

READY FIRST REPORT

READY FIRST

July 2010

**Standard set
for Iraqi medi-
cal training**

**Improving
roads**

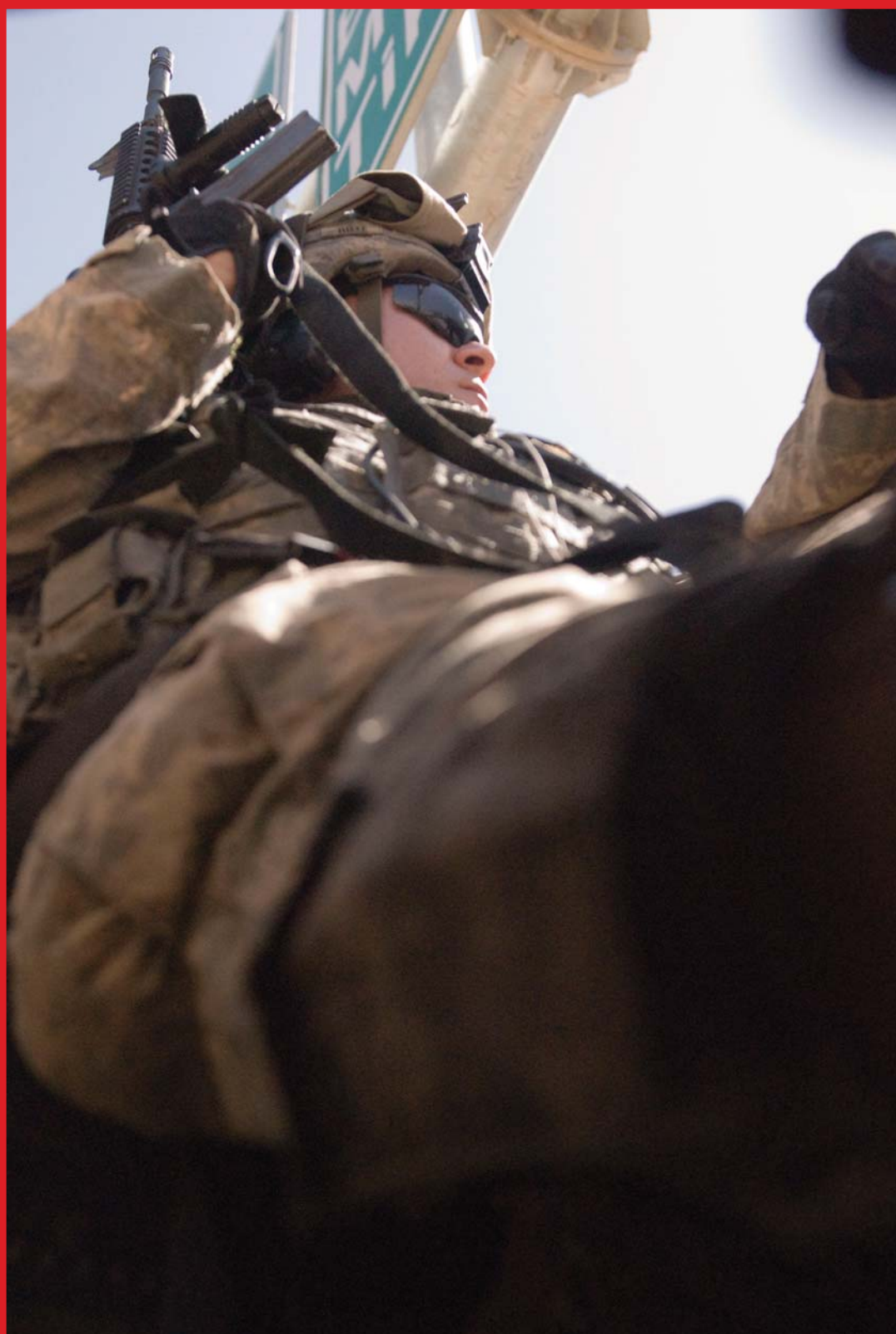
**1st AD CSM
visits 'Ready
First'**

**100
Commandos
graduate**

**Opening of
girls school**

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fallen
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**KRGB
conducts 1st
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patrol**



READY 6

COL LARRY SWIFT

- READY FIRST COMMANDER -



*Published by the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division
Public Affairs Office*

*Maj. Jim Bono - Public Affairs Officer
Staff Sgt. Christina Turnipseed - Public Affairs NCOIC
Sgt. Kevin McCulley - Broadcast NCO
Sgt. Steven Livingston - Public Affairs NCO
Pfc. Jessica Luhrs - Public Affairs Journalist*

READY 7

CSM JAMES DANIELS

- READY FIRST COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR -



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Fort Bliss Command Team visits Soldiers

By Pfc. Jessica Luhrs

Two familiar faces visited 'Ready First' Soldiers of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas, in Kirkuk and Mosul, Iraq, May 22-24.

The 'Ready First' command team wanted to surprise the Soldiers with the special guests so they didn't really tell anyone, according to Command Sgt. Maj. Glenn Robinson, command sergeant major of 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry, 1-1 AD.

The look on the Soldiers faces when they saw, Maj. Gan Howard B. Bromberg, commanding general of Fort Bliss and Command Sgt. Maj. David S. Davenport, Fort Bliss command sergeant major, words cannot describe, their morale could just be seen going up, he added.

Major General Bromberg and Command Sergeant Major Davenport made the visit, to see the Soldiers, so they could let them know they think about them every day when we're back on Bliss, said Maj. Gen. Bromberg.

