

Winners of Best Warrior Competition announced

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Runners-up and winners of the Best Warrior competition take the stage after being announced on Monday, Oct. 3, at the Association of the U.S. Army annual meeting in Washington, D.C. From left are Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Bogert, representing TRADOC, who came in second place for Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; Sgt. First Class Iker Irmak, representing Army Medical Command, who came in third place for Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; Sgt. 1st Class Joshua A. Moeller, representing U.S. Army Reserve Command, who won Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; Spc. Robert Miller, representing U.S. Army Pacific Command, who won Soldier of the Year; and Sgt. Mitchell Keeton, representing Army Materiel Command, who came in third place for Soldier of the Year. Not pictured is Spc. Trey Castor, representing Army Special Operations Command, who came in second place for Soldier of the Year. (U.S. Army photo by Martha Koester)

It was the final obstacle in a series of competitions that began many months ago. Twenty Soldiers from 10 Army commands underwent a grueling series of tests in the Best Warrior Competition last week at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia.

It ended Monday, Oct. 3, at the Association of the U.S. Army annual meeting in Washington, D.C., with the announcement that Sgt. 1st Class Joshua A. Moeller, representing U.S. Army Reserve Command, won the 2016 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year award, and Spc. Robert Miller, representing U.S. Army Pacific Command, won Soldier of the Year in the Army's premier competition.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey oversaw the 15th annual competition and called the Soldiers "the best and brightest our Army has to offer."

Moeller, 36, is a cavalry scout serving as a senior drill sergeant with 2nd Battalion, 413th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 95th Division, 108th Training Command. He is a 16-year veteran and is working toward a bachelor's degree in engineering management.

Miller, 24, is an explosive ordnance disposal specialist assigned to the 74th Ordnance Company. Miller is a three-year veteran and is working toward a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey speaks Monday at the Association of the U.S. Army annual meeting in Washington, D.C. Dailey announced the winners of the 2016 Best Warrior Competition. (U.S. Army photo by Martha Koester)

Competitors were praised for their mettle, and Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Daniel B. Allyn told the audience it rained throughout the competition last week, further compounding challenges.

"The scope, scale and complexity of what the Army does every day is simply awe-inspiring and illuminates why we must remain trained and ready for the missions at hand while concurrently preparing for challenges that await us in the days, weeks and months to come," said Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Daniel B. Allyn. "That's why the Best Warrior Competition is so important, testing warrior aptitude and urban warfare, physical fitness, professional knowledge and warrior tasks. The 20 elite competitors from 10 commands represent the very best that America's Army has to offer."

During the first phase of the contest last week, Soldiers took the Army Physical Fitness Test, which included a 2-mile run, as well as a written exam on general military topics and a graded essay. They also demonstrated battle drills. If basic Army standards were met, Soldiers advanced to the second phase, which included an evaluation of their military appearance as well as board interviews from a panel of senior sergeants major.

Allyn told the Soldiers and NCOs in the audience they play a vital role in helping the Army battle current challenges while preparing for future ones.

"As you train our next generation, our Army needs your candid thoughtful feedback as we continue to grow and adapt the future force," he said. "Your input is essential in the development of solutions, from refining our doctrine to acquiring the best systems, to approving the way we train and validating our operational concepts."