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Phoenix battalion conducts mass enlistment ceremony



Backed by a formation of Future Soldiers, Sgt. 1st Class Rafael Ramirez, first sergeant, Phoenix North Recruiting Company, salutes during the national anthem, prior to a Major League Baseball Game between the Arizona Diamondbacks and Colorado Rockies, July 2, Chase Field, Phoenix.

The Future Soldiers were part of a mass enlistment ceremony, administered by Capt. Denard Honey-suckle, commander, Phoenix North Recruiting Company, as 30,000 appreciative fans watched. Soldiers from Fort Huachuca were also present for the national anthem, as Major League Baseball paid honor to the Armed Forces. Thanks must go to Jonathon from the Diamondbacks management staff for coordinating with the battalion to make this even happen at such short notice.

The enlistment ceremony was the second of three for the battalion in 2017, with a further mass enlistment taking place on July 23.

From the Commander



“Phoenix Battalion has established an unprecedented level of community support and Army awareness, and is fully committed to providing the best career opportunities for our youth.”

-Lt. Col Dave Clukey

Phoenix Battalion crushed 4th Quarter, Fiscal Year (FY) 2017. The Battalion made up considerable ground to exceed FY16 enlistments milestones; 5 out of 6 companies improved in all categories; the Battalion made Army Reserve mission for eight consecutive months; and the Battalion made phase line (PL) mission on both sides in PL-August for the first time since December FY15.

The Battalion continued to foster partnerships with professional sports organizations to expand Army influence and to provide unique venues to recognize Future Soldiers and Soldiers. The Battalion conducted three separate Future Soldier oath of enlistments on the Arizona Diamondbacks’, Chase Field. Phoenix Central Company took this partnership to the next level by coordinating participation in several career fair events. This established a new precedent and offered the company unfettered access to Distributive Educational Clubs of America (DECA) high school students.

Phoenix West company spearheaded a partnership with the Arizona Cardinals to provide the Battalion access to a National Football League venue to promote the Army narrative and enable the Battalion to recognize 8-top performers. On 25 September 2017, top performers from the Battalion participated in



Phoenix Battalion participates in the Flag Detail during the National Anthem, on 25 September 2017 Arizona Cardinal season kick off

the flag detail for the national anthem at the Arizona Cardinals season kick off against the Dallas Cowboys.

Albuquerque Company represented the Battalion at the USAREC Sergeant Audie Murphy Club Board. Two exceptional Non-Commissioned Officers from Albuquerque Company were inducted into the prestigious Audie Murphy Club. Congratulations to Rio Rancho Center Leader, SSG(P) Michael Stone, and San Mateo Center Recruiter, SSG Rigoberto Portillo—well done!

Separately, access to high schools across the Battalion footprint continue to improve based on Recruiters unparalleled professionalism and initiative, and the Arizona School Board’s historic decision to include ASVAB and military enlistments into annual high school assessments.

The Battalion is off to an exceptional start in FY 18, all companies are closing in on lead line even with the largest mission increase in the history of USAREC. This is a testament to the exceptional Recruiters, talented Center Leaders and “pipe hitting” Company Leadership.



The newest Sergeant Audie Murphy Club members SSG(P) Michael Stone and SSG Rigoberto Portillo

From the CSM

“Phoenix Recruiting Battalion Soldiers have put the Battalion back on the MAP”



Soldiers from the mighty Phoenix recruiting Battalion delivered excellently during the 4th Quarter, finishing FY 17 with a bang. The

Battalion netted 549 Regular Army enlistments and 44 Army Reserve enlistments. There were 16 Recruiting Centers that closed the 4th quarter at 100% or better for the Regular Army mission and 17 Recruiting Centers closed the Army Reserve mission at 100% or better. Great push to close out Fiscal Year.

The “Beat the Heat” challenge produced some great competition between companies, centers and recruiters. The Top Company went to Tempe Company by .2% over Phoenix West. Both companies achieved over 100% on the RA and AR. There were two Recruiting Centers who achieved the “Recruiting Center Challenge”, the Superstition RC at 161% combined and 142 GSA achievement and the Show Low RC at 155% combined and 175% GSA achievements. There were also 9 Centers who achieved 110% or better. SSG Gumbs (10 Enl), SFC Bradley (10 Enl), SSG Ortiz (9 Enl), SSG Kirim (9 Enl), and SFY Fry (9 Enl) all achieved the Recruiter challenge of 9 enlistments or more. Congratulations to all those who achieved/exceeded the challenge.



A little team building PT with all the Center Leaders during CLQLD training.

- CSM Jose Gomez

The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club received two new inductees from the Albuquerque Company, SSG(P) Stone and SSG Portillo. Phoenix was the only battalion with two nominations.

The Phoenix Recruiting Battalion finished the Fiscal Year strong and proved that we have the best and brightest recruiters in the command. We have made some changes and feel we have the right leaders in the right places to continue to move forward in achieving the FY 18 mission. The Battalion is counting on each and every one to contribute their piece of the mission. Let’s blow this year’s mission out of the park. Thank you for all the great things you have done and the great things you are going to accomplish this upcoming quarter and fiscal year.



SSG(P) Stone and SSG Portillo being recognized in front of the Alamo in San Antonio

Recruiters receive performance awards



Photos from an award ceremony, held at the Phoenix Recruiting Battalion's Center Leadership Quarterly Development training event, Papago, May 12. Top performers within the battalion were recognized, including companies, centers and individual recruiters. Other training events held over the two day event included center leader briefs, a PT session featuring functional fitness circuits, and leadership briefs from battalion leadership LTC David Clukey, commander, and CSM Jose Gomez., battalion command sergeant major.

Maricopa County honors Army Birthday



Capt. Richard Ezell (center), executive officer, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, poses for a photo with members of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, June 7, County Government Office, Phoenix. The board unanimously approved a proclamation recognizing the U.S. Army's 242nd birthday at its formal meeting. (Photo by Mike Scheck, USAREC Public Affairs)



Capt. Richard Ezell, executive officer, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, recites the Pledge of Allegiance while opening the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors formal meeting, County Government Office, Phoenix, June 7.