The visit began with 'Ready First' Soldiers on Joint Security Site McHenry and Forward Operating Base Warrior, both near Kirkuk, Iraq, followed by a lunch with Iraqi security forces leadership.

After finishing in Kirkuk, the team, escorted by Command Sgt. Maj. James P. Daniels, command sergeant major of 1-1 AD, made a trip to Mosul where they visited with Ready First Soldiers on the various bases and checkpoints.

While in Mosul the Fort Bliss command team ensured they made a stop by to see the medics that saved the life of Pfc. Alvaro Regaldo, the 1/36th Inf. Soldier that was badly burned during fire in the Joint Security Site India dining facility.

"Because of all of you, he is still with us and recovering at a quicker rate than expected," said Maj. Gen. Bromberg, before awarding each of them with a coin.

While with the Ready First Soldiers, Maj. Gen. Bromberg and Command Sgt. Maj. Davenport also opened the floor for any questions the 'Ready First' Soldiers may have about Bliss and their upcoming conversion to a Stryker Brigade.

Many of the Soldiers wanted to know about one thing, new facilities on Bliss.

There has been a lot of build-up on Bliss; new homes, ranges, buildings for training, a new post exchange, restaurants, a movie theater and gym, said Maj. Gen. Bromberg, to the Soldiers, as many

Major General Howard B. Bromberg, commanding general of Fort Bliss and Command Sergeant Major David S. Davenport, Fort Bliss command sergeant major, talk with a group of Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, May 24. Major General Bromberg and Command Sgt. Maj. Davenport made a visit to their Soldiers in Kirkuk and Mosul, Iraq, May 22-24 to let them know everyone back in El Paso thought of them every day.





Major General Howard B. Bromberg, commanding general of Fort Bliss talks with Spc. Logan Lonkard, a Crestwood, Ky., native and infantryman with Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, after awarding him with a coin in Mosul, Iraq, May 24. Major General Bromberg and Command Sgt. Maj. David S. Davenport, command sergeant major of Fort Bliss, made a visit to their Soldiers in Kirkuk and Mosul, Iraq, May 22-24 to let them know everyone back in El Paso thought of them every day.



of their eyes got big and jaws dropped.

After answering questions the Soldiers had, the command team reminded the Soldiers of how much the people of El Paso are thinking of them.

Everyone knows you're doing fantastic stuff here and we are all happy to just be associated with Ready First," said Maj. Gen. Bromberg.

Major General Bromberg and Command Sgt. Maj. Davenport, also used their time with the Soldiers the recognize some for their outstanding actions.

It is a privilege to get recognized by Maj. Gen. Bromberg and Command Sgt. Maj. Davenport, said Spc. Logan Lonkard, a Crestwood, Ky. native and infantryman with Delta, 1/36th Inf.

As the command team left the various groups of 'Ready First' Soldiers Command Sgt. Maj. Davenport left his Soldiers with a challenge.

"I challenge each of you to get home safely and then to be safe while you're back at Bliss," said Command Sgt. Maj. Davenport. "Nothing breaks my heart more than to go a memorial for one of my Soldiers, so be safe and we'll see you soon."



Kirkuk ESU celebrate 7th Anniversary

By Pfc. Jessica Luhrs

A unit was formed seven years ago, this unit stands firm protecting the city of Kirkuk and are the foundation of security throughout the city, said Lt. Col. Daniel Cormier a Nashua, N.H. native and commander for 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 'Battle Boars' 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, out of Fort Stewart, Ga.

He said these words at the seventh anniversary celebration, in honor of the Kirkuk Emergency Services Unit brigade of the Iraqi Police, also known as the 'Lions' at their headquarters in Kirkuk, Iraq, May 22.

The ceremony; was hosted by Brig. Gen. Khattab Omer Aref, deputy of the provincial police chief of Kirkuk for the affairs of the ESU Bde., with Major Gen. Jamal Tahir, provincial police chief of Kirkuk, Lt. Col. Cormier and other dignitaries of Kirkuk attending.

To begin the ceremony, Brig. Gen. Khattab, founder of the ESU, spoke to his partners and brothers about how thankful he was for the support.

I have been here, leading the ESU since the beginning, all I have seen is progress, it is because of the support we have received from the Kirkuk Iraqi Police and U.S. Forces, I thank you, he said.

"We have worked side-by-side, since 2003, Kirkuk is much safer because of our partnership and we will continue to stand tall until we defeat any terrorists," he said.

Closely following Brig. Gen. Khattab, Lt. Col. Cormier spoke of how impressed he was with the leadership, bravery, professionalism and capability of the Kirkuk ESU.

"We have had the pleasure of working closely with the ESU for the last few months and I see they are a vital unit, manned by heroes and led by a Lion working together for a new Iraq," he said.

Following the speeches, policemen of the ESU marched around the field to the cadence of the IP band, saluting the dignitaries.

After this awards were handed out, by the dignitaries, to people of Kirkuk who played a vital role in the ESU and officers of the ESU.

"It was a wonderful ceremony," said Lt. Col. Cormier, to Brig. Gen. Khattab at the end. "I am honored to call you my brother."



Brigadier General Khattab Omer Aref, deputy of the provincial police chief of Kirkuk for the affairs of the Emergency Services Unit Brigade, thanks Lt. Col. Daniel Cormier a Nashua, N.H. native and commander for 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 'Battle Boars' 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, out of Fort Stewart, Ga. for attending the ESU seventh anniversary celebration at their headquarters in Kirkuk, Iraq, May 22.





