



WWW.WOOD.ARMY.MIL / MSCoE

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



PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
FORT LEONARD WOOD, MISSOURI 65473
VOICE: 573-563-4145
FAX: 573-563-4012
BY: Jonathan Koester
EMAIL: shatara.r.seymour.civ@mail.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Release No. 14-082

Sept. 12, 2014

Fort Leonard Wood drill sergeant named U.S. Army's TRADOC Drill Sergeant of the Year

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – A Fort Leonard Wood Soldier is the 2014 Drill Sergeant of the Year.

Staff Sgt. Jonathan Miller, 787th Military Police Battalion, 14th Military Police Brigade, was declared the winner Sept. 11 at the Drill Sergeant, AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year event held at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

Miller, who also took home the 1st Sgt. Tobias Meister Award for achieving the highest score on the Army Physical Fitness Test during the competition, talked about the emotions he felt when he heard his name called.

“I knew it was a tight race from the very beginning,” he said. “Really, to hear my name called was overwhelming. I was filled with emotions, a lot of pride, honor,” Miller said. “This competition was truly the most difficult, most challenging, the best competition that I’ve ever been a part of. So for that, I’d like to thank Drill Sergeant (David) Stover (2013 Drill Sergeant of the Year) and Drill Sergeant (Ryan) McCaffrey (2013 Army Reserve Drill Sergeant of the Year) and their team for really putting together a tough, awesome competition,” Miller added.

As a winner, Miller will now move into a new job at the strategic level at U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, a special perk of winning this special competition. Miller said he was looking forward to his new role.

- more -

“As we move forward, as we progress, as our Army evolves, I just want to make sure our Soldiers, our NCOs, our officers are getting the very best training,” he said. “I want to make sure that we continue to develop the absolute greatest training for our Soldiers.”

In a special moment for all the competitors, they got to hear from the first Drill Sergeant of the Year, retired Command Sgt. Maj. Allen Carpenter. Carpenter was introduced at the awards ceremony by Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Woods, command sergeant major for the U.S. Army Center for Initial Military Training at Fort Eustis, Virginia.

“This is a year of firsts,” Woods said. “This is the first year that we’ve come up and started a national Drill Sergeant Association. This is the first year that, here at Fort Jackson, we’re establishing a Drill Sergeant Hall of Fame. What we want to do with this is have a reminder of the past that made possible our present, and we want to honor the past that makes possible our future. And I am here to introduce the first Drill Sergeant of the Year, to commemorate all these other firsts, Command Sgt. Maj. (retired) Allen Carpenter.”

Carpenter said he was thrilled and honored to share the stage with all the competitors. He spoke of the drive these top NCOs have to always push to be better.

“When these competitors got up this morning, and they looked in the mirror, they saw honor and pride,” he said. “But there was a shadow of discontent in the back of their minds. They knew they had put forth their best effort in the tasks, and the tasks were complicated and challenging. But that little bit of disappointment was there. Right now, they feel honor, but at the same time, in the back of their minds, they are wondering about that little bit of disappointment. Well, there is no room for disappointment in this group. Whether they come out first, or they come out last, it doesn’t matter. They should be honored, because they are here.”

Through Carpenter’s words of encouragement, he couldn’t resist getting a few digs in on some newer Army traditions.

“Whoever come up with ‘hooah’ must have been smoking rope,” he said to nervous laughter from the crowd. “Don’t ‘hooah’ me. What happened to ‘Yes, sir. No, sir. Yes, sergeant major. No, sergeant major. Yes, first sergeant. No, first sergeant. Yes, sergeant. No, sergeant.’?”

To be a part of this moment, to stand on the stage with the first Drill Sergeant of the Year, and to share the moment with two great NCOs — two NCOs who he got to know back on that first ruck march — was something special that can never be taken away, Miller said.

“To be here on the 50th anniversary of the drill sergeant program, to share that honor and legacy, is forever going to be with us,” he said. “To be a part of that is the single most proud moment in my life.”

(Editor's note: Koester is a journalist who writes for the NCO Journal.)

Encl: Photo

Cutline: Staff Sgt. Jonathan Miller, 787th Military Police Battalion, 14th MP Brigade, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., instructs Soldiers in a marching formation. Miller was competing to be drill sergeant of the year at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

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.
