



Staff Sgt. Danielle Gorie, a drill sergeant with the Florida National Guard, checks the compass reading of Spc. Ryan Brewer during a land navigation exercise at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, Fla., in July 2013. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carmen Steinbach)

# NCO Becomes First Female Drill Sergeant for Florida Army National Guard

*By Staff Sgt. Carmen Steinback*

107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**F**ive years after the National Guard was authorized drill sergeant specialties, the Florida National Guard has added another first — the first female drill sergeant in the state's history.

Staff Sgt. Danielle Gorie works full-time for the FLARNG's recruitment and retention office as the advertising and marketing NCO, but she recently took on a more challenging role as drill sergeant.

"I wanted to set myself apart," Gorie said. "I love training troops, and now I can in a drill instructor capacity. It's all about mentoring Soldiers, and that's something that I greatly enjoy."

In order to become a drill sergeant, Gorie and other candidates from various units across the country endured nine grueling weeks of drill sergeant training at Fort Jackson, S.C. Out of the 60 students who graduated

in Gorie's class, eight were female.

"It was basic training all over again," said Gorie, who ranked the course as the most difficult challenge she has faced in her entire military career. "If you failed a test, you retook it the next morning. If you failed again, you went home."

In addition to earning the Drill Sergeant Identification Badge, she also gained various certifications, such as Combat Life Saver and combatives instructor during the course.

Having completed the training, Gorie now is responsible for training prior-service and initial recruits awaiting Officer Candidate School as part of the Officer Recruit Sustainment Program.

"Having a drill sergeant as part of our RSP-O program helps by teaching them basic soldier skills, like drill and

ceremonies and physical training, prior to attending Basic Combat Training,” said Capt. Enrique Martinez Jr., officer strength manager. “It also helps minimize the ‘shock’ factor upon the warriors’ arrival at their first course.”

Since its creation, Soldiers who have attended the RSP program prior to their basic training have consistently

outshone their peers even beyond boot camp, Martinez said. Since the majority of Gorie’s Soldiers are prior service, and all of them hold degrees, she expects no less from them.

“I hold them to a higher standard than I would ordinary privates,” said Gorie. “They’re all adults and capable of having responsibilities even at this new-Soldier level.”



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