During a trauma lane training event, an Iraqi medic evaluates the simulated injuries to a 'Battle Boar' Soldier with 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, out of Fort Stewart, Ga., during their final test in an advanced medic class, on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, June 17.

By Pfc. Jessica Luhrs

'Battle Boars' set standard for medical training

"You have been called to an accident, a building has collapsed, early reports say the building is on fire and 20 people are trapped inside, your mission is to confirm how many people are there, treat them appropriately and prepare them for evacuation."

These instructions were given to 19 Iraqi civilians, army and police, training to be medics with 'Battle Boar' Soldiers in 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga., just minutes before their final test, a trauma lane on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, June 17.

Sergeant Gregory Dombroski, a 'Battle medic section Headquarters Company they make the as realistic as hopefully it is Iraqi medics will see.

"Our vision for this program is; we teach these classes on how to be a medic and they take what they learned back, to teach others."

-Sgt. Gregory Dombroski.

'Battle Boar' combat sergeant with and Headquarters explained trauma lanes possible so the worst the ever have to

"We want them to the point to where if they come up on a victim they're not shocked," he explained.

The lane had 15 Soldiers playing the victims with injuries ranging from a simple bruise to burns over their body. Also on the lane Soldiers were tasked to just be a nuisance and cause stress to the medics in any way they can.

The 5-week long training has set the standard for medical training across Kirkuk, according to Sgt. Dombroski.

Since 2003 Iraqi medics have been training on combat lifesaving, he continued in saying this was not good enough though.

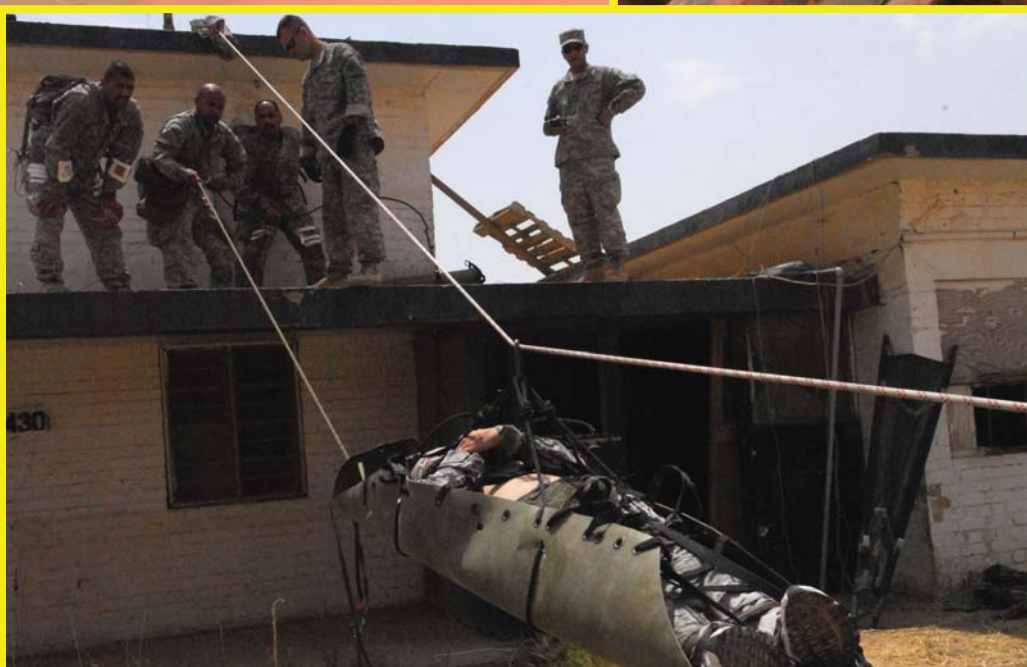
"These medics are usually first on scene to an emergency, they make the difference in life-and-

death for victims of car accidents, attacks or natural occurrences they need this advanced training so they are prepared," said Sgt. Dombroski.

The medics receiving the training agreed this is exactly what is needed to improve their medical abilities.

First Lieutenant Muhammad Jaslam Ahmed, a member of the IP Emergency Response Unit, said, he cannot wait for graduation so he can go back and teach more IP the advanced skills he learned and according to the 'Battle Boars' this was their vision for the course.

"Our vision for this program is that we teach these classes on how to be a medic and they take what they learned back, to teach others," said Sgt. Dombroski.



During a trauma lane training event, an Iraqi medic evaluates the simulated injuries to a 'Battle Boar' Soldier with 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, out of Fort Stewart, Ga., during their final test in an advanced medic class, on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, June 17.

Around the



e Battlefield





Specialist Adron Scarbrough, (left) a native of Hughesville, Penn., and a combat engineer with 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas and Spc. Joseph McWhirter, (right) a Brownwood, Texas native, and Huskey operator with 1st Plt., C. Co, sit on a Huskey at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, May 7. These Soldiers have one of the most hazardous jobs in the Army, they go out of the wire at night to search for improvised explosive devices and suspicious personnel along the roads in Kirkuk.

Combat Engineers, 'A tight band of brothers'

By Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs

Combat engineers, have one of the more hazardous jobs in the U.S. Army, it is their job to go out in the dead of the night and search for improvised explosive devices and suspicious activity, along the roads, their fellow Soldiers travel down on a daily basis.

Completing this mission for 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas, is their combat engineers with Charlie Co., 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1-1 AD. Their day begins as the sun is going down and other Soldiers are getting into bed, according to Spc. Adron Scarbrough, a native of Hughesville, Penn., and a combat engineer with 3rd Platoon, C. Co. The Soldiers of C. Co. don't mind the late nights, according to Spc. Joseph McWhirter, a Brownwood, Texas native, and Huskey operator with 1st Plt., C. Co.

