



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**BRAVO BATTERY, 1<sup>ST</sup> BATTALION, 79<sup>TH</sup> FIELD ARTILLERY**  
**5970 SOUTH BOUNDARY ROAD**  
**FORT SILL, OKLAHOMA 73503-4558**

17 JUNE 2020

Dear Friends and Family Members of Class 51-20,

I am Captain Keith Purdy. The Battery First Sergeant, First Sergeant Robert Young, and I make up the Command Team for your Soldier during their time in Basic Combat Training (BCT). Your loved one has arrived safely at Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 79th Field Artillery, part of the 434<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. They are here to become a Soldier in the U.S. Army. You can rest assured knowing that your Soldier is in the hands of the most dedicated and experienced Drill Sergeants and Cadre in the Army. Bravo Battery Drill Sergeants and Cadre are professional Soldiers with multiple combat tours and extensive training. We will instruct your Soldier in the Warrior Ethos, Warrior Tasks, and Battle Drills. Developing your Soldier is our mission.

Over the next ten weeks your Soldier will learn a variety of skills that will transform them from a civilian into a Soldier, and in doing so your Soldier will gain the basic skills required to fight and win on the modern battlefield. Training will be strenuous and demanding. Physical training is a daily event. Your Soldier will run further and perform more push-ups than they thought possible. They will be taught the customs, traditions, policies, and procedures of the U.S. Army. They will learn how to engage the enemy with a rifle, hand grenade, or through hand to hand fighting techniques. They will learn lifesaving skills, such as how to care for casualties through first aid and how to navigate with a map and a compass. Your loved one will train from 5:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., 6 days per week in order to become a disciplined, physically and mentally tough, U.S. Army Soldier.

Your Soldier is extremely busy, so do not expect regular communication. Written communication is often more reliable than phone calls. I encourage you to write to your Soldier; your support goes a long way. We will permit a call home within the first week of training. Additionally, the Command Team may permit phone calls **when their platoon earns the privilege and when the schedule permits**. Soldiers and families alike learn during Basic Combat Training that periods of minimal communication with your Soldier are difficult, but manageable. This experience builds the confidence your Soldier will need to endure separation (deployment) in the future. Help them achieve that confidence by remaining positive and encouraging when you do get to talk to your Soldier. You will both be stronger for it. Additionally, we recommend that you do not make non-refundable travel plans for graduation until you hear from your soldier that they will graduate.

## **Sending Care Packages**

If you wish to send a package, do not send magazines, weapons, food, or other contraband items (soda, candy, electronics, tobacco, medical supplies, etc.). Examples of acceptable items to send are toiletries and photographs. Letters and packages should be mailed to:

**(Soldier's Rank), (Soldier's Last name), (Soldier's First Name)  
Bravo Battery, 1-79 FA, PLT #\_\_\_ (get the PLT # from your Soldier)  
5970 South Boundary Road  
Fort Sill, OK 73503**

## **COVID-19**

The current outbreak of COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) has presented new challenges to training. Leadership at all levels are implementing the guidance from the Department of Defense as it is received to mitigate the spread of the virus. As of present, Family Day and Graduation are closed to the public but will be live streamed at [www.livestream.com/firescenter](http://www.livestream.com/firescenter). This is an ever evolving situation and as new guidance becomes available we will carry out the necessary precautions.

## **Emergency Contact Information**

**Should an emergency arise, the only means of notifying your Soldier is through your local American Red Cross. To speak to a Red Cross Emergency Communications Specialist call: 1-877-272-7337.** The field office in your vicinity will contact the Lawton, Oklahoma field office who will in turn contact me. In dire emergencies affecting immediate family members (sibling or parent), emergency leave may be granted. Other leaves of absence during training are not normally authorized.

## **Facebook**

Bravo Battery maintains a Facebook page to keep you informed on your Soldier's training. We will share pictures of training and make posts about key dates and events that you should track. I encourage you to log into Facebook and search "Bravo Battery, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 79<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery" or utilize the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/B179FA>. The most up to date information about graduation and family day will be posted on our Facebook page.

## **Important Dates**

Graduation: 18 September 2020 at 10:00 p.m. CST. **At this time ALL Basic Combat Training graduations on Fort Sill are closed to the public.**

## **The Army Family Team Building Program**

The Army Family Team Building program provides valuable information that introduces families to the Army and the Army way of life. Families who complete the online training will gain a better understanding of what their Soldier is experiencing. In addition, upon our receipt of **five** (level one) certificates from **five separate members of your family** (one certificate per family member), your Soldier will be allowed a “shout-out” on our Facebook page in the form of a short video. The link to the training is below.

<https://www.myarmyonesource.com/familyprogramsandservices/familyprograms/armyfamilyteambuilding/default.aspx>

Send your certificates to the Barbarian Facebook Page via Facebook Messenger. Please put “**Soldier’s Name / AFTB Certificate**” in the Body of the Message to help us track your certificates.

In closing, your Soldier is our mission. Without them, we would not be here. We will do whatever it takes to see that your Soldier is successful, but your son or daughter must possess the desire to become part of the U.S. Army. Encourage your Soldier to succeed and they will, just like the many who have come before them.

Respectfully,

ROBERT J. YOUNG  
1SG, U.S. Army  
First Sergeant

KEITH L. PURDY  
CPT, U.S. Army  
Commanding