BG Walrath visits Phoenix Recruiting Battalion

The Phoenix Recruiting Battalion had the pleasure of hosting Brig. Gen. Jason Walrath, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army Recruiting Command, June 15-17.

Walrath visited the battalion headquarters, June 15, and participated in an award ceremony for departing XO Capt. Richard Ezell. He also met with leadership from the battalion and briefed them on current recruiting issues. The following day Walrath visited recruiting centers in Tempe and Scottsdale and met with recruiters and center leaders, before a key leader dinner that evening.

Walrath concluded his visit by attending a Reserve Recruiting Partnership Council event in Mesa, June 17. This allowed Walrath to brief leaders from both recruiting and reserve units in order to forge partnerships.



Leadership tours House of Representatives

Leadership from the Phoenix Recruiting Battalion toured the Arizona House of Representatives, May 10, Phoenix, where they were able to see the senate in session and meet various house representatives.

The battalion was briefed by representatives Richard Andrade, Kelly Townsend, Maria Syms and Sonny Borelli, who all expressed their gratitude to those in attendance. The battalion was also recognized during the session, where they received generous applause.

They were also able to watch a vote in process and tour the house floor, where they gained a greater understanding of the legislative process.



From Panama to Phoenix: A Recruiters Story

Story by Alun Thomas, U.S. Army Recruiting BN-Phoenix

PHOENIX – For many immigrants, serving in the U.S. Army is a way of giving back to the nation which has given them a better life and helped make their dreams become reality.

It's a selfless service which makes the Army a unique melting pot of Soldiers from many diverse races and nations.

Part of this group is Sgt. Erick Fernandez, a recruiter for Tempe Company., Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, who was born and raised in Panama, until he left for the United States at the age of 18, leaving behind his family and a country beset by the reign of General Manuel Noriega until Operation Just Cause in 1989.

Fernandez, 39, was born in Panama City at a time when the U.S. Army had a major presence in the area, something he was fortunate enough to be closely associated with.

"My father was one of the



Sgt. Erick Fernandez, recruiter, Tempe Recruiting Company, poses for a photo at the Phoenix Recruiting Battalion headquarters, Phoenix, May 18. Fernandez, originally from Panama, moved to the United States at the age of 18 and joined the U.S. Army in 2005. (Photo by Alun Thomas, USAREC Public Affairs)

first Panamanian teachers to teach on one of the American bases there, so I grew up in an environment around Soldiers," Fernandez said.

"My father was a physical education teacher, so I would play baseball in leagues on base with the Soldiers."

Fernandez has fond memories of growing up in Panama, despite the war in Dec. 1989, where Noriega was deposed by the U.S. military.

"I was at home the day it started, it was right near the

end of the school year," Fernandez remembered.

"I woke up that morning and heard explosions and gunshots ... the whole city was at war. I asked my mother if there was any school that day and she said 'no, just stay in bed, there's a war going on.'"

Fernandez said it was tough not knowing what the outcome would be, but thankfully he and his family weren't negatively affected by the war.

"My neighborhood was actually

From Panama to Phoenix: A Recruiters Story (cont.)

very close to Noriega, just a few blocks away, but we were in a dead end street so we weren't close to the fighting," he said. "Having the U.S. Army so close was great for us and life in general was always positive."

With the backing of the Department of Defense, Fernandez's father was granted U.S. citizenship for his work with the Army.

"He did it for us - my brother, sister and me - so we could have another option in life," Fernandez said. "As soon as I turned 18 I left for the U.S. ... I grew up in an American environment so I told my father I was leaving and moved to Miami."

Fernandez said he lived with some friends who had already moved from Panama, making the transition much easier.

"I started going to college right away and worked on my English, which wasn't very good," he recalled. "The whole culture in Miami was easier for me to adapt to, coming from a Latin country. It wasn't as shocking as moving to somewhere like Boston or New York."

Fernandez started to consider the military as an option in 2005, after seeing his older

brother join the U.S. Army and witnessing them in action first hand.

"After growing up around the Army and seeing my brother joining, I decided to do it," Fernandez said. "I had always wanted to, however I was focusing on school and living a nice life in Miami."

"When it really hit me was in 2005 when we had some hurricanes in Miami and I saw the Army Reserve come down and help with food and supplies. We were without power for days and their hard work to get everything going again inspired me to enlist."

"I said 'I want to do that, I want to give back to the country which has been so good to me,'" Fernandez continued. "I wanted to give back to the community and make a difference."

Fernandez enlisted as a motor transport operator and said his initial goals were to go to school and gain full citizenship.

"I got my citizenship after only four months of service," he said. "The Army did everything for me, all the paperwork. It was a dream come true."

Fernandez spent a year in Honduras and also tried out for Special Forces as part of his ongoing Army career, with his path eventually leading to recruiting in Phoenix, where he's spent the last two and a half years.

"Recruiting can be very challenging at times, you can try your best to get someone to join, but you aren't always in control of their decision," he said. "My experience has been very rewarding however, because I feel like I've been able to make a difference in the community."

"When you go out and try to enlist new Soldiers you can see how you're helping somebody," Fernandez continued. "You can provide them with an education, a job and purpose. It's rewarding when you give them that purpose."

Fernandez said he is about to move to Fort Bragg with his wife Judith and is excited about their future.

"It's hard to imagine my life without the military," he said. "It's given me the life I always wanted."

Phoenix Battalion honors fallen at Memorial Day ceremony

Story by Alun Thomas, U.S. Army Recruiting BN-Phoenix



Lt. Col. David Clukey, commander, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, talks about the meaning of Memorial Day, during his speech as guest speaker, Anthem Memorial Day Ceremony, May 29, Veterans Memorial, Anthem, Ariz. (Photo by Alun Thomas, USAREC Public Affairs)

ANTHEM, Ariz. – The Phoenix Recruiting Battalion honored fallen service members as part of the Anthem Memorial Day Ceremony, May 29, Veterans Memorial, Anthem, Arizona.