Anything beats sitting in the office all day, he said.

"It also, builds-up the morale of the Soldiers in Charlie knowing we are out there making the roads safe," he continued.

Spc. Scarbrough added, "There is nothing better than going out and finding something, it makes it all worth it."

Since deploying to Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, Charlie Co. Soldiers have discovered several home-made explosive devices, detained multiple suspected terrorists and cleared the roads of Kirkuk on a nightly basis.

Because they have been so successful, insurgents have even begun planting hoax IED's to see the Charlie Co. reaction, according to Spc. Scarbrough.

"They want to mimic our battle drills, so we just change things up as needed, either we find them or they find us, and we're going to find them," he continued.

The danger that is associated with this job makes these Soldiers very proud of their work and brings them even closer together.

"We're a tight band of brothers and no matter what unit a combat engineer is in he is welcomed with open arms," said Spc. Scarbrough.



Command Sergeant Major James P. Daniels, (center) command sergeant major of 1st "Ready First" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, Sgt. 1st Class Chestine Sanders, (right) a Pine Bluff, Ark. native and platoon sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1-1 AD and Staff Sgt. David Henderson, (left) a Fayetteville, N.C. native and platoon sergeant for Headquarters Platoon, Charlie Company, 501st Brigade Support Battalion, 1-1 AD pose in front of the Ready First Brigade wall at Forward Operating Base, Kirkuk, May 26.

'Ready First' NCO's lead from the front in Iraq

By Pfc. Jessica Luhrs

Two non-commissioned officers (NCO) of 1st "Ready First" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, were recently recognized for their professionalism, general military knowledge and leadership while deployed to Forward Operating Base Warrior, in Kirkuk, Iraq.

Sergeant First Class Chestine Sanders, a Pine Bluff, Ark. native and platoon sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1-1 AD, was inducted into the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Club (SAMC,) March 26 and Staff Sgt. David Henderson, a Fayetteville, N.C. native and platoon sergeant for Headquarters Platoon, Charlie Company, 501st Brigade Support Battalion, 1-1 AD was named United States Division – North's NCO of the 3rd quarter, April 26.

The two both attribute their success to their Soldiers and leadership.

It was like all of 1-1 STB came together to help me succeed, said Sgt. 1st Class Sanders.

"Soldiers would stop me when they saw me and ask me questions, my first sergeant, 1st Sgt. Robert Beattie, held classes for me and my fiancée Jacqueline Williams sent me here with a book to prepare for the SAMC board," he said.

Staff Sergeant Henderson said, he tried a different approach by listening to the Army Study Guide on his iPod and testing his Soldiers.

"To and from work I would listen to the Army Study Guide then when I got to work quiz my Soldiers constantly and if they don't know the answer we would research it," said Staff Sgt. Henderson.

"By doing this I was prepared for the board and at the same time built my Soldiers general Army knowledge," he added.

Ready First Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. James P. Daniels, who is also a SAMC member, said these NCO's have been successful because they live the SAMC motto, "lead from the front."

Not only do they challenge themselves to develop their leadership and Army knowledge, they also focus on building-up their Soldiers, he said.

These two NCO's don't plan to stop leading from the front anytime soon.

During the deployment Staff Sgt. Henderson will be working towards becoming USD-N, NCO of the Year and joining Sgt. 1st Class Sanders as a member of the SAMC, then moving to Fort Leonard Wood, Mi.

While Sgt. 1st Class Sanders plans to be promoted to master sergeant then becoming a first sergeant in Hawaii.

Staff Sgt. Henderson said he plans to use confidence to accomplish all of this.

I walk into the board thinking I am a Soldier and NCO, I know my material, he said.

Engineers locate, destroy IED

By Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs

During a route clearance mission near Kirkuk, Iraq, 4th Platoon, combat engineers with, Charlie Company, 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas, located and destroyed an improvised explosive device before it could injure any security forces that travel the area, May 14.

Upon locating the IED C. Co secured the area then it was destroyed by Explosive Ordnance Disposal, according to Co. – C. leadership.

After the area was secured some of the Soldiers searched the area for suspicious people and spoke to nearby villagers to see if they had seen anything.

When the IED was destroyed EOD moved in to collect evidence.

It is great what these Soldiers do, according to Command Sgt. Maj. William M. Johnson, 1st Armored Division command sergeant major, who happened to be on the mission with the Soldiers along with Command Sgt. Maj. James P. Daniels, 1/1 AD command sergeant major.

They go out in search of IED's to protect their fellow Soldiers, he continued.



Peshmurga soldiers of 1st Kurdish Regional Battalion, their partners 'Gunner' Soldiers of Bravo Battery, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas and local contractors deliver much needed gravel to fix the roads in the rural village of Yurimjah, near Kirkuk, Iraq, June 30.

Peshmurga, 2-3 FA improve roads

By Pfc. Jessica Luhrs

Peshmurga soldiers of 1st Kurdish Regional Battalion, their partners 'Gunner' Soldiers of Bravo Battery, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas and local contractors delivered much needed gravel to fix the roads in the rural village of Yurimjah, near Kirkuk, Iraq, June 30.

Leadership of 2/3rd FA and of the village explained this project funded by the U.S. Army commander's emergency relief fund is essential to everyday life in the village and will improve the quality of life for the citizens.

"Before the gravel the roads in Yurimjah were uneven and impassable when rain has fallen, not allowing vehicle or even foot traffic to pass," said 1st Lt. Jeremy Lewis, executive officer for Bravo Battery.

