



Staff Sgt. Yu Rhee, one of the Army's first recipients of the new Master Recruiter Badge, conducts an interview as part of U.S. Army Recruiting Command's first Master Recruiter Badge competition at Fort Knox, Kentucky, in September. The competition began with more than 1,000 recruiters, and seven earned the coveted badge. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Army Recruiting Command)

Recruiting offers NCOs opportunity to enhance Army

By Lysie Dickerson

U.S. Army Recruiting Command

When Master Sgt. Donald Gallagher joined the Army Reserve, he already knew he wanted to be a recruiter. His interest in recruiting started with friends talking about their own experiences in the field. It seemed to him like a very fulfilling assignment.

"When I first got into recruiting, I found that it was very fast-paced and you had to really work hard," said Gallagher, now a Recruiting and Retention School instructor who is heading to the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy in the summer. "Your work ethic was pushed. The harder you worked, the more success you saw."

Recruiting duty provides noncommissioned officers with the opportunity to shape the future of the Army, positively impact the lives of others, and advance their

own Army careers. It's a great broadening assignment that strengthens an NCO's skill set, he said.

"I truly believe that when a noncommissioned officer comes into recruiting duty and when he leaves, he's made immense leaps in his ability to coach, teach, mentor and counsel individuals," Gallagher said. "I would just tell anybody that's potentially looking at coming into recruiting, that if they want a challenging assignment that offers great career progression and is going to help them become a better noncommissioned officer, they should really look at coming in to Recruiting Command."

Recruiters are an elite group with an elite mission. Only the top NCOs in each MOS are selected to be recruiters.

“Recruiters today are the very best of the noncommissioned officer corps,” said Maj. Gen. Allen Batschelet, commanding general of U.S. Army Recruiting Command. “When we’ve looked across all the noncommissioned officers in the Army to find who can qualify to be a recruiter, less than 10 percent of NCOs can be considered.”

Without recruiting, there is no Army. Every day, recruiters build the Army, finding those with a genuine desire to serve and putting the best in uniform.

“The ability to shape the future of the Army — there’s no other job in the United States Army that gives you the flexibility that recruiting does when it comes to that,” said Master Sgt. Jeff White, NCOIC of USAREC’s Recruit the Recruiter team. “You are literally recruiting the men and women who are going to form the Army of the future.”

As the face of the Army to the American public, recruiters must be self-disciplined, live the Army values, and have a high level of integrity. Recruiting requires independent and adaptive thinkers who are capable of making decisions in unfamiliar environments while maintaining the respect and trust of civilians.

Recruiters perform a variety of tasks, including giving presentations at schools, interviewing applicants, and participating in community events.

“It’s fun because you kind of get connected back to actually helping your community more than you would in the mainstream Army or even in the civilian world,” said Recruit the Recruiter team’s Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Vance. “I had the chance to go back to my MOS and turned it down.”

Recruiting provides Soldiers the opportunity to help the Army while helping other people.

“I’m helping the Army provide the strength in numbers, but when I talk to the applicants and people interested in the Army, I’m here to help them as well,” said Staff Sgt. Yu Rhee, a recruiter at the Los Angeles Recruiting Battalion who was one of the first seven individuals

to earn the Army’s new Master Recruiter Badge. “I really get to know what their goals are in life and why they’re here sitting in front of me in my office. There’s that job satisfaction that comes with helping others. I think that’s what I enjoy most about it.”

White said there’s a small percentage of recruits who, before coming into the Army, were on the ‘wrong track,’ getting in trouble, or not doing well in school.

“When you can take them and get them off of that track and put them on the right track, when you see them come back from basic training, that’s when this job is worthwhile,” he said. “You literally change someone’s life.”

Serving as a recruiter advances an NCO’s career by offering high promotion rates and strengthening a variety of skills.

“Your opportunity to exercise initiative, to be in a mission command environment, do the things we enjoy as leaders and develop your leadership skills are more available inside of the Recruiting Command than they are in the operational Army,” Batschelet said.

Recruiting duty sets people apart from their peers, White said.

“From a career-enhancement standpoint, you’ll be looked at much more favorably on centralized promotion boards,” he said.

Recruiters must learn to be inspirational and motivational to be successful leaders, White added.

“I think that recruiting teaches you that you can’t rely on the rank that’s on your chest; you have to rely on interpersonal skills necessary to lead, and it really helps you hone those skills,” White said. “That’s something that—even coming from a combat arms MOS—I could have never imagined I was going to become a better leader as a recruiter than I was as a tank commander.”

NCOs interested in volunteering for recruiting duty can find out more information from the Recruit the Recruiter office at (502) 626-0210. ■



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