Hundreds of people attended the ceremony on a warm morning, as they paid tribute to those who gave their lives to their nation in various conflicts dating back almost 241 years.

Guest speaker at the ceremony was Lt. Col. David Clukey, commander, Phoenix. Rec. Bn., who spoke about two Special Forces officers who lost their lives as part of the War on Terror, Capt. Andrew Keel and Capt. Jason Jones.

In paying tribute to Keel, Clukey said he was a fearless and dynamic warrior, who proved himself as a leader in Afghanistan.

“(Keel) had just completed two years of rigorous training to earn his green beret at the Special Forces Qualification Course, and left his fiancée behind to join the battalion forward in Afghanistan,” Clukey said. “Here, he worked in the battalion’s operations center to gain experience as he anxiously awaited his opportunity to command a Special Forces team.” (continued next page)

Phoenix Battalion honors fallen at Memorial Day ceremony (cont.)

Keel's opportunity arose in November 2012 when his Operational Detachment lost its team leader to a roadside bomb, putting him in charge.

"Three months after he took command of his Team, on March 11, 2013, (Keel), his team, and local Afghan leaders and police were huddled in front of their staged vehicle convoy inside the secure walls of the team's compound to conduct final preparations for a pending mission," Clukey said. "It was during this assembly that an insurgent dressed in an Afghan Police uniform, subtly climbed into the bed of one of the staged pick-up trucks and opened fire on the group at close range with a vehicle mounted machine gun. Although the assailant was quickly dispatched, two US service members were killed, eight were wounded, and dozens of Afghans were killed and wounded."

Tragically Keel was one of the two service members killed.

"In the short time (Keel) led his team, his influence and enthusiasm were palpable. His loss brought the battalion to its knees," he said. "He embodied everything we look for in a Special Forces detachment commander, and most importantly he brought hope, cohesion and life, that galvanized a wounded team during a critical time when they needed it the most."

Clukey then spoke about Jones, whose 12-man team was responsible for training, advising, and assisting, a battalion of Afghan commandos in 2014.

"His confidence, poise and clarity when reporting and leading operations in the most intense situations were second to none," Clukey added. "His team quickly developed a reputation for their excellence and their ability to accomplish the mission, no matter the challenge or complexity."

On June 2, 2014, Jones led his team into an austere and highly contested district close to the border of eastern Afghanistan. This was an area now claimed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) but historically used as a key transit point for ancient smuggling routes between Afghanistan and Pakistan, Clukey said.

"Captain Jones, his team and the commandos they advised were there to liberate the people in the district from oppression, by bringing security and stability to the area,' he said. "Their effort would provide the force necessary to enable the Afghan government to pursue unassisted efforts to re-establish sovereignty of the critical district."

On this mission, like others before, Jason and his team did everything right, Clukey continued.

"They advised the commandos and drove the insurgents from the area, and successfully reclaimed the district center for the Government of Afghanistan through a symbolic gesture of overwhelming force and incredible synchronization."

However, in the military we say the enemy always has a vote, Clukey said. (cont. next page)

Phoenix Battalion honors fallen at Memorial Day ceremony (cont.)



Capt. Matthew Peterson, commander, Phoenix North Recruiting Company, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, salutes at the table of the Missing in Action and Prisoners of War, during the Anthem Memorial Day Ceremony, May 29, Veterans Memorial, Anthem, Ariz. (Photo by Alun Thomas, USAREC Public Affairs)

“Ultimately Captain Jones’ young life was claimed by an insurgent indirect fire projectile fired indiscriminately from well outside the security perimeter established by the commandos,” he said. “As he was concluding his engagement with local Afghan leaders within the relative security of district center compound, the round impacted and exploded through the wall behind him.”

“He is survived by his beautiful wife Amy and they would have celebrated their first wedding anniversary the month of his death. To me, his loss was the complete embodiment of potential lost. I saw in him a young man who struggled and overcame incredible adversity to become exceptional. He and his team did everything right, yet the enemy still had a vote.”

Keel and Jones are but two examples of the over 1.3 million Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardians, who made the ultimate sacrifice in our country’s conflicts and wars, either in direct combat or other enabling our freedoms for 241 years, he added.

“It’s what has always made America the beacon of hope and freedom that it is – the generations of brave and courageous warriors who dedicate themselves to the defense of the United States and that my friends, is why we have Memorial Day,” Clukey concluded.

Female infantry recruit prepares for basic training

Story by Alun Thomas, U.S. Army Recruiting BN-Phoenix



Kimberly Robinson (front row, center) stands at parade rest during her oath of enlistment at the Phoenix Military Entrance Processing Station, May 2017. Robinson enlisted as the first female infantry Soldier in the Navajo County region in East Central Arizona. (Courtesy Photo)

SHOW LOW, Ariz. – It was a make or break time for Kimberly Robinson. She had just graduated from Show Low High School in 2016 and was unclear about her future.

Should she stay within the familiar confines of her hometown in Show Low, Arizona, or branch out into something challenging and providing career opportunities?

In early 2017 Robinson made up her mind. She decided to enlist as an infantry Soldier in the U.S. Army, becoming the first female to do so in the Navajo County region in East Central Arizona.

This huge step in her life is one Robinson had pondered for years, having lived her whole life in Show Low with her father Tim Robinson, who had served in the Navy before becoming a sheriff.

“A lot of my motivation came from my parents, especially my dad who served in the Navy,” Robinson, 19, said. “He would tell me a lot of stories about it, which always fascinated me. I was interested in pursuing the military, just not 100 percent.”

Robinson said she was very active at high school, participating in soccer for *(continued next page)*

Female infantry recruit prepares for basic training (cont.)

years and also becoming involved with the student council.

