler in Arlington, Va. Oct. 12, 2014.



Runners sprint through the finishline at the Army 10-miler in Arlington, Va. Oct. 12, 2014.

Pfc. Tyvonn Lee, 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), does push-ups Oct. 24, 2014 for the Iron Unit competition at Fort Gordon, Ga.

The B Company 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) team flips a tire Oct. 24, 2014 during the Iron Unit competition at Fort Gordon, Ga.

Bill Bengtson/Fort Gordon Public Affairs Office

Photo by 2nd Lt. Eric Osteen/63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

IRON UNIT

COMPETITION YIELDS VICTORY TO BRIGADE

By Laura Levering Fort Gordon Public Affairs Office
and 2nd Lt. Eric Osteen, 63rd Signal Battalion
(Expeditionary)

Pushing an M1114 Up-Armored Humvee is an unlikely feat for even the strongest individuals, but when assembled as a team, almost anything is possible.

Dozens of service members learned the importance of teamwork during this challenge and others like it during the Iron Unit competition.

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers hosted its annual competition Oct. 24 at Barton Field, Fort Gordon, Georgia. The event is designed to test service members' endurance and ability to work as a team.

The teams of 35th Signal Brigade (Theater Tactical) emerged victoriously with C Company, 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) taking the 1st place trophy and B Company, 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) taking 3rd.

"It's a friendly competition between units, but it's really all about camaraderie," said Spc. Tamaeo Moore of 782nd Military Intelligence Battalion, event organizer and BOSS secretary. "That's the whole focus."

All branches were invited, but only the Army and Air Force rose to the challenge.

Twenty five-member teams tested themselves at eight stations. Adding to the teamwork concept, teams chose the order in which they wanted to complete stations.

"The Iron Unit competition challenged our physical and mental skills, but most of all it showed how well we worked together as a team" said Spc. Tutthwhitner, member of the C Co., 63rd ESB iron unit team.

Moore said the majority opted for the 10-mile ruck march first, thinking it would be easiest. With each subsequent station, the competition grew more challenging as fatigue set in. For one senior leader, a more basic exercise proved most difficult.

"If there was something that right now could tell my age, it would be the lunges that we did," said Command Sgt. Maj. Sheldon Moorer, senior leader of 67th ESB.

Moorer and other senior leadership in his battalion hoped their participation served as an example for junior Soldiers to emulate.

"We want to achieve the same goal, and that goal is to make sure we have a physically fit, comprehensive formation," Moorer said.

A water jug shuttle run, 500 push-ups, 500 sit-ups, and an estimated 200-pound tire flip challenge pushed teams to their limits. The final station was a welcome relief for those physically tired, but posed a mental challenge for some. Rounding out the course, each team member was asked a question on topics related to each branch of service and Fort Gordon.

Winning teams were determined by overall times. The top three finishing teams received medals and bragging rights.

First place received an Iron Unit competition guidon streamer, gold medals, and gift certificates to Dick's Sporting Goods.

"Winning is the only option," said 1st Lt. Bonner, executive officer of C Co., 63rd ESB, and a coach for their team. "The team faced adversity, but showed heart and determination throughout the fight. I could not be more proud of how hard everyone worked." ■

TRAINED IN CLOSE COMBAT

■ SOLDIERS OF 63RD ESB EARN COMBATIVES LEVEL ONE CERTIFICATION. ■

By Pfc. LaQuon Doremus, 63rd Expeditionary Signal Battalion (ESB)

Soldiers from the 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) successfully completed level one of the Modern Army Combatives Program at Fort Gordon, Georgia, from Sept. 8-11, 2014.

The MACP certified Soldiers from the 63rd ESB for the first time in over three years as each participant learned the first three drills in hand to hand combatives as well as submissions, dominant body positions and throws.

“As an avid fan of mixed martial arts, it was great to see how the Modern Army Combatives Program has taken an element of many different fighting styles into one to better train our Soldiers in self defense,” said 1st Lt. Joshua Anderson, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 63rd ESB.

The combatives program enhances Soldier’s ability to defend themselves and others around them not just in times of war but in any potentially dangerous situation that might arise.

The participants were trained that these techniques were not meant to endanger the safety of others but to be used in necessary situations for self defense.

The training event gave Soldiers the chance to build cohesion because for one week they left their respective companies and learned together.

