



# THE BLACKHORSE



**OPERATION:  
ROCK STAR RAMPAGE**

**22nd Regimental  
Command Sergeant Major**



## **The Blackhorse**

**COL Joseph D. Clark**  
Commander  
11th ACR

**CSM Michael J. Stunkard**  
Command Sergeant Major  
11th ACR

## **Ironhorse**

**LTC Christopher R. Danbeck**  
Commander

**CSM Michael C. Williams**  
Command Sergeant Major

## **Eaglehorse**

**LTC Rodney J. Morgan**  
Commander

**CSM Roy A. Holmes**  
Command Sergeant Major

## **Packhorse**

**LTC Ryan Moses**  
Commander

**CSM Eric J. Vidal**  
Command Sergeant Major



The Blackhorse newsletter is looking for photos and stories on the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. Anyone can submit a story, photo, or both to the 11th ACR Public Affairs Officer at [albert.r.jernegan.mil@mail.mil](mailto:albert.r.jernegan.mil@mail.mil). Photos must contain an accurate description with full name, rank, unit and hometown of the subjects.

For additional information, contact the 11th ACR PAO at (760) 380-5112.

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(Cover photo by Pvt. Austin Anyzeski)



# Command Team Greetings



CSM Stunkard and I would like to wish all the Troopers, Blackhorse family members, and Fort Irwin community, a Happy Holidays and New Year.

We encourage all to take time off to enjoy the season with family and friends. As we enjoy our personal blessings, let us not forget our brothers and sisters in arms who are unable to be home with family this year as they uphold the values of our great nation throughout the world. The selfless service, courage, and loyalty embodied by today's Soldier is what makes serving with you the greatest honor of all.

This time of year is a reminder that it is not only our troopers who serve, but their families serve and sacrifice as well. Our Soldiers, families and loved ones have the highest respect and gratitude of all Americans. We are extremely proud of all you do and want you to know, we hold you in our prayers.

The mission we execute here at the National Training Center is essential to our nation's security and we are a critical enabler on battlefields across the world. Relax and reset yourselves for the New Year and the service you will continue to provide to our service members.

Be safe and enjoy the time with your loved ones. We will see you in the New Year. Thank you for all you do to provide strength to our Army.

**ALLONS!**



# *11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT CHANGE OF RESPONSIBILITY*





The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment held a Change of Responsibility ceremony Sept. 20, 2016, on Fort Irwin's Fritz Field, where outgoing CSM James T. Gandy, relinquished responsibility of the Blackhorse Regiment to CSM Michael J. Stunkard.





# Fort Irwin, The National Training Center and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month

Since the Revolutionary War, Hispanic-Americans have served in defense of the United States of America, and continue to do so 241 years later. Approved by the President, Lyndon B. Johnson in 1968, the month-long observance of Hispanic heritage from Sept. 15, to Oct. 15 has been carried on for nearly 50 years throughout the United States. Of the more than 310 million Americans in the U.S., nearly 55 million are of Hispanic descent. Diversity runs rich within the soul of the nation, and in its Army, which includes over 64,000 Hispanic-Americans in service.

Fort Irwin held a celebration to mark the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month, Sept. 14, 2016. U.S. Army CSM Eric Vidal, senior enlisted advisor, Regimental Support Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, shared his experience in both the civilian and military environment as a Hispanic-American of Puerto Rican descent, and spoke on what Hispanic Heritage Month means to him at the observance ceremony being held at the Sandy Basin Community Center here.

“From the American Revolution through Iraq and Afghanistan, Hispanic Americans have fought bravely for our nation. But their contribution to our Army goes beyond their time in service,” said Vidal. “It was amazing to be side by side of all the ethnic groups and no one judging me. It was just one Soldier talking to another Soldier, preparing to fight for our country if called upon.”

To retain equal opportunity and an atmosphere of respect throughout the Army, Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated as a period of gratitude and appreciation across the service branch. In the past 30 years, the representation of Hispanic-Americans in the Army has increased by 10 percent, as opposed to 1985, when it was a dwindling, 3 percent. Army leaders want to create conditions to foster and sustain a culture where Soldiers can have a military career and the most opportunities to reach their full potential.