But after leaving high school and these activities behind, Robinson said she became tired of her complacent life and had to make a decision about her future, something she didn't find easy.

"I wasn't good at making decisions ... but I needed to be selfish and do something with my life," she said. "Joining the Army seemed scary, I didn't want to leave my mom and my family, but it was something I had to do for myself."

Robinson said she thought military could potentially provide a stable career, which other jobs wouldn't, leading her to the recruiting office in Show Low and the lure of becoming infantry trained.

"I'm not the type of person to sit behind a desk ... I like pushing myself and I want to do my part to help the nation out," Robinson added. "Joining the infantry seemed like best way to do it."

Robinson worked with local recruiters to make her dream a reality and after minor medical setbacks, finally enlisted as an infantry Soldier at the Phoenix MEPS in May.

"I'm not the type of person to sit behind a desk ... I like pushing myself and I want to do my part to help the nation out," Robinson added. "Joining the infantry seemed like best way to do it."

Robinson worked with local recruiters to make her dream a reality and after minor medical setbacks, finally enlisted as an infantry Soldier at the Phoenix Military Entrance Processing Station in May this year.

She said she fully realizes the challenges ahead, as she prepares to ship out to basic training on Aug. 28 at Fort Benning, Georgia.

"I am a female, so I know my strength will be tested and I'll have to be amazingly strong, both physically and mentally," Robinson stated. "I'm sure there will be other infantry females there, but I'm aware it will mostly be males. I know I'm going to be pushed, just like they are."

Robinson said she feels physically ready for basic training, having worked out extensively in preparation for the grueling

"I go to the gym regularly, run as much as I can and push myself. I don't know what physical stress I'll be put under, but I feel I'll be able to handle it," she continued.

Working with Robinson during the recruiting process was Staff Sgt. Christopher Degaetano, center leader, Show Low Recruiting Center, who praised her determination and commitment.

"Kimberly is very athletic and highly motivated and has a level of patriotism that's unexplainable," Degaetano said. "That's why we felt she was a perfect candidate for Army service, especially the infantry."

Degaetano is confident Robinson will excel at basic training and everything she attempts following this in her career.

"She is going to do big and great things in the Army, I'm certain of it," he added. "She also has the opportunity to go to Ranger School if she chooses."

For the moment however Robinson is counting down the days until she departs for Fort Benning.

"I'm both nervous and excited for it, but just taking it day by day," Robinson said. "It's scary, but a great opportunity and I have to try my hardest."

Educators Tour offers rare glimpse into special operations

Story by Alun Thomas, U.S. Army Recruiting BN-

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – A group of 14 educators and dignitaries from Arizona and New Mexico joined leadership from the Phoenix Recruiting Battalion for an Educators Tour of Fort Bragg, N.C., April 17-20.

The purpose of the tour was to introduce educators and key influencers to the Army disciplines that require a significantly higher General Technical / Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery score, to counter the common misconception that the Army is a second option to college.

The tour highlighted the capabilities and training venues available for U.S. Army Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Soldiers at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School and the 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) (3rd SFG(A)), Special Forces Multi-Purpose Canine (SFMPC) Facility.

The tour also showcased Army facilities, housing, as well as the everyday activities undertaken by service members on Fort Bragg.

The tour was led by Lt. Col. David Clukey, commander, Phoenix Rec. Bn., and was attended by local representatives and educa-



Educators and dignitaries from Arizona and New Mexico pose with leadership from the Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, outside the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, N.C., April 17, as part of an Educators Tour, which took place April 17-20. The tour introduced educators and key influencers to the Army disciplines that require a significantly higher General Technical / Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery score, by highlighting the capabilities and training venues available for U.S. Army Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Soldiers. (Courtesy Photo)

tors including Diane Douglas, Arizona Superintendent of Education, the Mayor of Glendale, Jerry Weiers and the Mayor of Queen Creek, Gail Barney.

Clukey said the firsthand view into special operations provided an exclusive perspective and better understanding of the high level of proficiency and opportunities available to America's best and brightest.

"I showcased the direct connection and significance of a strong STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) educa-

tional background and how the Army can strengthen and significantly enhance this foundation," Clukey said.

"All in attendance walked away with a much better appreciation of the high level of training, educational opportunities, and professional competence of the U.S. Army," he said.

The tour successfully accomplished the goal of highlighting what makes the Army a valuable career option, with its myriad options of job opportunities and possibilities.

Phoenix recruiter overcomes adversity to find success

Story by Alun Thomas, U.S. Army Recruiting BN-

PHOENIX – With a full basketball scholarship to the University of the Pacific in California, the future looked bright for Staff Sgt. Jennifer Kirim.

But during one fateful game in 2010, Kirim suffered a knee injury that tore her anterior cruciate ligament, requiring reconstructive surgery and leaving her dreams shattered.

With her scholarship taken away due to the severity of the injury, Kirim put a backup plan in place that would ultimately pay dividends - she enlisted in the U.S. Army, something she had dreamed of before college.

Kirim, center leader, Black Canyon Recruiting Center, Phoenix North Recruiting Company, has long since rebounded from her injury and become a top-producing recruiter for the company, since joining the battalion a year ago.

Kirim, a native of Lodi, Calif., enlisted in Nov. 2010 after suffering the injury, something she said was devastating at the time.

“After blowing my knee out and losing my scholarship, I realized I wasn’t going to be able to do what I loved anymore,” Kirim said. “I had always wanted to join the Army, whether as enlisted or commissioned, so I figured that was the best time.”

Kirim took on the military occupational specialty of recovery mechanic and moved to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, as her first duty assignment, leading to a deployment to Afghanistan in 2012-13

with the 101st Airborne Division.

“It was a great deployment for me. I got to go to a lot of places with different units,” Kirim said. “I was attached to British and Canadian Special Forces units and did recovery operations for them. The leadership experience was extremely valuable for me.”