He continued saying, when the gravel is spread into the needed areas it will assist in transportation of goods for the people of the village.

The village mukhtar agreed with 1st Lt. Lewis.

During the rainy season the roads are very dangerous to travel the water floods the roads and children of the village cannot safely get to school, he said.

First Lieutenant Lewis added this gravel drop also improved the relationship between security forces and the citizens of the village.

"The people of Yurimjah have been in need of assistance and to be able to provide that to them will improve on relations with the village," he said. "They now trust us and the Peshmurga more than before."

Citizens of the village showed their appreciation to the security forces by all showing-up to the gravel drop and thanking the soldiers for providing the gravel.



Command Sergeant Major William M. Johnson, division command sergeant major of 1st Armored Division out of Wiesbaden, Germany, along with Command Sgt. Maj. James P. Daniels, command sergeant major of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 'Ready First' 1st AD, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, talk to Sgt. 1st Class Domingo Chavez, an Albuquerque, N.M. native and a platoon sergeant with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1-1 AD, about progress being made in Kirkuk, Iraq with the Iraqi security forces, May 15. Command Sergeant Major Johnson made this visit to meet with the Ready First Soldiers, he is scheduled to join at Fort Bliss in 2011.

Command Sergeant Major William M. Johnson, division command sergeant major of 1st Armored Division out of Wiesbaden, Germany, awards Spc. Briggs Syme, a native of Ogden, Utah, and a Soldier with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 'Ready First,' 1st AD, after a patrol near Kirkuk, Iraq, May 15. Command Sergeant Major Johnson made this visit to meet with the Ready First Soldiers, he is scheduled to join at Fort Bliss in 2011..



Command Sergeant Major William M. Johnson, division command sergeant major of 1st Armored Division out of Wiesbaden, Germany, along with Command Sgt. Maj. James P. Daniels, command sergeant major of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 'Ready First' 1st AD, out of Fort Bliss, Texas during a patrol with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1-1 AD, May 15. Command Sergeant Major Johnson made this visit to meet with the Ready First Soldiers he is scheduled to join at Fort Bliss in 2011

1st AD CSM visits Ready First Soldiers in Kirkuk

By Pfc Jessica Luhrs

Iron Soldiers of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 'Ready First' 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, were visited by their Division Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. William M. Johnson, during his 3-day visit to Forward Operating Base Warrior, in Kirkuk, Iraq, May 13-15.

Command Sergeant Major Johnson is out of Wiesbaden, Germany and deployed to Camp Victory, Baghdad, Iraq, and made this visit to his Iron Soldiers so they have a chance to get to know him.

He wanted this opportunity because 1st Armored Division headquarters is scheduled to move from Germany to Fort Bliss in the summer of 2011, joining the 'Ready First' Soldiers, according to Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson.

Soon after landing, Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson joined Command Sgt. Maj. James P. Daniels command sergeant major of 'Ready First' on a route clearance patrol with Charlie Co., 1-1 Special Troops Battalion, 1-1 AD.

During the patrol he witnessed, C-Company combat engineers, successfully locate and destroy an Improvised Explosive Device.

It is great we have these 1st Armored Division Soldiers out here protecting the roads for their fellow Soldiers, Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson said of the mission.

After completing the mission with C-Company, the command sergeants major arrived at Joint Service Station McHenry to visit with the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 37th Armor, 1-1 AD.

While with 1/37th Armor, Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson patrolled Riyadh, near Kirkuk and then awarded two of the Soldiers with his coin.

Following the mission Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson, attended the re-enlistment of Staff Sgt. Jonathan Atwood, a native of Warsaw, Ohio, and a non-commissioned officer on 1/37th Armor commanders personal security detachment.

"I need to get this Soldiers information, I'm recruiting for my PSD," joked Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson, after the ceremony.

After visiting with 1/37th Armor, the command sergeants major visited Soldiers of 6th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1-1 AD, at Patrol Base Doria.

To see the progress being made on Doria, this is scheduled for closure in a month.

Following a tour of Doria, the command sergeants major, went to the Kirkuk Training Center, to watch the 6/1st Cav. Soldiers train their Iraqi partners.

"We did a lot these past few days, but I wanted to give Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson a snapshot of how his Iron Soldiers are; training their counterparts and leaving a Ready First mark in Kirkuk," said Command Sgt. Maj. Daniels.

Command Sergeant Major Johnson said he didn't mind the busyness at all.

"My favorite part is seeing my patches and my Soldiers," he said.





Soldiers with Recovery Platoon, Fox Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 'Ready First,' 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, work to recover a track recovery vehicle, during a mission near Kirkuk, Iraq, April 15. The recovery mission lasted 3-days with a total of 6 vehicles needing assistance.

Ready First works day, night to recover vehicles

U.S Army Story by Pfc. Jessica Luhrs

Photos by Staff Sgt. DeMarco Wren, Pfc. Jessica Luhrs

1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

After working throughout the day, as fuelers, mechanics and welders, Soldiers with Recovery Platoon, Fox Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 'Ready First,' 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, lay down for the night and wait for the knock on the door, telling them to get their gear on and go recover a vehicle that has been disabled, in their area of operation around Kirkuk, Iraq.

The knock always comes at the most random time, said Cpl. Chester Watts, a Luling, Texas native, and a Soldier with the recovery team.

After the knock, the clock starts ticking and we have about 15 minutes to get outside the wire, he continued.

