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U.S. ARMY MANEUVER SUPPORT CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FT. LEONARD WOOD, MISSOURI



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Fort Leonard Wood Operation Rising Star winner in Texas for finals

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – Fort Leonard Wood’s 2014 Operation Rising Star winner is at Fort Sam Houston, Texas preparing for finals that start Saturday.

Staff Sgt. Michael Joseph, a 399th Army Band drummer, said he is feeling the pressure to keep the Army Entertainment’s Rising Star title on post.

Last year, Sgt. Christiana Ball, 787th Military Police Battalion drill sergeant, won Army Entertainment’s 2013 Rising Star.

“I would love to win it again for Fort Leonard Wood. Christiana has been so supportive. She just told me to keep doing what I am doing, and the judges will love me,” Joseph said.

“It feels great to represent this post in the finals. There were so many great competitors here at the Fort Leonard Wood auditions. I just feel so humble that I was chosen to move forward in the competition,” he added.

Originally from Cumberland, Kentucky, he said he started singing about 10 years ago.

“I only started singing in front of an audience about two years ago. I started singing and playing guitar just as a hobby,” Joseph said.

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Joseph is one of six competitors from Army installations around the world.

Finals week is scheduled for Saturday through Dec. 12, at the Fort Sam Houston Theatre, home of Army Entertainment. Shows are recorded with a live audience Saturday, Monday, Wednesday and Dec. 12.

“My wife is getting a support team together for me. She has started a Facebook page and made flyers for the local community,” Joseph said. “My Family is most definitely my biggest fans.”

The shows can be viewed at www.OpRisingStar.com, on Sunday, Tuesday and Dec. 11, beginning at 9 a.m., daily.

Viewers will have 24 hours to vote for their favorite performers after each round.

“I would just like to thank everyone in advance for supporting me through this whole process. The support that I have received already has just been wonderful, and it really means so much to my Family and me. We really appreciate everyone,” Joseph said.

The winner will be revealed Dec. 13, at www.OpRisingStar.com, where people can also go to view the shows and vote.

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For more information, contact the Fort Leonard Wood Public Affairs Office at 573.563.4145. Photos are available for download at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortleonardwood/>.

(Melissa Buckley is a Guidon photojournalist.)

About Fort Leonard Wood

Fort Leonard Wood is a thriving and prosperous installation that has evolved from a small basic training post 70 years ago to a premier Army Center of Excellence that trains more than 80,000 military and civilians each year.

Home to the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence, Fort Leonard Wood now trains and educates service members and develops doctrine and capabilities for the Training and Doctrine Command's U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School, U.S. Army Engineer School, and U.S. Army Military Police School, three gender integrated Initial Military Training brigades, one of only five reception stations in the Army, and the Army's largest Noncommissioned Officers Academy.

Over the past several years, Fort Leonard Wood has received numerous additional responsibilities to include supporting the 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, a large Forces Command unit that is responsible for all deployable capabilities at Fort Leonard Wood. A colonel-commanded Marine Corps Detachment and an Air Force Detachment, which are both the largest on any Army installation, are located on Fort Leonard Wood; a large Navy Seabee Detachment and elements of the Coast Guard train here as well.