Staff Sgt. Jennifer Kirim, center leader, Black Canyon Recruiting Center, holds the Phoenix North Recruiting Company guidon, during a change of command ceremony, June 30, West Maricopa

Following the deployment Kirim moved to Fort Benning Georgia, for the next two years and worked in field artillery, before getting notified she was going to be a recruiter.

“I was nervous when I found out I was going to be a recruiter,” she said. “I was getting promoted rapidly in my own MOS and was very successful, so I was nervous to come to Phoenix and start something new.”

Kirim moved to the Phoenix Recruiting Battalion in July, 2016, and said she struggled at first, before finding her way.

“I didn’t know how I was going to fit in and contribute to the team,” Kirim explained. “The first few months were rough, but once I started getting my own rhythm going I started being successful.”

The keys to her success came from trying different things and not being afraid to fail, Kirim said.

“What works for one person may not work for you, so you have to excel in one area and not be afraid to fail in others,” she continued. “That was my biggest thing at first - I didn’t want to fail, so I didn’t try new things. Once I got over that I realized I had to try different techniques and find what I was good at and thrive on them.”

Kirim said social media has been an aid that has helped her succeed, as well as being an assistant basketball coach at Moon Valley (continued next page)

Phoenix recruiter overcomes adversity to find success (cont.)



Staff Sgt. Jennifer Kirim, center leader, Black Canyon Recruiting Center, poses while deployed in Afghanistan in 2012, while at the rank of specialist. Kirim deployed with the 101st Airborne Division as a recovery mechanic. (Courtesy Photo)

High School, Phoenix, something she relishes greatly.

“The team loves having me out there, especially when I bring other recruiters. We do strength and conditioning and answer questions about the Army,” Kirim said. “They love to see people volunteering. That’s why we go out there and they’re super receptive to it.”

With this flurry of activity, Kirim’s excellent performance saw her made center leader of the Black Canyon center four months ago, which quickly became one of the top performing centers in the battalion.

“I was worried at first how it would play out as the center leader, but the other recruiters and I all got on board and started putting Future Soldiers in right away,” Kirim stated. “Morale improved immediately and we’ve been moving upwards ever since.”

As a female recruiter Kirim said she was apprehensive how she would be perceived when beginning her assignment, but said it’s proven to be no barrier whatsoever.

“I did feel pressure when I first came to Phoenix - everyone was saying ‘now we’ve got a female recruiter you’re going to be putting everyone in the Army,’” Kirim joked. “At first I wasn’t putting anyone in and I felt like I was letting people down.”

“I’ve come to find out being a female recruiter is positive, because female recruits feel comfortable talking to you,” Kirim said. “The males do too, because they aren’t as intimidated.”

Phoenix Central holds change of command ceremony



Capt. Adam McGinnis, (left) outgoing commander, Phoenix Central Recruiting Company, Lt. Col. Dave Clukey (center), commander, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, and Capt. James Hur (right), incoming commander, Phoenix Central Rec. Co., salute during the playing of the national anthem, prior to a change of command ceremony, Aug. 4, Grand Canyon University, Phoenix. (Photo by Alun Thomas, USAREC Public Affairs)

PHOENIX – The Phoenix Central Recruiting Company welcomed new company commander Capt. James Hur, following a change of command ceremony at Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, Aug. 4.

Hur replaced outgoing commander Capt. Adam McGinnis, who had been in command of Phoenix Central since Dec. 2015.

Overseeing the ceremony was Lt. Col. Dave Clukey, commander, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, who praised the company and its achievements during McGinnis' tenure in command.

"Phoenix Central has been at the forefront of establishing community partnerships and primarily recruiting our nation's best."

"They did this through sustaining critical partnerships with Arizona communities and the metro area, like the Arizona Diamondbacks, Phoenix Suns and Phoenix Rising."

Clukey said McGinnis had provided outstanding leadership during his command, providing continuity and purpose.

"He is a standard bearer of professionalism and a true example of the Army values," Clukey said. "Officers like Captain McGinnis personify the characteristics we look for in our future field grade officers and those folks we deem worthy of being potential battalion commanders."

During his speech McGinnis said although recruiting is difficult, his company helped him strive for ex-

cellence.

I think I had the right group of people at the right time, with excellent first sergeants and center leaders," McGinnis said. "They were always 100 percent committed and some of the best non-commissioned officers I've ever worked with."

Hur thanked Clukey and McGinnis for their help in preparing him for his new role.

"Thank you for your guidance and mentorship as I take command of Phoenix Central," he said. "I'm excited to join this outstanding formation and I look forward to all the great opportunities in my path."

Phoenix recruiter makes impact as football coach

Story by Alun Thomas, U.S. Army Recruiting BN-Phoenix

MESA, Ariz. – A recruiter from the Phoenix Recruiting Battalion is using his background in football to make a positive impression on local high school students as an assistant coach.

Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Fry, recruiter, Superstition Recruiting Center, has been performing coaching duties for the Skyline Coyotes Junior Varsity Football team for the past year, utilizing his experience as a former semi-professional player to help inspire the side.

Fry said he became acquainted with the team after recruiting at Skyline High School, Mesa, Arizona, which led to an invitation to coach the team's defensive backs.

"I go out at least twice a week to football practice and prep the team for their games," Fry said. "On game days I'm always out there, either in my coaching shirt or my Army uniform if I don't have time to change."

Fry's coaching and mentorship made such an impression that he has been invited back for the 2017 season, after the Coyotes went 8-1 in 2016.

"The kids see me more as a role model than a coach and use my Army history as their inspiration," he continued. "I sell the Army to some extent, but I keep it football related for team building and morale and the other coaches respect that."

Fry, originally from Rockford, Illinois, said he played semi-pro football from 2005-2007 as a cornerback in Beloit, Wisconsin, which gave him the experience and tools to coach effectively.