Following Vidal’s speech, SGT Yolanda Duarte, RSS, 11th ACR, along with Soleil Montejano, preformed a Mexican Folk Ballet dance for the attending leaders and Soldiers of Fort Irwin. Concluding the event, Fort Irwin’s Culinary Specialist Team presented the leaders and Soldiers with traditional Hispanic cuisine, including Empanadas De Carne, Crispy Flautas, and Chorizo Fried Beans to offer a “taste” of authentic Hispanic culture.



U.S. Army CSM Eric J. Vidal, senior enlisted advisor, Regimental Support Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, poses with LTC Christopher Danbeck, commander, 1st Squadron, 11th ACR, during the presentation of gifts at the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration, at Fort Irwin's Sandy Basin Community Center, Sept. 14, 2016. (U.S. Army Photo by PVT Austin Anyzeski)





U.S. Army SGT Yolanda Duarte, S-4 non-commissioned officer, Regimental Support Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, concluded her performance for the leaders and Soldiers during the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration at Fort Irwin's Sandy Basin Community Center, Sept. 14, 2016. Duarte preformed a shining representation of Mexican Folkloric Ballet during the celebration. (U.S. Army Photo by PVT Austin Anyzeski)

U.S. Army CSM Eric J. Vidal, senior enlisted advisor, Regimental Support Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, spoke on his experience as a Hispanic-American of Puerto Rican descent in the United States, at Fort Irwin's Hispanic Heritage Month celebration, Sept. 14, 2016. Vidal joined the Army in 1991 during the Gulf War, and has been on three operational deployments across the Middle East. (U.S. Army Photo by SGT David Edge)



Soleil Yaire Montejano, a twelve year-old Mexican Folk Ballet dancer, preformed for the leaders and Soldiers at Fort Irwin's Sandy Basin Community Center during the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration, Sept. 14, 2016. Montejano was enrolled in a Mexican Folkloric Ballet School by her mother at the age of 5, and since then, she has participated in more than 60 presentations across the state of California. (U.S. Army Photo by PVT Austin Anyzeski)



# HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

15 Sept - 15 Oct





# ROTATION



The 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, Colo., challenged the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment for control of the Mojave Desert, during rotation 16-09 at the National Training Center. The purpose of NTC Rotations is to coach, teach and mentor brigade commanders, staffs, and separate companies/platoons on the applications and execution of combined arms doctrine to improve the war fighting skills of the Brigade Combat Team.



16-09







# Fort Irwin Ten-Miler Team Comp

Story by 1LT Mi

“Runners, set.” *\*BOOM\** goes the artillery as more than 24,000 participants careen through a blanket of smoke at the start line of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Army Ten-Miler. Year after year, the Columbus Day Weekend marks a time of reunion, reverence, remembrance, honor, and pride in Washington, D.C. as runners from across the world, including service members, family members, and civilians alike, race through the nation’s capital in support of the brave men and women who defend our freedom. While each reason for running may vary, the shared commonality is the time devoted to the preparation, and the resolute will to cross the finish line after 10 grueling miles.

Amongst the participating teams at the 2016 Army Ten-Miler was the Fort Irwin Ten-Miler team. The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment sent three runners with the team, 1LT Michael Camarillo, assigned to MICO and the team captain, SPC Tristan Trotter, a MICO Soldier with RSS, and CPT Stephen Jordan, the Regimental CHOPs, all represented the Blackhorse Regiment. Co-Captain and three-year veteran, CPT Yesenia Byrne, assigned to MEDDAC, CPT Clyde Daines, also a 3-year team veteran from Eagle Team, OPSGROUP, SFC Daniel Long, Scorpion Team, and CPT Samantha Rigby, with MEDDAC, rounded out the Fort Irwin team. After three successive tryouts of escalating difficulty and an intensive five-week pre-season workout regimen, the team was finalized at the end of April.





# Completes Successful 2016 Campaign

Michael Camarillo

The regular season for the team consists of daily practices, typically a training week consists of three days of mid-distance mileage around the post, two days of high intensity interval or tempo runs, one day of medium-intensity duration runs, and one day dedicated to long-distance mileage. In escalating fashion, the training schedule builds on itself starting around 38 miles per week and peaking around 100 miles per week, incorporating two-a-day workouts.

