



Staff Sergeant Clark Burns, Company R, 262nd quartermaster battalion, 23rd quartermaster brigade, faces a formal board Monday during the first day of the 2015 Drill Sergeant and AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year competitions. Burns is one of eight competing to be named AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year.

Drill Sergeant, AIT Platoon Sergeant Competitions Begin With Formal Board

By Jonathan (Jay) Koester — NCO Journal

The 14 competitors in the 2015 Drill Sergeant and AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year competition hope you enjoyed your Labor Day. They spent their day going through a formal board interview and a written test.

The competition began Monday afternoon and continues through Thursday at Fort Jackson, S.C. The four-day competition includes obstacle courses, exams, a rappel tower and plenty of road marching.

After a quick safety briefing, 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., reminded the competitors that the winners don't just get glory, they get new jobs at the strategic level of the Army.

"Everybody understands that if you win this, that you will be assigned to (the U.S. Army Center for Initial Military Training) at Fort Eustis, right?" Campbell said. "It is a unique opportunity that not very many staff sergeants

or sergeants first class will ever get. For one, you will have a number. We're about to select the 47th Drill Sergeant of the Year and the sixth AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year. When you move to IMT, you are going to be working at the strategic level. You are going to be part of decision making that will affect the Army for years to come.

"Do your best," Campbell said. "Try to win this thing. The next week is going to be very challenging. You'll get some sleep and we'll feed you, but we are going to work you out mentally and we're going to work you out physically."

Staff Sgt. Christopher Croslin, 2014 Army Reserve Drill Sergeant of the year, congratulated the competitors for their past success, but reminded them that the competition is now on.

"You're already the best at what you do," Croslin said. "You've already been picked out by your installations or your divisions to come out here and compete, so kudos to you right there. Now it's time to separate yourself



Staff Sgt. Jonathan Miller, the 2014 U.S. Army Drill Sergeant of the Year, left, and Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Russell, 2014 AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year, speak with the 14 NCOs competing in the 2015 competition. The competition began Monday at Fort Jackson, S.C. (Photos by Jonathan (Jay) Koester / NCO Journal)

from your peers. Keep a positive attitude, stay motivated throughout the entire competition.”

Staff Sergeant Clark Burns, Company R, 262nd quartermaster battalion, 23rd quartermaster brigade, is one of the eight NCOs competing for 2015 AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year. Burns said he was happy to compete this Labor Day.

“I want to set a positive example for my Soldiers,” Burns said. “You can’t expect your Soldiers to do something you wouldn’t do. You can’t expect your Soldiers to go to a formal board, to push themselves to make themselves better, unless you are willing to lead by example and show them the way.” ■

Competing to be the 2015 Drill Sergeant of the Year are:

- Staff Sergeant Franco Peralta
- Staff Sergeant Derrick Gosney

- Staff Sergeant Eric Hulien
- Staff Sergeant Jacob Miller

Competing to be the 2015 Army Reserve Drill Sergeant of the Year are:

- Staff Sergeant Mark Mercer
- Staff Sergeant Russell Vidler

Competing to be the 2015 AIT Platoon Sergeant of the Year are:

- Sergeant First Class Samuel Enriquez
- Sergeant First Class Dimario Habersham
- Sergeant First Class Heidi Anne Hartman
- Staff Sergeant Claudia Collazo
- Staff Sergeant Jonathan Murray
- Staff Sergeant Eric Ross
- Staff Sergeant Michael Johnson
- Staff Sergeant Clark Burns



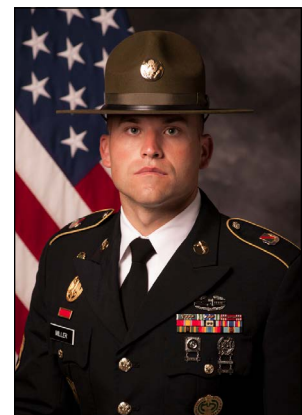
Staff Sergeant Franco Peralta



Staff Sergeant Derrick Gosney



Staff Sergeant Eric Hulien



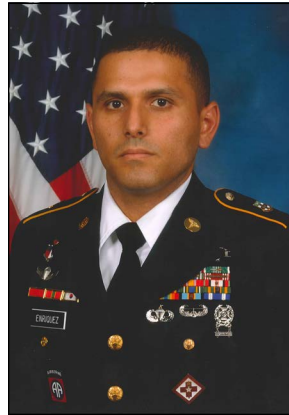
Staff Sergeant Jacob Miller



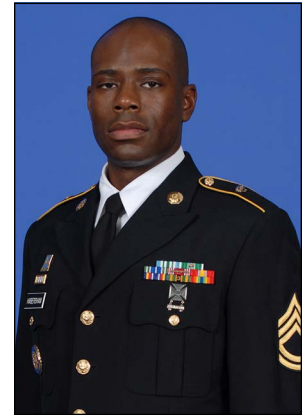
Staff Sergeant Mark Mercer



Staff Sergeant Russell Vidler



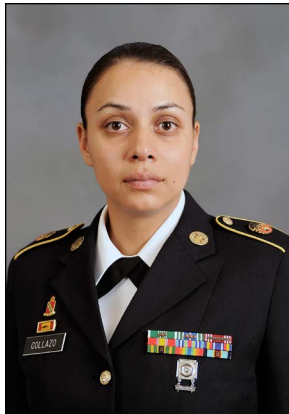
Sergeant First Class Samuel Enriquez



Sergeant First Class Dimario Habersham



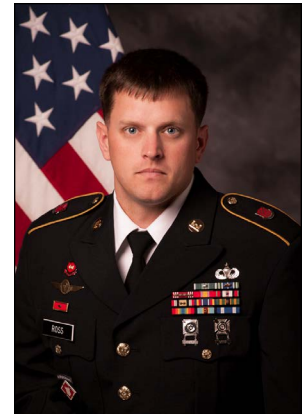
Sergeant First Class Heidi Anne Hartman



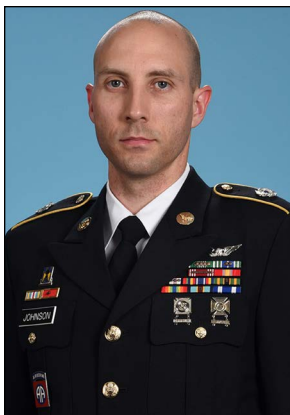
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