"I played for a team called the State Line Rush, which was right on the border of Illinois and Wisconsin," he explained. "During my second year I was possibly going to take a scholarship to Indiana State, but I decided to join the Army because my mother was a single parent and I didn't want to put her in a financial burden."

Fry now coaches the same position he once played, but also helps the Coyotes in other areas.



Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Fry, recruiter, Superstition Recruiting Center, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, instructs defensive backs from the Skyline Coyotes Junior Varsity Football team, during a practice in Sept. 2016, Skyline High School, Mesa, Ariz. Fry, a former semi-professional football player, helped the side to an 8-1 record in 2016 and is returning for the 2017 season. (Courtesy Photo)

"I help the wide receivers as well because they have the same fundamental footwork as a cornerback," Fry said. "Primarily though my role is on the defensive side."

The response Fry has received from the players has been overwhelming, he said, with many seeking guidance.

"I have players coming left and right looking for mentorship and it's paid off from a recruiting aspect," he added.

"I've helped kids fill out their college packets and things like that ... I'm not just about the Army mission itself. I want to help these kids out in general."

Fry said he's now fully integrated into the high school as a staff member, having been included in the school yearbook and also awarded his own office.

He did however turn down the chance to coach with the varsity side, with his recruiting duties taking precedence.

"I was offered the chance to coach at the varsity level this year, but I respectfully turned it down because of my recruiting obligations," he said.

"I can't give them 100 percent like I can with the juniors, where the workload isn't as much, although they're just as important."

The coaching experience has made Fry a better recruiter, he said, helping him in different aspects, both personally and professionally.

"I come from an educational background with family members who taught, so when I came on to recruiting, one of my first goals was to learn the educational piece," Fry said. "

"This ensures kids can do credit recovery and graduate on time. That's something I take a lot of pride in, because I know with all the programs I've learned, they'll graduate on time."

Phoenix Recruiting Battalion hosts Arizona School Board members



Lt. Col. Dave Clukey (left), commander, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, discusses opportunities within the U.S. Army to Arizona School Board members, Aug. 12, Springhill Suites Hotel, Phoenix. (Photo by Alun Thomas, USAREC Public Affairs)

Story by Alun Thomas, U.S. Army Recruiting BN-Phoenix

PHOENIX – The Phoenix Recruiting Battalion hosted a brief for Arizona School Board members on opportunities of service in the U.S. Army, Aug. 12, Springhill Suites Hotel, Phoenix.

The ten attending school board members were briefed by Lt. Col. Dave Clukey, commander, Phoenix Rec. Bn., on the more than 150 jobs that exist within the Army, available medical and educational benefits, and the lasting impact of serving the nation.

Clukey said it's important to break contemporary paradigms that exist regarding service, one of which involves parents and how they perceive the military.

“Parents see military service as dangerous ... if their son or daughter decided to go into special operations, yes it is dangerous, but it's an exclusive group and not the normal military complex,” Clukey said. “The vast preponderance of the military are combat support. These are your cooks, logisticians and people who pack parachutes. This is what parents need to understand; it's not as dangerous as they think.”

Most of the jobs available in the Army translate into the civilian sector, Clukey said, making them more valuable.

“This gives them experience doing what they like to do when they get out of the service,” he said. “It also gives them free education which we pay for. That's one of the key benefits we provide.”

Phoenix Recruiting Battalion hosts Arizona School Board (cont.)

For every promotion a Soldier takes comes required schooling, he continued, increasing their knowledge and education.

“They can’t get promoted unless they go to a school. Every single promotion accounts for additional schooling,” Clukey explained. “The Armed Forces is very adamant about continuing education. We want people that are adaptive, clever and free thinking.”

Another misconception is people joining the military as a last resort, when all other career options have been exhausted, Clukey said.

“Only three out of ten of today’s youth meet the bare requirements for military service,” he said. “The main thing going against them is childhood obesity. That accounts for 31 percent. They do not meet the physical requirements.”

Low aptitude is another key factor for future recruits, he said, with 9.5 percent accounting for disqualified applicants.

“Aptitude counts for another large percentage. Lots of applicants don’t graduate from high school,” Clukey said. “You have to be a high school graduate to enlist these days. The ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) shows educators what students are good at, what they’re best suited for in the military and potentially pursue a career in.”

“The higher the score, the more jobs that are available. The lower the score and the range of jobs goes down,” Clukey said.

Clukey talked about the Future Soldier program, where possible and new recruits are mentored by recruiters prior to joining the Army or shipping for basic training.

“We do workouts and provide mentorship for those who have joined or are leaning towards joining the Army,” Clukey said. “We are mentors for these kids. We want them to be successful. We will challenge them with basic things like map reading, history of the Army and rank structure.”

“What I’ve found is where there’s a will there’s a way,” he continued. “If they’re committed to a goal, they will accomplish it.”

Clukey also discussed the Partnership for Youth Success (PaYS) program, where first-term Soldiers are guaranteed a job interview with the company of their choice after leaving the Army.

“The Army is partnered with over 500,000 organizations, like U Haul, Global Tranz ... you name it,” he said. “When these kids enlist they’re assured of an interview with at least two of these companies. This gives them a foot in the door. They aren’t guaranteed a job, but an interview.”

Attending the meeting was Devin Del Palacio, vice president, Tolleson Union High School District, who found the information critical, especially for teachers in his district who may have been unaware about the opportunities provided by the Army.

“This was an excellent discussion, because a lot of us oversee districts with thousands of students, and when we’re out there we want to speak intelligently about the Armed Forces and the opportunities that exist,” Del Palacio said. “We focus heavily on whether kids are college and career ready, but we need to throw the military option in there.”

“The military is a valuable option, especially from the viewpoints of education and leadership, and we shouldn’t discount it,” he said.

Phoenix North holds change of command ceremony

Photos from a change of command ceremony for the Phoenix North Recruiting Company, June 30, West Maricopa Education Center-Northeast Campus, Phoenix.