Throughout the season, the Fort Irwin Team competes in multiple MWR races at the National Training Center, boosting community support and outreach. The culminating point in training, initiating the onset of “tapering”, is the Ventura Half Marathon. This race takes place in early September, allowing the team to assess their readiness and focus on key deficiencies over the remaining three weeks prior to the Army Ten-Miler. This year, the MWR hosted a Fort Irwin Ten-Mile Race at the end of September, which served as a “send-off” gesture to the team as they headed to D.C.

The National Training Center has been regaled as the

*“My most humbling experience as a team member happened while running alongside our Wounded Warriors in Washington, D.C.; witnessing the sheer determination they possess, will forever inspire me.” – SFC Daniel Long, a first time Army Ten-Miler participant.*

“Crown Jewel of Combat Training Centers,” hosting at least 10 Decisive Action Rotational Exercises per year, providing Army Brigade Combat Teams with the opportunity to conduct full-scale Combined Arms Maneuver against a formidable, 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment opposition force. A mission of this magnitude necessitates significant resources, manpower, and time from the resident units at Fort Irwin. This underlines the unique problem-set for the members of the Ten-Miler Team, likely unfathomable by their counterparts at other military installations.

The 2016 team was comprised of three Soldiers from the 11<sup>th</sup> ACR, two Soldiers from Operations Group, and two Soldiers from MEDDAC. The 11<sup>th</sup> ACR is the opposing force that replicates a near-peer combined arms threat for Rotational Training Units to fight.

Operations Group fields the Observer, Controller, Trainers who assess and mentor the RTU throughout the training exercise. MEDDAC supports the unit readiness with 24/7 medical coverage and expertise for the National Training Center. All three units are critical to the success of the NTC mission to “Train the Force.” Thus, the ability for the Fort Irwin Ten-Miler Team to compete in spite of the high operations tempo speaks volumes to their fortitude and resilience.

“Runners, set.” *\*BOOM\** goes the artillery as the Fort Irwin Ten-Miler Team raced away from the shadow of the Pentagon along the Potomac River. Through trials and tribulations, seven Soldiers proudly represented the National Training Center and Fort Irwin in this great nation’s capital, Oct. 9, 2016. The team finished 15<sup>th</sup> overall out of 42 teams. More importantly, the foundation has been set boding promise for a competitive 2017 season.

Thank you to the Fort Irwin MWR and the Fort Irwin community for their support and assistance.

*“This is my third year running for the Team and Post. While I have never cared for running, the camaraderie and teamwork has driven a renewed sense of gratification with an otherwise mundane activity. Running in Washington, D.C. truly encompasses the best of military service and sacrifice.” – CPT Clyde Daines*



# The Regimental DFAC Competes for the Connelly Award



In 1968, the Army created the Philip A. Connelly award as a way to recognize excellence in Army food service. The Connelly award tests a unit's ability to perform fundamental tasks in every level of food service. Every aspect of the dining facility, from cleanliness, food storage, preparation, and service is inspected and judged.

The Regimental Dining Facility here, had its chance to prove that it is one of the elite in the Army, Aug. 24, 2016.

Food Service Specialist is one of the oldest, and arguably one of the proudest Military Occupational Specialties in the Army. Since 1775, when the U.S. Army was established, cooks have proudly served with honor.

For the last 241 years, the regulations for food preparation and service has changed greatly in the Army. Enforcing the standards has always been the job of the non-commissioned officer. Day in and day out, food service specialist NCO's make sure that their Soldiers go above and beyond the Army standard.

"The Connelly competition pits all of the dining facilities across the Army against each other to see who has the best dining facility and to see who knows their stuff," said U.S. Army SSG Sahara Neria, a shift leader assigned to Headquarters Troop, Regimental Support Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. "It's kind of like a showcase for the Food Service Specialist, showing the Army who can do everything to standard."

With the Connelly judges moving around the dining facility asking questions and paying close attention to everything that the Food Service Specialist were doing, the Soldiers didn't seem to be bothered by the extra scrutiny.

