



The competitors of the 2011 Drill Sergeant of the Year Competition stand in front of the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant School at Fort Jackson, S.C. The statue is of Allen Glen Carpenter, who won the first competition in 1969 as a sergeant first class. (NCO Journal file photo)

## Former Drill Sergeants Invited to Attend 50th Anniversary Events

*By Jonathan (Jay) Koester*

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**N**COs at Fort Jackson, S.C., are organizing what could be a new Soldier's worst nightmare: a field full of Soldiers wearing drill sergeant hats.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Army's drill sergeant training program. Events to commemorate that anniversary are planned to coincide with the 2014 Drill Sergeant and Advanced Individual Training Platoon Sergeant of the Year competition Sept. 8-13 at Fort Jackson. All former drill sergeants — retired and currently serving — are invited to attend the competition and commemoration.

The competition will take place Sept. 8-10, with the competition winners announced during an awards ceremony Sept. 11. On Sept. 12, there will be an open house at the new U.S. Army Drill Sergeant School campus, as well as a social, said Sgt. Maj. Thomas Campbell, the G3/5/7 (operations/plans/training) sergeant major for the U.S. Army Center for Initial Military Training at Fort Eustis, Va. All former drill sergeants are being asked to wear their drill sergeant hats to the social.

"The Drill Sergeant Hat Social is going to be in the center of the Drill Sergeant School campus, in the center

of the physical training field,” Campbell said. “Our goal is to get as many drill sergeant hats as we can on the Drill Sergeant School field. We will then have a photo opportunity to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the formal Drill Sergeant School program.”

Countless Soldiers have walked by the drill sergeant statue at Fort Jackson, and the Sept. 12 social offers the chance to watch that statue come to life. Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Allen Glen Carpenter will be the guest speaker at the social. Not only was Carpenter the Army’s first Drill Sergeant of the Year, he is also the person who the drill sergeant statue is modeled after.

“The unique thing is Sgt. Maj. Carpenter has never seen that statue,” Campbell said. “This will be the first time he actually gets to see it in person. It’s always stood in front of the Fort Jackson drill sergeant school, both at the old location and at the new school. So every drill sergeant who has passed through the doors since the 1980s has walked by Sgt. Maj. Carpenter. And many, many photos have been taken by drill sergeants with him.” ■

For more information on the competition, open house or social, e-mail Campbell at [thomas.e.campbell7.mil@mail.mil](mailto:thomas.e.campbell7.mil@mail.mil) or the current Drill Sergeant of the Year, Sgt. 1st Class David Stover, at [david.e.stover.mil@mail.mil](mailto:david.e.stover.mil@mail.mil).



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