Capt. Matthew Peterson relinquished command to incoming commander Capt. Denard Honeysuckle, after 18 months in charge of Phoenix North. During the ceremony the traditional passing of the guidon was observed, as Peterson passed the colors to Lt. Col. Dave Clukey, commander, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, who then passed them to Honeysuckle, officially recognizing him as commander. Peterson was presented with several gifts from his company prior to the ceremony, having been the inaugural commander of Phoenix North.



Master Sgt. Acosta Promotion Ceremony

Photos from a promotion ceremony for Master Sgt. Ruben Acosta, plans noncommissioned officer, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, who was promoted to the rank of master sergeant, Sept. 5, battalion headquarters.



Special Operations semi visits local high school

Hundreds of high school students were given the opportunity to engage first-hand with an interactive Special Operations Semi (AS2) tractor-trailer, Sept. 5, Moon Valley High School, Phoenix.

The event was hosted by recruiters from Phoenix North Recruiting Company, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, who guided the students through the trailer, allowing them to witness and experience aspects of the Special Operations world.

The AS2 features a host of exhibits, including a Parachute Simulator, AH6 Little Bird Simulator, Weapons Display and a Ground Mobility Vehicle Drive Simulator.



Phoenix West Company



The Honey Badger team has performed exceptionally well over the past few months to include exceeding our FY17 4th Quarter mission by precision – something last accomplished in December of 2013. In this quarterly article, we want to highlight two extraordinary events: the enlistment of a Honey Badger family member and the Special Forces Total Army Involvement in Recruiting (TAIR).

On September 21, 2017, Sergeant First Class Jaime Guerra of Arrowhead Recruiting Center had the unique opportunity to enlist his son, Anthony Guerra. Anthony expressed his interest in joining the Army ranks and participated in numerous Future Soldier trainings. It was at training that Anthony realized he wanted to make a difference and follow the footsteps of his father. With his mother, sibling, and father watching, Anthony was sworn in the United States Army by Capt. Eugene Lee.



The Guerra proudly takes a photo immediately after the oath of enlistment. From left to right: Joshua, Anthony, Mayra (mother), and Sergeant First class Guerra.



Applicant Anthony Guerra takes the oath of enlistment.



Applicant Anthony Guerra takes the oath of enlistment conducted by CPT Lee

Over a three day period from September 11 to September 13, 2017, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Patrick Schorn and First Sergeant David Rose of Charlie Company, 6th Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group Alpha addressed four targeted schools in Phoenix West and engaged over 1,000 STEM/JROTC students.

To conclude the week long Special Forces TAIR visit, Lieutenant Colonel Clukey, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Schorn, and First Sergeant Rose briefed various opportunities in the Special Operations community in a panel moderated by Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers. The panel not only addressed the numerous types of jobs within the SF community to include medical, civil affairs, and aviation, but also left the Apollo students with a resonating piece of advice – never quit



LTC Clukey, CW3 Schorn, and 1SG Rose answer questions on a panel moderated by Glendale Mayor Weiers.



SF TAIR engagement photo at Apollo HS (from left to right: 1SG Rose, CW3 Schorn, Principal Parsons, LTC Clukey, Glendale Mayor Weiers, and SSG Ortiz).

Tucson Company

Soldiers from the Center Point Recruiting Center recently relocated their center into a newly renovated building. The company headquarters was also moved and is co-located with the center. In order to recognize this event, Tucson councilmember Fimbres, conducted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to honor the recruiters of Center Point and the company leadership.

Fimbres first recognized the outstanding service of the company by presenting Capt. Anderson with coins of distinction. Fimbres is an Army veteran and is a thorough advocate for the Army. He recognizes the sacrifice our Recruiters have to make in order to find qualified recruits for the Army. He presented these coins on behalf of his jurisdiction.

Fimbres was then invited to perform the actual ribbon-cutting ceremony, which was performed at the entrance of the center. He delighted to be chosen for this honor and pledged the support of his office in order to help with the recruiting mission.

Finally, the ceremony concluded with the official cutting of the cake. This symbolized a new beginning for the center and company. Fimbres thanked each Recruiter for their hard work and encouraged them to continue to be the model citizens that they are. Although the Recruiting mission can be discouraging at times, our service and dedication are an invaluable contribution to the community. This ceremony allowed community coverage of the center's new location and allowed the Army to generate goodwill with the community. Tucson Company leadership will continue to pursue events which highlight the Army in a positive light and assist in the recruiting mission.



Councilmember Fimbres presented CPT Anderson with coins for the service of his company for the community



Phoenix North Company

Phoenix North Recruiting Company has had an outstanding fourth quarter to close out Fiscal Year 2017. Our recruiters performed admirably to meet the mission and achieved a 97% combined mission accomplishment rate for the quarter. Furthermore we re-introduced ourselves to our partners in education across Phoenix, Paradise Valley, Anthem, Prescott, and Flagstaff.

The Anthem Recruiting Center invited Boulder Creek faculty and staff were invited for a March 2 Success presentation with SFC Gray and SFC Smeltz. During that time the recruiting duo was able to actively engage key leadership from Boulder Creek High School. Upon completion of the school day the recruiters were invited to the first teacher's meeting of the school years. The recruiters were able to explain how the Army can benefit their students, and answered questions about the SASVAB.

The Flagstaff recruiters assisted and supported Flagstaff High School's homecoming week. NCOs were asked to be involved with daily activities such as refereeing dodgeball, riding in the homecoming parade, and participating in the school bonfire. Educators, staff, and students appreciated the support all week long.

Prescott Recruiting Center provided an Army benefits presentation to Bradshaw Mountain staff members who support them throughout the school year. Events like this maintain the influence the center has with the fully supportive targeted high schools and shape the environment for classroom presentations.