"This competition, while important, didn't faze most of us, because this is what we do every day we come to work. The only difference today, was about who can do it better," said SPC Felicity Hill, a cook assigned to Headquarters Troop, RSS, 11th ACR.

The dining facility that wins the Philip A. Connelly award will take home bragging rights for the year. More importantly, the winner will receive an invitation to the National Restaurant Association's annual conference, two junior Soldiers will win scholarships to the Culinary Institute of America in Napa Valley, Calif., and finally, a trophy for their display case.

"Winning the Connelly would be huge. It would put Fort Irwin on the map as not only being the best field training location in the Army, but the best dining facility in the Army," said SFC Miriam Fontenette, a dining facility manger assigned to Headquarters Troop, RSS, 11th ACR. "The Soldiers worked hard to prepare for this competition, and win or lose, I am proud of what these Soldiers accomplished in such a short time."

The Regimental DFAC displayed their capabilities and have been recognized for their talent. And next year, they shall compete again.







# Blackhorse Cond

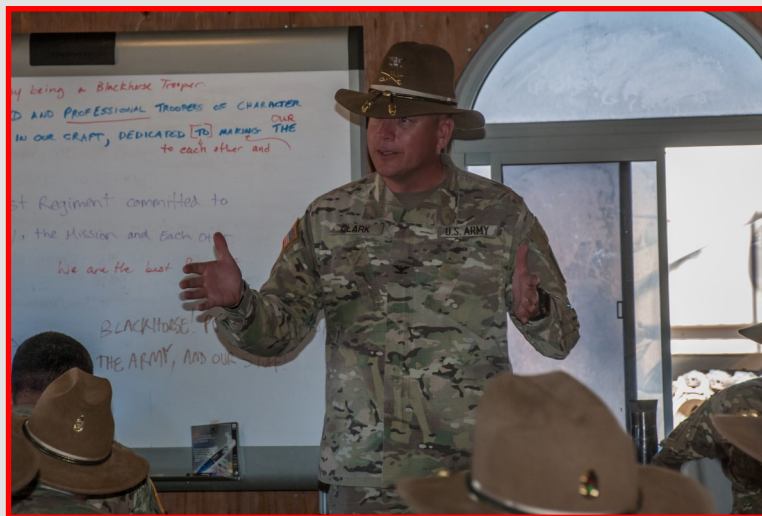
The 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment conducted a War Council and Dining-in, Nov. 14, 2016, in the training city of Razish at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. The event was executed to serve three purposes for the Blackhorse Regiment: develop a Regimental Vision Statement, identify key events for the next two years on the training calendar, and lastly build esprit de corps and assist leaders from the troops through Regimental staff to become truly invested and committed to the operations of the Regiment.

A war council has long been utilized by military commanders as a method of deciding upon a course of action for the unit as well as conveying the Commanders Intent to subordinate leaders which allows them to seize the initiative and control the tempo of the battlefield. For this reason COL Clark selected November 2016, the beginning of a two month break from battle, to bring in his subordinate commands and allow their units to learn of the guidance and the way forward for the Regiment.

As the 11<sup>th</sup> ACR officers and senior non-commissioned officers arrived at the governor's compound within Razish, the momentous task of deciding the direction of the Regiment fell squarely upon their shoulders. The duty of continuing the historic legacy of the Blackhorse Regiment is not one to take lightly.

The vision statement, was the first order of business for the leaders of the Regiment. The Regimental Commander provided initial guidance to the troop and company leaders partnered with senior staff members and then directed them to develop the direction in which to take the Regiment, with the end state being to continue to make the Army better, one brigade combat team at a time.

A combined effort is the key in developing a vision that the entire Regiment will be adhering to. As the group arrived at the final version, together, they delivered the proposed vision statement to the Regimental Commander.





# ucts War Council



Giving their stamp of approval, all of the Regimental leaders signed the document, making it official.

The Blackhorse vision statement reads: “We are the best Regiment! Together, we shoulder the challenge of making our Army better by developing masters in our craft, and Troopers of character.”

The roadmap to success for the 11<sup>th</sup> ACR includes the additional task of shaping a training calendar that lays out key events for the next two fiscal years. With a highly limited rotational calendar that does not provide many opportunities, the task of meeting training milestones is a challenge.