Corporal Watts' platoon has a very important and difficult mission; they must go respond to a call in a short amount of time, assess the situation upon arrival and load the disabled vehicle, said 1st Sgt. David Rice, a Leslie, Mich. native and first sergeant of Fox Co.

The missions usually vary in complexity based on the situation recovery can take 30 minutes or 3 days, said Sgt. Kevin Shepard, a Raleigh, N.C. native and heavy equipment operator non-commissioned officer in charge, as the rest of the platoon began to laugh.

The 3-day thing is no joke, said Cpl. Watts.

Recently these Soldiers were a part of what they call the biggest recovery mission ever.

"We got the knock late one night about 2 MRAP's (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle) being stuck in the mud, we thought it would be a normal mission until 2 of our recovery vehicles got stuck," said Sgt. Shepard.

At the end, after 3-days, a total of 6 vehicles getting stuck and running out of supplies we were on our way home, said Cpl. Watts.

"It's funny now, but then not funny at all," said Pfc. Tyler Trimbach, a Dayton, Ohio native and Bradley mechanic with the recovery team.

Even with the 3-day missions the team wouldn't have it any other way.

We all enjoy being a part of recovery, said Spc. Hal Farmer, a fueler out of Shelbyville, Ind. It gets my blood pumping just driving these huge trucks down the small Iraqi roads, he continued.



Soldiers with Recovery Platoon, Fox Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 'Ready First,' 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, work to recover a track recovery vehicle, during a mission near Kirkuk, Iraq, April 15. The recovery mission lasted 3-days with a total of 6 vehicles needing assistance.



Soldiers with Recovery Platoon, Fox Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 'Ready First,' 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, pose on a truck in their motor pool at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, May 20. These Soldiers have a very important and difficult mission; they must go respond to a call in a short amount of time, assess the situation upon arrival and load the disabled vehicle.





100 Iraqi Commandos complete live-fire

By Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs

More than 100 commandos with 12th Iraqi army (IA) brigade, proved their abilities after successfully completing a live-fire exercise, which was the final verification in a commando course given by their 'Blackhawk' partners in Apache Troop, 6th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas, at the K-1 IA base, Kirkuk Province, Iraq, June 5.

The course was designed by 'Blackhawk' leadership after the commando's expressed their desire to learn more accurate fire on multiple targets and develop advanced infantry skills.

Throughout the 30-day course the commandos learned leadership, basic rifle marksmanship, combat lifesaving, moving as a squad and as a team and clearing a house, according to Maj. Brain Schoellhorn, a native of Columbia, Ill. and a 'Blackhawk' who assisted in the training of the IA leadership.

All of the training built up to what they are doing today, he said to a crowd of IA and 'Blackhawk' officers who came to observe the verification.

The verification exercise began with the IA commando platoon leader giving the operation brief on a sand table replica of the course.

The sand table is used to ensure each commando knows exactly what they need to do while on the course and what they can expect while engaging a target, said Lt. Ahmed Azher Gedoge, team leader from 3rd platoon, commando company.

After the operation brief the IA commandos engaged the targets, assessed casualties, moved in teams to overcome obstacles and cleared a house.

After the operation was completed successfully Maj. Schoellhorn spoke to the commandos and the leadership in the audience about how impressed the 'Blackhawks' are with the commandos success.

"We came out here with the intentions to train on rifle marksmanship and each of you are walking away with skills in training management, leadership and basic soldier skills," he said.

The commando leadership agreed with him.

"Because of this training we all have more trust in each other we now know the soldier to the left and to the right knows exactly what to do and we will all protect each other," said Lt. Ahmed after completing the verification course. "We are one now," he finished.



Fallen Servicemembers honored by Iraqi Police

Major General Jamal Thaker Bakr, provincial police chief of the Kirkuk Iraqi Police, speaks about, the U.S. Forces Wall of Remembrance, which displays nearly 40 photos, of fallen Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, with the date they were killed in action and which brigade they were with, during the wall's unveiling ceremony at the Kirkuk IP Headquarters, Kirkuk, Iraq, June 2.

By Pfc Jessica Luhrs

A few days after the United States honored the fallen servicemembers from various wars, policemen, from the Kirkuk Iraqi Police (IP), Kirkuk, Iraq, honored nearly 40 fallen U.S. servicemembers, who were killed in action in Kirkuk since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, during a ceremony at the Kirkuk IP Headquarters, June 2.

At the beginning of the ceremony, the U.S. Forces Wall of Remembrance, which displays nearly 40 photos, of fallen Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, with the date they were killed in action and which brigade they were with was unveiled, according to Lt. Col. Daniel Cormier a Nashua, N.H. native and commander for 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 'Battle Boars' 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, out of Fort Stewart, Ga.

The memorial, located in the main hallway of the Kirkuk Police Headquarters, near the memorial of their IP partners who were also killed in action, was unveiled by Major Gen. Jamal Thaker Bakr, provincial police chief of the Kirkuk IP and Lt Col. Cormier.

After the unveiling of the wall the dignitaries, Soldiers and IP, stood for the rest of the ceremony. "We want to show our respect for the fallen," said Maj. Gen. Jamal. "Throughout the ceremony everyone stood in silence."

Major General Jamal then spoke of why the Kirkuk IP decided to dedicate the wall to their U.S. partners.

The IP of Kirkuk, wanted to honor the fallen U.S. heroes who fought next to our policemen and soldiers for Iraq's freedom which is why we dedicate this wall in their honor, said Maj. Gen. Jamal, during his speech at the ceremony.

He continued, we thank all of the U.S. Forces for our freedom and we want to recognize those who made this possible.