There were no mechanics, signaleers, enlisted, or

officers during the training, just combatives students eager to learn and train to be better.

The Army is structured with a certain decorum and respect that doesn’t mix officer and enlisted training all that often. During the clinch drills for example, the level two certified instructor, a sergeant, was allowed to strike the officer in order to teach the importance of protecting him or herself while attempting to achieve the clinch.

The purpose of proficiency in MACP is to enhance the Soldier’s confidence to diminish a threat without firing his or her weapon system.

In order to certify Soldiers in level one combatives, one must have achieved at least level three from the fight house at Fort Benning, Georgia.

This class had the privilege of having an instructor that has achieved level four, the highest level offered in MACP.

The Soldiers had the first hand opportunity of drilling with him directly which greatly increased their perspective on the energy and technique used in fighting to increase proficiency.

Upon completion of the course, the instructor demonstrated modified techniques to defend yourself to help stress his point that he gave during the duration of the class to always stay open minded.

It gave the participants interest and motivation to move on to the next level and continue progressing in MACP. ■



Soldiers from the 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) pose after completing level one of the Modern Army Combatives Program, at Gym 3, Fort Gordon, Ga., Sept. 10, 2014.



Combatives students watch the instructor demonstrate the army bar from the mount during a level one combatives class at Gym 3 on Fort Gordon, Ga., Sept. 10, 2014.

McAfee

Microsoft Office 2013

Access 2013

Excel 2013

Service members peek into Microsoft

By Capt. Celestine Merisor,
51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

At Microsoft Department of Defense Command Day, service members are allowed to have a sneak peek at some of Microsoft's up and coming projects. Some of the most interesting topics of discussion focused on Windows 10, Azure/Cloud Platform Service and Office 365.

Windows 10 brings together the functionality of Windows 7 along with some of the most popular characteristics of Windows 8.1. The most user-friendly factor of Windows 10 is that its platform is converged to operate across all form factors.

Further, it is touch optimized for systems with detachable keyboards. Offering a familiarized experience and a return to the Start Menu, the operating system provides administrators with higher granular control of the user experience.

Virtual desktop and snap tab are just some of the improved methods for multitasking offered in the enhanced feature set of Windows 10.

Another appealing feature of the OS is that it is engineered with built-in protection against modern security threats offering two factor password authentication, breach, theft and phishing resistant credentials, single sign on experience, comprehensive ID management and enterprise data protection through trusted applications and secure identity.

Microsoft has reinvigorated the concept of cloud computing through Cloud Platform Service (CPS) and Azure

Pack. Enterprises may now subscribe to self-servicing public cloud services with the option to choose plans based on usage.

This service reduces the need for in-house IT operations by providing Infrastructure as a Service and Platform as a Service through Microsoft and associated service providers. Azure/CPS may also integrate with existing System Center and Windows Server environments.

The major advantage of this service is that it provides the enterprise with the ability quickly and seamlessly scale to meet organizational needs. The computing process is changing.

Cloud computing models have replaced the traditional approach to tying specific applications to specific servers. Because resources can be pooled, IT organizations can deploy applications as elastic self-service services and the traditional unit of computing is moving from the single server to the datacenter level.

Core to this concept is enabling parity of application owner experiences irrespective of where the underlying infrastructure may reside. The Windows Azure platform provides tenant end users with a uniform self-service management experience to consume the infrastructure needed by their application services for Windows Server environments.

For home users, Office 365 enhances flexibility and productivity through enterprise grade cloud service. Backend servers are maintained and housed in Microsoft datacenters and are accessible to users on a wide range of devices.

Office 365 is not the same as Office Online. Office Online lets users open Word, Excel, PowerPoint, or OneNote documents in a web browser and is included with all Office 365 plans. Perpetual licensing by device has been superseded by subscription based service.

Subscription based service allows each user to utilize up to five devices with Office 365. With this service, users always have the latest version of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, Publisher, Lync and Access. Office 365 can also be used with supported versions of Exchange Server or SharePoint Server that are installed on-premise or with Exchange Online and SharePoint Online.

Overall, Microsoft's preview of its new products and services was thought provoking. It is clear that technical leaders must become accustomed to a prevailing operating environment within the cloud. Leaders must adapt to new hurdles when storing information in cloud.

"Cloud computing provides great flexibility when on the road but I am concerned about data security for sensitive information. Physical security is one of the keys to ensure your data is secured and cloud computing takes away the physical security aspect from the data owner", said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Tito Doble, information services technician, 51st ESB.