The Blackhorse Regiment is responsible for a multitude of tasks that include maintaining and further developing Soldier’s tactical and technical abilities, but also supporting Fort Irwin garrison requirements. Some items of support includes extensive community relations projects, new and experimental equipment initiatives, and overall unit readiness, such as maintaining a deployable force.

Despite the tasks and requirements, leaders are prepared to execute training that ensures the Regiment is prepared for its two-fold mission, the training of Army BCT’s, as well as answering our nation’s call to deploy in support of worldwide contingency operations.

Leaders of the 11<sup>th</sup> ACR have created a plan to achieve the commander’s intent. The next step is the implementation of that plan. Through rotations, key METL training events, leader development and building combat power, the path to delivering results will be plowed through and positive results will be delivered by the Blackhorse.

To close the War Council, Regimental leadership convened a Dining In to remember the units past, rejoice in the present and mentally prepare for the future. Leadership had the opportunity celebrate the great work they had accomplished earlier in the day and weld together a team amongst warriors.

From their efforts the 11<sup>th</sup> ACR will continue as the premier cavalry brigade in the Army. The Blackhorse Regiment stands ready to demonstrate that, Pile On!





# 11th ACR Evolves the Operational Environment

The National Training Center at Fort Irwin, as the “Crown Jewel” of the Army, has long been at the cutting edge of preparing Brigade Combat Teams for combat or contingency operations around the world.

Now that our Army and our nation has endured 15 long years of combat operations and is adjusting to rapidly changing threats, the NTC has the responsibility to keep pace with each dynamic operating environment our BCTs may encounter. The 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment is the driving force of that endeavor.

The world’s premiere opposition force continues to be the unsolvable puzzle within the NTC. The Blackhorse Regiment has implemented a multitude of enablers to replicate a variety of environments that will better prepare the rotational training unit for any operation to which it is deployed.

The 11<sup>th</sup> ACR is organized into the 80<sup>th</sup> Division Tactical Group during rotations at the NTC, and within this organization is an enabler network that provides various actions that work in concert with conventional forces to enhance the complexity that the RTU faces.



In January 2016, the Regiment received its first Group 3 (Tactical) Unmanned Aerial System, the Outlaw G2E, replicating a surrogate UAS threat in the same category as the U.S. Army’s RQ-7B Shadow. The Outlaw UAS has significantly improved the Regiment’s intelligence collection capability, often pinpointing the locations of enemy High Payoff Targets with laser accuracy. This capability, combined with the Regiment’s indirect fire assets, has consistently led to the destruction of these HPTs prior the start of a major battle, rendering them useless to the RTU during the fight.

This example of near-peer capabilities has greatly enriched the experience of the RTU during rotations as it requires their staff to conduct mission analysis to a greater level than ever before.

The Blackhorse Regiment has also implemented additional hybrid threats within the organization, such as Task Force Skaven, the Improvised Explosive Device cell, and TF Citizen, which populates city centers with unaligned inhabitants to enhance the overall experience during a rotation.







Actions that the Rotational Training Unit, or BCT conducting the rotation, take or do not take impact the scenario through the participation of Blackhorse Troopers with specific identities built into the scenario.

These enablers allow the Division Tactical Group (DTG), i.e. the Regiment, to execute their mission of delivering hybrid threat operations with the human dimension added to the operational environment. This crucible training experience assists in maximizing the RTUs operational readiness.

Another angle of the operating environment that has evolved over the course of the past few years is the employment of cyber-electromagnetic activity (CEMA). While the DTG has the capabilities of engaging the enemy with multiple lethal effects, there are many opportunities to strike a foe utilizing CEMA, targeting their mission command, communications systems, and decision-making abilities before a round is ever fired.

To better prepare our Army for inevitable clashes in this emergent domain, the 11<sup>th</sup> ACR partnered with external CEMA units for Rotation 16-08, pitting two brigade-sized elements against each other with the intent to operationalize CEMA at the tactical edge. These elements were tasked to detect, degrade, and disrupt coalition forces in order to prevent freedom of maneuver in the battlespace. Their effects ranged from increasing guerilla combatants on the battlefield through aggressive recruitment campaigns to delaying coalition aviation support by ways of “weaponized crowds” swarming coalition aviation tactical assembly areas.

