

Transformed NCO speaks at Army birthday

Story, photo
By Bob Reinert, USAG
Natick Public Affairs

NATICK, Mass. — If you had to pick one person to blow out the candles on the cake during the Army's 237th Birthday, you couldn't do better than Staff Sgt. Sharalis Canales.

In less than seven years, Canales, 27, has transformed herself from a homeless New York City resident to a well-respected NCO at the Natick Soldier Systems Center. Putting on her nation's uniform literally changed her life.

"I am proud of the woman I have become," said Canales, speaking at

NSSC's Army Birthday celebration June 14. "We each have our own reasons for enlisting in the Army, but I know that none of us could have expected how it would have changed our lives forever. I stand before you as someone whose life was changed because I joined the Army."

Canales was living at the Covenant House shelter in



Staff Sgt. Sharalis Canales speaks during the 237th Army Birthday celebration at Natick Soldier Systems Center. In less than seven years, Canales transformed herself from a homeless New York City resident to a respected noncommissioned officer at NSSC.

Times Square when she enlisted in November 2005.

Prior to that, she had spent ages 14-20 in a group home after her divorced mother had given her up.

While others struggled to adjust to Basic Training, Canales shrugged it off — she had already lived with far more people in the shelter. It didn't take long for the 4-foot-8-inch Canales to stand out in the

crowd, and she has done so ever since.

"The Army molded me to become fearless," said Canales, "a leader and ready to face any obstacle thrown at me."

Canales, training NCO for the NSSC Headquarters Research and Development Detachment and president of the installation's Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program, said she was humbled to speak on the Army's birthday so near to its birthplace.

"What better place to celebrate than to be here in Massachusetts, a few miles away from where our Army was first put to the test?" Canales said. "Today, we cel-

ebate the generations of Soldiers who followed in the footsteps of those colonists who left their homes and embraced our nation's call to duty."

After she spoke, 60 future Soldiers from the Boston Recruiting Company reaffirmed their oaths of enlistment, and a ceremonial cake-cutting took place. Canales, however, had shown everyone at Natick what the Army is all about.

"The Army is my family, my home, my life," Canales said. "I will continue to serve for as long as the Army will have me. I am thankful to wear this uniform today."

Sill complex offers battle command training

Did you know the Mission Training Complex provides quality individual and collective battle staff training support to Fort Sill units?

The MTC, at 3380 Miner Road, is staffed with an experienced team of trainers, technicians and managers to execute facility operations, training management and exercise support. The MTC executes the individual operator, leader and staff training part of the Army Digital Training Strategy.

The facility boasts 40-plus acres of land available to organizations to train as a collective unit. Six classrooms provide unsurpassed individual digital systems and virtual training. It is the primary agency for providing individual and collective

training support to Army Forces Command units.

The MTC mission is to provide the training enablers to conduct individual, leader and collective battle command (digital) training supporting Forces Command, mobilizing and deploying units and to provide training support to Training and Doctrine Command schools with available resources.

The individual Army Battle Command System courses are divided into three sections: communications, data management and mapping.

The communications portion of the class focuses on sharing data between users on like systems, as well as, sending and receiving messages from other ABCS sys-



Did you know?

By Col. Paul Hossenlopp
Fort Sill Garrison commander

tems. During the data management section segment, operators learn skills necessary to deal with the large volumes of information available to system operators, while the mapping section helps operators transition from paper maps to their digital equivalents. The section also details the differing map types and scales while plotting data, in the form of icons and graphics, to the map.

Most tasks are reinforced with practical exercises,

based on a realistic scenario, that mimic those tasks that would be performed in both real world and exercise situations. The standards for these tasks are based upon the Department of the Army provided and approved documentation for each respective system.

Focus is on staff training using constructive simulations to develop collective skills based on commander's training objectives and Soldier needs. The

MTC staff is poised to assist commanders in creating training opportunities to develop proficient staffs. MTC staff members are also fully capable to assist commanders by relieving some of the burden associated with developing training venues, allowing the commander to focus on his training. The MTC uses the digital exercise with the sole purpose of creating an environment that operationally lights up the unit's entire command and control systems helping them validate their setup and verify their operator training. In many cases, these exercises are followed up with command focused vignettes to exercise specific collective tasks.

Units requesting a digital

exercise or training must submit a request through their respective training and operations office, to the MTC operations officer. These requests may be submitted via e-mail, fax or hand carried to Building 3380. No requests can be approved without conducting an initial coordination meeting to verify all the unit's resource, training and security requirements.

Training at the MTC is free for active military of any service, DoD civilians and Reserve or National Guard personnel for whom the training would support their mission. Hours of operation are Mondays through Fridays, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. For more information, call MTC operations at 442-4126.

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DSoy test to begin



File photo by Jeff Crawley

In this file photo, Col. Gregory Dewitt, 434th Field Artillery Brigade commander, presented the 2012 Fort Sill Drill Sergeant of the Year award to Drill Sergeant (Staff Sgt.) Victor Marquez, B Battery, 1st Battalion, 40th Field Artillery, April 16 at brigade headquarters. Marquez begins the Training and Doctrine Command DSoY competition June 25 at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va.

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