The persistent challenge will be to maintain a secure operating environment in growing technological climate riddled with emerging cyber and physical threats. ■



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Lion's pride



Build Relationships, Strengthen Bonds

By Capt. Joseph Messinger,
51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

At the very center of why I joined the U.S. Army, resides a desire to have a lasting positive impact on the lives of our nation's fighting men and women. Few other things have as far reaching affects as the qualitative dimension of a marriage.

Relationships need spontaneity, exploration and yet also demand a sense of predictability and rules. Sadly, these needs are often unmet.

It is impossible to have quality time without quantity time, and so we are allotted time and funds to 'spoil' our Soldiers.

They spent three days and two nights at the Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound, Washington Dec. 14-16, 2014.

During this time, we discussed a wide variety of ideas covering each person own unique disposition, finances, anger, future planning, intimacy, positive recasting of thoughts and the list goes on.

From Chuck Atanasio, a retired Army chaplain, I learned a valuable expression, "The wisdom of the group". Strong Bonds training is a mix of formal and informal — a

special combination of receiving instruction and sharing of the group's communal wisdom.

It is my presumption that there is a lot of communal wisdom and that our shared time at a Strong Bonds event is meant to set aside time to allow for a thematically focused space to develop ideas and expose issues that need to be addressed.

To intentionally set aside time towards a specific end, is the necessary step to prepare for success. Next we fill that time with wisdom, compassion and the patience that comes with the knowledge that learning is life long.

With the passage of time, individuals often rediscover themselves and chart new territory of personal growth and awareness.

When married, couples may discover that their partner has grown so much that they are virtually not the same person they married.

Discoveries like these are subtler and so often go unnoticed. The 'time out' provided by Strong

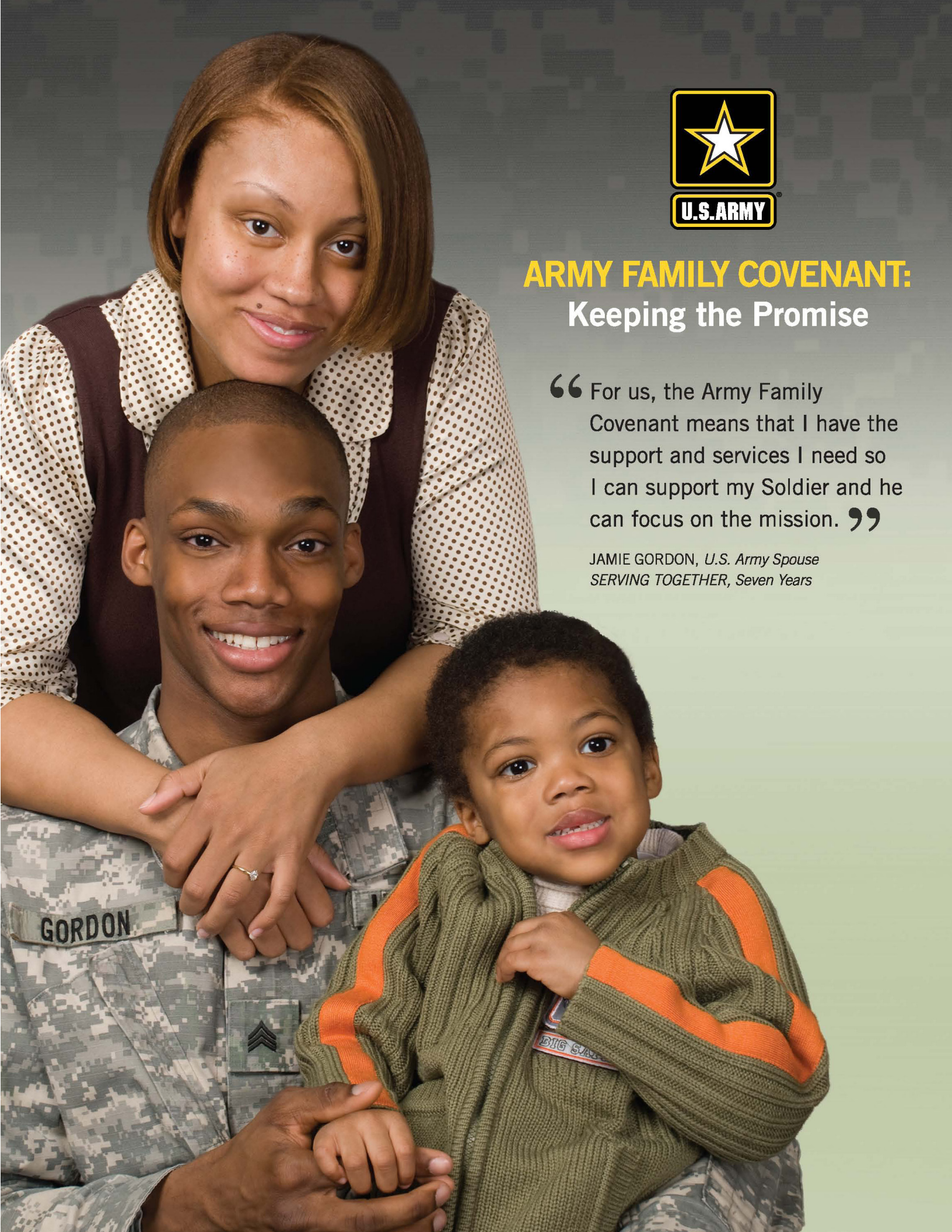
Bonds carves a moment for these reflections.