As this enabler continues to be developed, despite noted deficiencies, leaders at all levels have recognized the importance and potential of these effects and attempted to integrate them into maneuver plans.

It is training initiatives such as this that aid the Army in maintaining readiness for the realities of a modern battlefield and in preparing for the emergent effects of the future.







## 11th ACR Bids Farewell to the 51st TICO

*Story and photos by: Pvt. Austin Anyzeski*

The National Training Center and Fort Irwin held a deactivation ceremony for the 51st Translator Interpreter Company, Regimental Support Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment at the Fort Irwin Theater, Sept. 23, 2016.

During the height of the Global War on Terrorism, the U.S. Army realized that it needed a more effective means of communication in order to win the hearts and minds of those impacted by the war. In 2003,

the Army began to populate the 51st TICO with 152 speakers of 14 target languages and dialects, including Arabic, Farsi, Pashtu, Kurdish, and Dari.

The company was then officially activated at Fort Irwin in 2008, with the mission of training and deploying Soldiers, in support of contingency operations and joint exercises around the world.

"Since its activation, the Soldiers of the 51st TICO have

demonstrated an unmatched mastery of various indigenous regional languages and dialects. Having deployed to over 20 countries throughout the Middle East, Africa, and Europe," said U.S. Army LTC Ryan Moses, commander, RSS, 11th ACR. "Their missions ranged from supporting combat operations to grasping the various distinctive cultural nuances of sensitive issues related to diplomatic relations."

As the 51st TICO closes





one door, a new door opens. The company has been scaled down to form the 51st Translator Interpreter Platoon, while still maintaining the responsibility of providing competent experts in the most difficult environments.

"I look forward to seeing what is next and how the new structure will change the way the Soldiers are utilized," said a tearful CPT Jared Dahl, commander, 51st TICO. "The 51st TIPL is a new and exciting innovation in the Army, and the opportunity exists to create something that will continue to benefit the Army, no matter what region we conduct operations."

In the eight short years that the 51st TICO served here at Fort Irwin, the organization built a powerful and lasting legacy that, few, if any other company could have accomplished in such a short time.

"Countless numbers of fathers, mothers, sons, brothers, sisters, and daughters are alive and have been able to return home from the Global War on Terror, because of the critical skill set that your unit provided," said Moses. "It is through them, that the legacy of the 51st TICO, will endure."





# ROTATION 17-01







The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment battled the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas, for control of the high desert at the National Training Center during rotation 17-01. The purpose of NTC Rotations is to coach, teach and mentor brigade commanders, staffs, and separate companies/platoons on the applications and execution of combined arms doctrine to improve the war fighting skills of the Brigade Combat Team.







# Barstow Kiwanis Club's 82nd Annual Mardi Gras Parade







The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment participated in the Barstow Kiwanis Club's 82nd Annual Mardi Gras Parade, Oct. 29, 2016, where the Blackhorse Regiment provided personnel and equipment in order to showcase the National Training Center, the Regiment and the U.S. Army. This event served to strengthen the relationship with the City of Barstow and the Fort Irwin community.





# OPERATION: ROCKSTAR RAMPAGE

*Story by: SGT David Edge*

*Photos by SGT David Edge & PVT Austin Anyzeski*

The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment hosted more than 20 Rock Star energy drink extreme athletes as they converged on Fort Irwin, Oct. 19, 2016, to experience a full day in the life of a Blackhorse Trooper.

The extreme athletes' day started as most Soldiers' days begin, before the sun comes up, as they conducted physical fitness at The Box CrossFit gym. After being put through the paces by the CrossFit instructors, the athletes were asked to go on a short run, led by Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Stunkard, senior enlisted advisor, 11th ACR.

"The PT was similar to a lot of different training that I have done in the past to prepare myself for various races that I have competed in," said Jolene Van Vuget, Rock Star motocross rider. "If a person is out of shape and they try to do the PT, they will definitely have a rough time though."

