

# Beating the Odds

*By Capt. Corey Robertson 31st ADA PAO*



JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. - The saying “small town boy makes good” has never been more true than with the recent accomplishment of U.S. Army Spc. Mitchell Peterson. Spc. Peterson is from Pleasantville, Iowa, a city that boasts a population of just over 1600, and he recently was awarded the very prestigious Expert Field Medical Badge or EFMB. Spc. Peterson is a U.S. Army Medic assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5-5 Air Defense Artillery, 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

JBLM hosted the EFMB testing and had a total of 246 candidates attempt to earn the badge. After all testing was complete, 33 Soldiers stood apart from their peers as recipients of the badge. “It’s a really significant accomplishment and I had the opportunity to observe some of the great training these soldiers did in preparation,” said Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Buchanan, deputy commanding general, I Corps. “About 13 percent of the candidates made it through to the end, which is above the Army average of around 11 or 12 percent.”

Spc. Peterson was the only Soldier from 5-5 ADA that competed, “A lot of people were pushing me to go out for the badge, and at first I was reluctant due to the high attrition rate. After a few days I figured ‘why not’ and I took a shot,” said Peterson.

The EFMB is awarded to medical personnel of the U.S. Military who successfully complete a set of qualification tests including both written and performance evaluations in casualty care and evacuation tasks, weapons qualification, and a physical fitness test. Spc. Peterson said he always wanted to be a medic, and this recent qualification was a huge milestone in his career. “My day to day of working in the clinics has helped me become a better-rounded person, and the badge testing was the more ‘hooah’ stuff you see on television,” said Peterson.