Black Canyon Recruiting Station and Moon Valley High School hosted the Special Forces Trailer on 05 SEP 17. SSG Kirim, SSG Bryson, SGT Reynaga and FS Austin Ludkte spent an entire day with the trailer and the students. The students were briefed on all the options the Army has to offer with focus on use of the G.I. Bill and Tuition Assistance for college. While waiting to enter the trailer students participated in pushup and pullup contests for Army RPI. The teachers and staff were very engaged and also went through the trailer. Rapport was built with this event and the school is looking forward to another event in the near future



SGT Buchanan with Principal and staff from Bradshaw Mountain HS



Key Leaders from the Flagstaff Unified School District, Mayor Evans, and Congressman Rep. Steven Flanagan committed to assisting the Army expanding it's influence in the community.



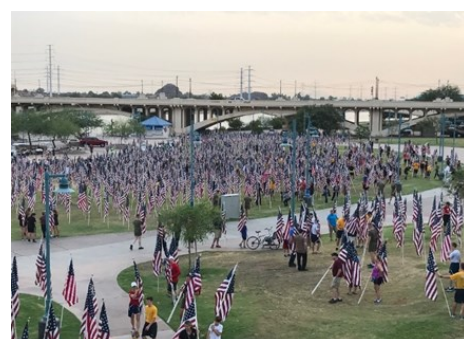
Flagstaff Army recruiters pump up the student body before the football game!

Tempe Company

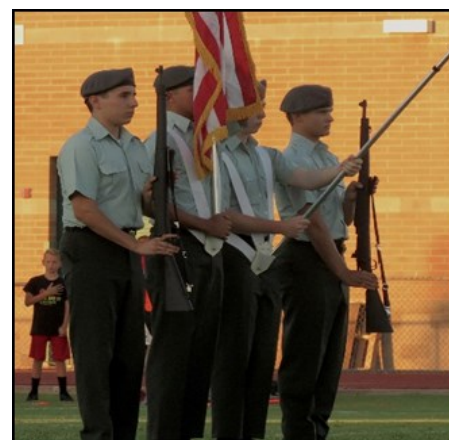


The Tempe Titans performed exceptionally well throughout this quarter. Through dedicated service and professionalism, our team not only made our AR and RA assigned missions, but had a combined achievement of 110.81%. Tempe Company's mission success is indicative of our expertise and total team dedication to executing the Army's most vital mission of recruiting the best and brightest young Americans to serve as Soldiers in our nation's Army.

On September 8 2017, 22 Soldiers and seven Future Soldiers from Tempe Recruiting Company participated in the set-up of the Healing Fields at Tempe Beach Park. Tempe Company recruiters joined hundreds of volunteers, including the ASU ROTC programs and a variety of community service organizations in placing 2,996 3'x5' flags, entirely covering Tempe Beach Park. This annual memorial for the victims of the terrorist attacks on 9/11, organized by the Tempe Exchange Club, served as a reminder of those we lost on that day and honored their sacrifices. It was an incredible opportunity for the Company to participate in the 16th anniversary set-up. The Healing Fields were open to the public through the weekend and a special memorial ceremony was held on Sunday, 11 September 2017.



On 18 August 2017, SSG Warner from Gilbert Center organized a color guard consisting of Gilbert Center Future Soldiers to present the colors for all football games held at Highland High School. All of the Future Soldiers in the color guard enlist out of Highland. Highland does not have a JROTC program. The color guard will help promote Gilbert Center's image in the community and serve as a symbol of pride for the Army. Highland school officials are impressed with SSG Warner's actions and have asked SSG Warner to also organize a color guard for upcoming high school graduations. The graduation color guard will consist of enlistees from all branches.



Students, family and friends at Highland High School look on as SSG Warner leads Gilbert Future Soldiers Colin Roman, Tyler Grey, Aaron Ortiz and James Coppola in presenting the colors.

Albuquerque Company



SSG(P) Michael Stone and SSG Rigoberto Portillo from Albuquerque Company, Phoenix Battalion, 5th Recruiting Brigade were officially inducted into the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Club (S.A.M.C.) at Fort Knox Kentucky 22 September 2017.

After competing and winning the Phoenix Battalion board in March 2017, both NCOs advanced to the 5th REC BDE board in June 2017. Both NCO's were selected to advance to the USAREC level board which officially convened 21-25 August 2017. The week prior, these fine NCOs vigorously prepared in San Antonio, TX with 5th REC BDE level recipients. The board and preparation was a healthy mix of physical endurance, writing skills, historical knowledge and general board knowledge. Most importantly it was a true test of their leadership application within the NCO Corps.

Both gentlemen have an unmatched work ethic and professionalism that distinguishes them from their noncommissioned officer peers Army wide. Their performance speaks for themselves and they are consummate noncommissioned officers!

-CPT Dominguez, CDR ABQ Co.

These NCOs without a doubt live their lives by the 4 tenants of the S.A.M.C. day in and day out: Loyalty, Discipline, Caring and Professionalism.

-1SG Basl, 1SG ABQ Co.



SSG Stone (second right) and SSG Portillo (center) pose with USAREC leadership after being inducted into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club.



SSG Stone (second right) and SSG Portillo (right) stand on stage after being inducted into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club.

Phoenix Central Company

On September 12th, Recruiters from the Phoenix Central Recruiting Company represented the U.S. Army and partook in the Arizona Diamondbacks Career Fair at Chase Field. Students were informed on career opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM). Phoenix Central Recruiting Company's Recruiters highlighted that the Army provides over 150 Occupational Specialties that include Communications, Intelligence, Medical, Engineering, and Medical.



Recruiters from Phoenix Central Recruiting Company performed color guard honors on the opening day of the Arizona Balanced Budget Amendment Planning Convention, Arizona House of Representatives, Phoenix, Sept. 12. The convention was a planning event for the first Article V convention in the nation's history, in which states can propel Congress to hold a convention to propose amendments to the constitution, if more than two-thirds of the state's vote to do so. Capt. James Hur, commander, Phoenix Central Recruiting Company, Phoenix Recruiting Battalion, said he was proud for his company to be called upon to present the colors at such a significant event.

