

# SHARP PROGRAM

*By Staff Sgt. Nathan Akridge*



With more than 3,000 sexual assaults reported in 2012, who can help protect Soldiers from Sexual Assault, and also help guide the victims through the process following a reported sexual assault? The Fires Center of Excellence held classes to train a select group of Noncommissioned Officers to become Sexual Assault Response Coordinator or SARC representatives. This team will be the first responders in the event of a sexual assault, and are trained to show both compassion and understanding to a victim, while

simultaneously helping them get the medical care, social services and support they need to get through this difficult process.

“We hope these students gain awareness of the dynamics of how harassment and assault affects the victims,” said Sgt. 1st Class Elizabeth Miles, 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigades Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention or SHARP program manager. “We also hope that they can see how you can, if you’re not careful, re-victimize the person by asking the same things over and over when you really don’t need to.” The SARC training is designed to go above and beyond the 80 hour SARC class that all SARC personnel must take. “We want to drive home and drill down how we handle things here at Fort Sill,” said Leslie Watts, Fort Sill Garrison SARC. “We want to show them how advocacy is handled here, who the points of contact are, and make the system more user friendly for them than it would be with just book smarts.” Watts added that this program will make the Victim Advocates more proficient on their job, and will allow them to the best care possible to victims. “It’s going to really help the victims because the advocates that go through this course have gotten more information on Fort Sill and our operations and resources, said Watts. “Because of this course, we will have better Victim Advocates who can afford the best service to the victims that they can possibly receive.”