On behalf of the families of these fallen servicemembers I thank the IP of Kirkuk for recognizing these U.S. heroes, said Lt. Col. Cormier.

Lieutenant Colonel Cormier also said he thought the wall was very appropriate for Memorial Day.

These Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines made the ultimate sacrifice for Kirkuk and to be recognized by the IP, so close to Memorial Day, shows just how appreciative they are for the freedom they now possess, he said.



Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 1st Kurdish Regional Guard Brigade, deliver school supplies to the children of Bash Balach, near Kirkuk, Iraq, during their first patrol June 29.

KRGB conducts first combined patrol near Kirkuk

By Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs

“When they first hit the ground, they immediately established security around the area and did it without being over-intrusive on the civilians. It was a pleasant surprise to observe soldiers who are thought to have little tactical training conduct themselves as a veteran unit,” said by Capt. Charles Roush, commander of Bravo Battery, 2nd Battalion, ‘Gunners’ 3rd Field Artillery, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas when speaking of his 1st Kurdish Regional Guard Brigade partners first patrol.

The 3rd Battalion, 1st KRGB soldiers successfully conducted their first joint patrol with U.S. Forces, since the joining of the Peshmurga brigades to form the 1st KRGB, in the village of Bash Balach, near Kirkuk, Iraq, June 29.

The ‘Gunners’ were not the only people impressed by the actions of their partners during their first patrol the leadership of the village were also very impressed.

The KRGB soldiers came into the village and provided books, pens, pencils and other supplies to the children which really prove they care about what happens in the village, according to Abdul Sharif, the village leader.

After providing supplies to the children the soldiers walked through the village to introduce themselves to the citizens as the soldiers who would be providing their security, continued the village leader.

“We thank them for coming to our village and providing good security to our village and we are willing to assist them in anyway,” he finished.

Brigadier General Sherko Fateh Shwanny, commander of 1st KRGB, said his soldiers will continue to do these types of patrols in villages in the area to continue building relationships like they did in Bash Balach.

“We want to be a good face for the people so we will do these types of patrols as often as we can,” he said.



By Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs

Kirkuk IP graduate investigative officer course

After a month of training on securing a crime scene, processing a crime scene and other techniques used to solve a case, 8 Iraqi Police (IP) investigation officers with the Kirkuk IP Joint Investigation Team (JIT) celebrated the completion of the Kirkuk Police Organized Crime Unit investigative officer course by holding a graduation and award ceremony, at the Kirkuk Training Center (KTC), Kirkuk province, Iraq, June 15.

Distinguished guests who attended the graduation ceremony included; Kirkuk Police Chief, Major Gen. Jamaal Taher Bakir, 49th Military Police (MP) Brigade Commander, Brig. Gen. Donald Currier of the California National Guard, Police Chief of the KTC, Brig. Gen. Kawa Gareb Abdolrahman and 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division Commander, Col. Larry Swift.

The ceremony was also attended by the JIT partners 'Titan' Soldiers of 512th Military Police Company, 92nd Military Police Battalion, 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade out of Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. The graduation and award ceremony began with speeches from the leadership of the Kirkuk IP and 'Titans.'

"The completion of this course marks a step to success for the Kirkuk IP and JIT," said Capt. Kara R. Manning, a 'Titan' officer and the U.S. officer who oversaw the training.

She continued to explain this group of distinguished Iraqi officers will work hand-in-hand with U.S. subject matter experts from the beginning of a criminal event to the prosecution to help further the investigative abilities of the province.

Brigadier General Currier also spoke to the crowd of 'Titans,' IP and other guests about how courses like these build professional knowledge.

He finished with, "It is our hope the skills you learned in this course will help you on the frontlines to defeat crime in Kirkuk."

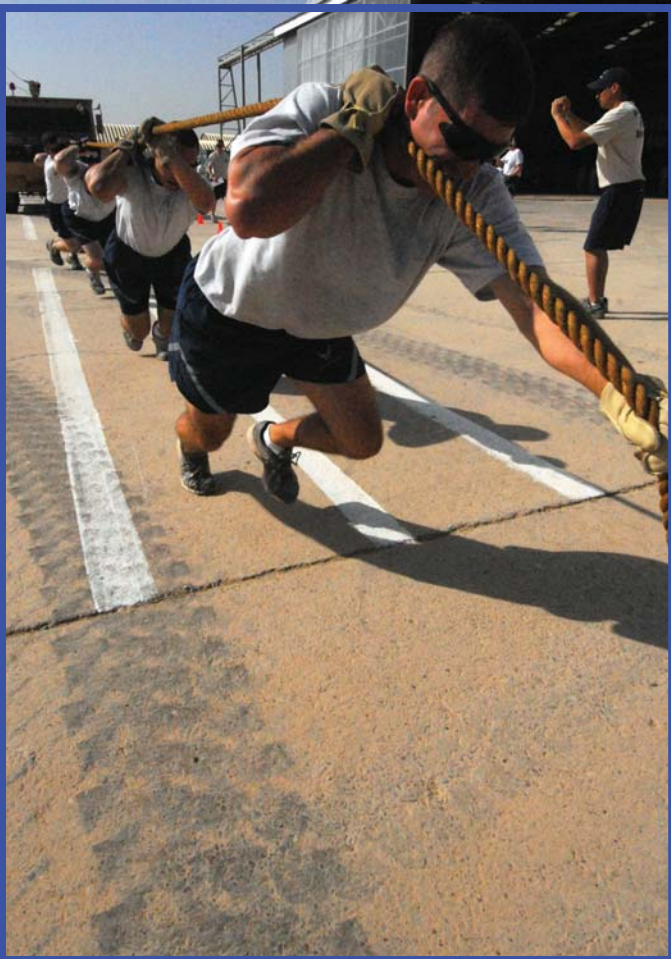
Also during the ceremony the 'Titan' leadership explained to the IP leadership exactly what the JIT had accomplished during their month of training.