Soldiers from the 51st ESB filled the halls of the Great Wolf Lodge with laughter, fun and good conversations. It was easy to laugh, but there was also had an atmosphere that allowed people to 'get real'.

Some people spoke of hurt and pain, and we allowed them the grace, dignity and safety to voice their experience and process their thoughts. Also we were able to recognize that there were many common threads and tensions in each other's lives.

It helps to know that other couples struggle with the very same issues that you and your spouse have been grappling with. In my estimation, it allowed the audience to perceive their own issues with a sense of perspective and maturity.

I'm not sure we saved the world on at the Great Wolf Lodge, but I am sure that we have a qualitative impact in the lives of 14 families. And I am sure that the world is saved one family at a time. ■



ARMY FAMILY COVENANT: Keeping the Promise

“For us, the Army Family Covenant means that I have the support and services I need so I can support my Soldier and he can focus on the mission.”

JAMIE GORDON, U.S. Army Spouse
SERVING TOGETHER, Seven Years

Corie Weathers, spouse of Capt. Matthew Weathers, chaplain for 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) gives a speech at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va., after being named the 2015 Armed Forces Insurance Military Spouse of the Year, May 8, 2015.



Wife of 67th ESB Chaplain & Military Spouse of the Year

A successful beginning

By 1st Lt. Jessica A. Garcia, 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)

"Had it not been for my mentors and them serving my family, I wouldn't be here serving it forward," said Mrs. Corie Weathers.

When Capt. Matthew Weathers, battalion chaplain, 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) decided to enter his wife Corie into the Armed Forces Insurance Military Spouse of the Year competition, neither one of them could have imagined the journey it would take her on.

Corie was subsequently named the Army's Spouse of the Year Feb. 20, 2015, and one step closer to becoming the Military Spouse of the Year in a competition sponsored by Military Spouse Magazine and Armed Forces Insurance.

Corie first felt the need to help spouses in the military when her family moved to her husband's first duty station Fort Carson, Colorado.

She was a stay at home mom, finishing up her licensure standards for counseling, and soon started volunteering her time during her husband's first deployment.

She chose to devote her volunteer time to training spouses on how to deal with grief, raising "care teams" which led to her work with Gold Star Wives, an organization for spouses of those killed in the U.S. military on active duty. That was where Corie said she found that she really wanted to serve spouses.

From then on, she has embodied what it means to serve others and serve in the military. Not only has Corie, kept helping fellow military spouses, but she has also helped local teenagers, military families as a whole, and Soldiers suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

"Each place I've gone I've done different things based on what the

"I want people to know that regardless of what season you are in, the season you are in matters, it is just as important as any other season. Wherever you are at, that is enough and it is important. What you do matters."

-Mrs. Weathers

community and unit needed," said Corie.

From Fort Carson, Colorado, and Fort Stewart, Georgia and now at Fort Gordon, Georgia, Corie has made it a point to immerse herself into the communities and units to help where help is needed, she said.

In Augusta, Georgia she has found her work off-post has led her to start an outpatient program to focus on teen girls who face issues with cyber bullying, depression and coping issues.