After a quick shower and breakfast at the 11th ACR dining facility, the extreme athletes were taken to Fritz Field, where they would prepare for a simulated military operation. Blackhorse troopers spent the next several hours getting the Rock Star athletes familiarized with military equipment learning how to safely use weapons while moving in combat formations, and preparing their plan for seizing an objective within the National Training Center's training area.

"My favorite part of all this was preparing to go to the field. It gave us a chance to get to know the Soldiers that were teaching us everything from the weapons that we would be handling, to breaching doorways," said Joey Di Giovanni, Rock Star off-road racer. "It was just a lot of fun getting to joke around with the guys and seeing what they go through on a daily basis."





The day culminated with the Rock Star athletes carrying out a mission on a city within the NTC. The athletes were tasked to clear a small city of all enemy combatants.

"Today we got to do some training that was special, that many people don't get the opportunity to do. The experience was just crazy. When the guns start going off and the bombs start exploding, it's just insane," said Van Vuget, a resident of Maryland. "The mental and physical strength it takes to be able to focus on completing the assigned task, while so much is going on around you, is just crazy."

During the mission, the Rock Star athletes were partnered with the Blackhorse Troopers that trained them earlier in the day. The squad-sized teams that they formed, served to give the



athletes a more complete military experience, demonstrating the camaraderie that is developed between the troopers.

"This is an experience like no other. I have some close friends that are military, so to be given a chance to get a little tastes of what they experienced, both in country and deployed, was really cool," said Di Giovanni, a Southern California native.





# An 11th ACR Soldier's Story: SGT Amir Matin, Living His Dream

*Story by: 1LT Christian Negrón*

With every Soldier, there is a story to be told. This story is about SGT Amir Matin, a squad leader with the 51<sup>st</sup> Translator Interpreter Company (TICO), Regimental Support Squadron, 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment.

Matin is a stand out Soldier, honorable and well respected amongst his peers. He is a valuable asset to the TICO, as he is fluent in four different languages: Farsi, Dutch, Arabic and English. Because of his unique capabilities, Matin can deploy to both the Afghanistan and Iraq theater of operations, where his skills are in very high demand.



Matin was born and raised in Tehran, Iran, before his family relocated to Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Naturally, he learned Farsi, as it is his native language. However, he has also learned Dutch, English and Arabic.

“It was a very diverse city with many nationalities.” Matin said about Amsterdam. The diversity enabled him to truly expand his horizons and learn a great deal about various cultures. Matin is grateful for his time spent in Amsterdam, because he grew tremendously as a person.

Many people dream about coming to the United States, and for Matin, it was definitely a work in progress as he repeatedly inquired with family about the states.

“It was a gradual process. At first I did not know much about the U.S. My aunt lives in New York and she told me a lot about her life in the states,” said Matin. “I also watched movies and shows and became more familiar with the U.S. My step sister was married to an American from Phoenix, and had lived there for a couple of years. She told me about the U.S. too.”

So, with enough information, Matin moved to the United States in 2005 after applying for, and being awarded a green card through a Department of State program.

Soon after moving to America, everything came together in a very unfamiliar place. Living in the U.S., he truly grew passionate for the country and the many opportunities he was given, which led to his enlistment in the Army in 2011, at the age of 28. He utilized his knowledge of multiple languages to land a job as a 09L, the military occupational specialty of Interpreter/Translator.

“I joined because I knew I was not getting any younger and I wanted to give back to the country that gave me so much,” said Matin.

Matin further demonstrated his commitment to country by volunteering to deploy, once with 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division to Afghanistan, and again to Iraq in support of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. During both deployments, Matin’s skills were invaluable and provided great benefit to both the coalition forces, and the citizens of these two countries.

Matin feels that the greatest reward was playing a vital role in the buildup of foreign nations and living his dream, serving in the greatest Army in the world and living in the United States.



# Blackhorse In Action!!





# 11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT WANTED



THE 67TH COLONEL IS LOOKING FOR  
**2500 ELITE CAVALRY TROOPERS**  
WITH THE SKILL, CUNNING, VALOR AND DASH  
TO RIDE WITH  
**THE BEST DAMN REGIMENT**



Michael J. Stunkard  
22nd Regimental Command Sergeant Major



Joseph D. Clark  
67th Colonel of the Regiment