"The Kirkuk Police Organized Crime Unit investigative officer course enabled multiple experts the opportunity to teach advanced techniques of crime scene investigation and proper evidence collection," said Capt. Manning.

When the leadership finished with their speeches the officers who had completed the training and 'Titan' Soldiers received a certificate of completion and hat with the word Police, in English and Arabic, from Maj. Gen. Jamaal, Brig. Gen. Currier, Brig. Gen. Kawa and Col. Swift.

"I am very proud of all of the IP accomplishments we will use this training to provide security and peace to Kirkuk," said Brig. Gen. Kawa at the end of the ceremony.

4th of July



Texas Soldiers open new girls school in Iraq

By Pfc Jessica Luhrs

Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, "Outlaws" 1st Battalion, 37th Armor, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, out of Fort Bliss, Texas along with the Hawijah District Council, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Al Bassa girls primary school, which will provide quality education to more than 50 young girls around Tal Jal, northwest of Hawijah, Iraq, July 6.

The project, near Kirkuk, Iraq, began in November of 2010 and was funded by the Commander's Emergency Relief Fund, according to 1st Lt. Nathaniel Cox, company operations intelligence support team (COIST) leader for the "Outlaws."

The leadership of Hawijah also played an important role in the building of this school, he continued.

"The Hawijah District Council's Reconstruction Committee gave us the local government perspective on the project, they were present for the inspections and in the end gave the final approval on the building," said 1st Lt. Cox.

Lieutenant Colonel Geoffery Catlett, commander of 1/37th Armor and leadership of Hawijah began the ceremony with a ribbon cutting.

Following the ribbon cutting dignitaries of the event spoke to the children of the school and toured the new school.

"We are very pleased with the new school," said a member of the Hawijah District Council. "It is just what this village needs."

Lieutenant Colonel Catlett agreed saying the school was very well built.

After the dignitaries spoke they watched as children in the area received Beanie Babies, hats, school supplies and medical attention from the "Outlaw" Soldiers.

"This is my favorite part of the job being out here doing something good for the children," said "Outlaw" Commander, Capt. Scott D. Wares, while watching the children receive their gifts.



Around the



READY

Battlefield



Iraqi medics graduate EMT course

By Pfc. Jessica R. Luhrs



"Today marks a great day for the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Medical Community of the Province of Kirkuk," said 1st Lt. Jonathan Metcalf. "Today, nine Iraqi Police from the Emergency Services Unit, Emergency Response Unit and district police stations, one Iraqi Army Soldier from the 12th Iraqi Army Division, and nine ambulance aides from the Ministry of Health will be certified as medics, trained to the full standard of an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)."

"Over the past five weeks, these individuals have dedicated hundreds of hours in the classroom and practicing hands-on skills that will not only enable them to save lives in their daily jobs, but enhance the organic medical capability of their various organizations," said Lt. Metcalf.

This was said to an audience of distinguished guests and the graduates of the EMT course during the graduation ceremony at the Mountain Warrior Gym on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, June 21.

The ceremony was hosted by their 'Battle Boar' partners in 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga., and attended by Task Force Marne Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo; the Director General of Health for Kirkuk Province, Dr. Siddik Omar Rasool; Brig. Gen. Khatab Omer Aref, deputy provincial police chief of Kirkuk for the affairs of the ESU; the Task Force Marne and Division Surgeon, Col. Edward Michaud; Command Sgt. Maj. James Daniels, command sergeant major 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas along with other friends of the Battle Boar Battalion.

Before the ceremony began Maj. Gen. Cucolo took a moment to speak to the graduates to personally.

"You are the future of Iraq and it is a very noble thing to learn to be a medic," he said to the group. "I salute you for your bravery because you are the ones who save lives."

Soon after this, the ceremony began with Col. Michaud speaking of the high level of training the graduates received.

This course started off as a combat life-saving course and developed into a very special Emergency Medical Technician course, with a high-level of hands-on training, he said. Now that each of the individuals has this type of training all of their leadership expects them to assist these Battle Boar instructors in teaching the people of Kirkuk, said Col. Michaud.

After Col. Michaud spoke, Maj. Gen. Cucolo spoke to the guests and new medics.

"Because of this training each of you are taking on a great responsibility," he said. "When you show up where there is death and injury the population and those who are hurt will feel better with the sight of you."

After the speeches were complete Dr. Siddik and Capt. Jon Stubblefield, the primary instructor for the course, presented the medics with their medical brassards and certificates signifying the completion of their course.

"We are excited to welcome all of these medics into our brotherhood," said Lt. Metcalf.

Congratulations to these Ready First Soldiers that were named Task Force Marne Hero of the North

The intent of the "Task Force Marne Hero of the North" is to share some of the stories of what we see our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Civilians do. Daily, Task Force Marne leaders select one individual from across the task force to be recognized by the entire organization because of their duties and actions, their particular military professional exemplified the best that the Armed Services has to offer.

Sgt. Christopher Pike
D. Co., 1-30 Inf.
Pensacola, Fla.

Sgt. Christopher Hall
A. Troop, 6-1 Cav.
Galveston, Texas

Staff Sgt. Thomas Marcoux
A. Troop, 6-1 Cav.
Grand Rapids, Mi.