One might wonder how one person is able to do so much and still be a mother and wife, and the answer is she has ventures that she does herself and some are with "team Weathers."

As soon as the kids are on the bus she works extremely hard with her work and when the kids get home, it's strictly family time. However, even when it is her work or her husband's work, they help each other serve as many people as they can.

Whether it is her husband dropping off snacks during her night group, or it's the entire family assisting in a battalion marriage retreat, the kids watching out for other children and Corie assisting with the counseling, team Weathers

helps each other help other people.

Team Weathers newest endeavor involves their passion together; marriages, with an online marriage retreat called enlivenmarriage.com that she and her husband have created.

Corie wants people to know that great marriages do exist in the military and wants to help couples get there.

Since Corie has been named the Army Spouse of the Year, she has received an immense amount of support from across the nation.

"The most amazing part is military families and spouses saying they voted for me and wrote me letters and sent messages saying I believe in what you do, and how can I help," said Corie who wants to use this opportunity to have an even greater influence.

"We felt ready for something a little bit different and a little more challenging, we want to do this well and do it right. I want people to know that regardless of what season you are in, the season you are in matters it is just as important as any other season. Wherever you are at, that is enough and it is important. What you do matters," Corie concluded. ■



Corie Weathers, center right, stands with her family at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va., after wife of Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, right, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, presents the Military Spouse of the Year award to her May 8, 2015.

The rewarding finish

By David Vergun, Defense Media Activity - Army

Corie Weathers was named the 2015 Armed Forces Insurance Military Spouse of the Year, May 8, 2015, which also happens to be Military Spouse Appreciation Day.

She is the spouse of Army Capt. Matthew Weathers, a chaplain on Fort Gordon, Georgia with the 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary).

While receiving the award was an honor and a happy event, Weathers said she has survived really tough times as an Army spouse, just like others have.

The darkest moments came in 2009, when her husband was deployed to Afghanistan at a place where many of his fellow Soldiers were killed or injured - Contingency Operating Post, or COP, Keating.

Two Medals of Honor and nine Silver Stars were earned at COP Keating that year, when hundreds of Taliban breached the outpost's perimeter.

While her husband was in Afghanistan, Corie was on Fort Carson, Colorado. Although the chaplain was at a distant outpost, the two said they were still able to maintain almost daily contact through social media.

Corie said she fully realized the danger her husband was in. But rather than sit at home and cry, she decided to do something that would ease the pain of separation and help other spouses on post.

Being a licensed professional counselor, she decided to put that to use doing a job that is plainly heartbreaking.

Since so many were getting killed, the procedure was for the casualty notification team to deliver the news in person to the home of the spouse. Corie's job was to then do a follow-up visit with the surviving spouse, within just minutes of the visit by the casualty notification team, said

the chaplain, who termed it the "Care and Go" team.

Being a counselor, Corie was able to use that skill to listen and offer solace. Meanwhile in Afghanistan, Weathers said the strength and love of his wife helped him through the darkest days.

Today, Corie helps advise and set up Care and Go teams on Fort Gordon.

She also continues to provide counseling to other spouses, mainly dealing with issues of employment, career issues, domestic violence and others.

"Military spouses need more help - a place to talk, to hurt, to be real without feeling it is unpatriotic or out of place," she said.

The goal is to help them "thrive in their marriages, their personal goals, cope with the changes in their Soldiers, as well as the coming changes in the military." ■



THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Recently, I was with a gathering of folks who were talking about football. They were discussing which teams were expected to take the championships, scores, point spreads, which teams had lost their quarterbacks, personnel out due to injuries, records, defensive lines, statistics, and odds. They were predicting who would participate and win in the Super Bowl (let's see how their predictions materialize). Admittedly, I had little idea what they were talking about. I don't follow the sports scene, but apparently these folks did so with great enthusiasm. For them, this was important to them and they had no trouble retaining these facts. If I was an enthusiast, then I would be more than eager to also retain these discussion items.

There are areas that we consider our priorities, these are important and so we have no trouble learning and retaining related information. Some may be close to home, such as our family, our faith, our career; others may be a little more removed such as hobby or special interest. These all are priorities. As an example, when family is a priority, we will "find" time to spend with family members and be involved in their activities. Not all can serve as top priority but each area must be kept in context. Without priorities, one would tend to drift aimlessly.

