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



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Top Soldiers, Marines selected following Best Warrior Competition at FLW**

**FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo.** – Fort Leonard Wood’s Best Warriors of 2015 come from different brigades and detachments across the installation.

The installation’s Soldiers, Seabees and Marines put their top service members to the test during the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence 2015 Best Warrior Competition March 23 to 26.

The winners are: Drill Sergeant of the Year – Staff Sgt. Jacob Miller, 14th Military Police Brigade;

Advanced Individual Training Platoon Sergeant of the Year – Staff Sgt. Eric Ross, 1st Engineer Brigade;

Noncommissioned Officer of the Year – Staff Sgt. Jason Stewart, 14th Military Police Brigade;

Joint Service Noncommissioned Officer of the Year – Marine Sgt. George Grimm, Marine Corps Detachment;

Soldier of the Year – Spc. Elliot Whitehead, 3rd Chemical Brigade; and

Joint Service Junior Enlisted Member of the Year – Marine Cpl. Carl Weiffenbach, Marine Corps Detachment.

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Command Sgt. Maj. Terrence Murphy, Maneuver Support Center of Excellence and Fort Leonard Wood command sergeant major, said everybody on the installation should be proud of the participants.

“They gave everything that they had, never quit and that is what our military is about,” Murphy said.

“We tested their feet, their backs and their minds. They did the Army Physical Fitness Test, the Navy Physical Fitness Test and the Marine Corps Combat Fitness Test – which half of them had never seen before,” Murphy added.

In addition to the physical fitness assessments, troops endured complex exams, as their minds and bodies were strained through four days of demanding events.

“It was exciting to win because this was a close competition, “ said Staff Sgt. Jacob Miller, Company C, 787th Military Police Company, 14th Military Police Brigade. “I felt like we were neck-and-neck the whole competition.”

About 30 service members signed up, but by the final day only 22 remained.

This year, competitors were evaluated on everything from their combative skills to ceremony and drill techniques.

“The endurance portion of the competition was hard. It was tough to keep a consistent pace throughout the competition. But I liked the ruck marches – that was the easiest for me,” Miller said.

Competitors were chosen by their chain of command to represent them at their battalion boards. They moved on to compete at the brigade level, then winners from the brigades competed at the MSCoE level for each quarter of the calendar year.

Those individuals who competed and won at the MSCoE level were allowed to compete at the Annual Best Warrior Competition.

The winners of the Drill Sergeant, AIT Platoon Sergeant, Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year categories will move on to compete at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command level. The noncommissioned officer and the Soldier winner will move on to the Army level competition, if they win at TRADOC.

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For more information, contact the Fort Leonard Wood Public Affairs Office at 573.563.4145.

Encl(s) – Photos

Photo 1: Joint Service Junior Enlisted Member of the Year, Marine Cpl. Carl Weiffenbach, faces off with Sgt. Jessica Goacher during the combatives portion of the Best Warrior Competition.

Photo 2: Drill Sergeant of the Year, Staff Sgt. Jacob Miller, 14th Military Police Brigade, performs pushups during the physical fitness test for the 2015 Best Warrior Competition.

### *About Fort Leonard Wood*

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*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 about 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, 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.*

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