One incoming command sergeant major was giving his philosophy to his unit as he listed his priorities in this order: God, family, and his assignment. This does not mean he neglected the later or items further down the list, but he keeps these in perspective. For all, a balance must be maintained.

For people of faith, we keep in mind what the Lord has done and continues to do in the lives of each one of us. This is often done with the realization that He preserves us in spite of ourselves. One's faith is a priority that permeates through the remainder, causing one to want to do the best he or she can do at whatever task is set before him.

As we have begun a new year, consider what is important to you. We all have priorities. Keep these in perspective as you go about your tasks.



**35th Signal Brigade
Brigade Chaplain
LTC ARLEIGH VONSEGGERTH
706-791-5163/5160**

Lion's pride

- ☐ Community Center
- ☐ Hospital
- ☐ Church
- ☐ Library

- ☐ Animal Shelter
- ☐ Sports Teams
- ☐ After-School Programs

- ☐ Day Care Center
- ☐ Public School
- ☐ Halfway House

- ☐ Food Bank/
Soup Kitchen
- ☐ Cleanup
Programs

- ☐ Retirement Home
- ☐ Art Gallery
- ☐ Youth
Organization

- ☐ Neighborhood
Adoption
- ☐ Boys and Girls
Club



GET INVOLVED

☐ Rehabilitation Center

☐ Community Theater

There are many different reasons for wanting to be more active in your community: to help others, to overcome a loss, to learn something new or to meet new people. Opportunities to volunteer your time keep growing exponentially in this economy. Take a look around and see what opportunities you may be looking past.

VMIS- Are you tracking?

Units/organizations are on line with the Department of Army Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS) at www.myarmyonesource.com.

1. Register as a volunteer
2. Search for Volunteer application
3. Apply/Submit volunteer application for volunteer positions
4. Log your hours
5. Document training and awards

The information travels with you when you PCS or ETS, and provides you with a complete volunteer history whether you're just tracking your volunteer activities, or using the information to search for employment.

Incentives for Registering and Tracking Hours:

1. Each volunteer registered in VMIS can receive the Army Volunteer Corps lapel pin
2. Logging hours can earn the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

To qualify for award of the MOVSM a service members volunteer service must meet the following requirements:

1. Be to the civilian community, to include the military family community
2. Be significant in nature and produce tangible results
3. Reflect favorably on the Military Service and the Department of Defense
4. Be of a sustained and direct nature

While there is no specific time period to qualify for the MOVSM (for example, 500 hours of community service within 24 calendar months), approval authorities shall ensure the service to be honored merits the special recognition afforded by this medal. The MOVSM is intended to recognize exceptional community support over time and not a single act or achievement. Further, it is intended to honor direct support of community activities. For the purpose of this award, attending membership meetings or social events of a community service group is not considered qualifying service, while manning a community crisis action telephone line is considered qualifying service.

JBLM

Installation Volunteer Corps:
253.967.2324
lori.d.stephens.civ@mail.mil

Location:
Family Resource Center
on JBLM Main

FORT BRAGG

Army Volunteer Corps:
910.396.8160/2458
alice.d.stephens.civ@mail.mil

Location:
Soldier Support Center
3rd Floor

FORT GORDON

Army Volunteer Corps:
706.791.3880
lynn.c.harshman.civ@mail.mil

Location:
Darling Hall

FORT STEWART

Army Volunteer Corps:
912.767.0248
naomi.c.fayson.civ@mail.mil

Location:
BLDG 87 near the PX

RETENTION



Once a Soldier, Always a Soldier... A Soldier for Life!

Fiscal Year 2015 4th Qtr (ETS between 1 July 2015 to 30 Sept 2016)

Now that we are rolling into the fourth quarter of FY15, we as Team 35th must continue to remain steadfast in keeping Soldiers in boots.

Leaders continue to engage your Soldiers and their families on their future endeavors with Team Army whether its Active, Reserves or National Guard. Soldiers be forward thinkers by focusing on Assignments, Retraining, GT Improvement, Promotion, Civilian and Military Education, Special Programs (OCS, Warrant, Drill Sergeant, Recruiting, etc) because everything you do today affects your tomorrow.

Contact your servicing Career Counselor for assistance as we are here to encourage, provide guidance and information to assist you and your family with your tomorrow.



SFC DEATRA WILKES

35th Signal Brigade Senior Career Counselor

BLDG 25422

706-791-6508

