Press Release

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Fort Drum Public Affairs

Fort Drum welcomes new 10th Mountain Division senior enlisted leader, bids farewell to retiring CSM

FORT DRUM, N.Y. (March 19, 2020) -- Maj. Gen. Brian J. Mennes, 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander, hosted a change of responsibility ceremony March 18 to welcome Command Sgt. Maj. Mario O. Terenas and his family to the installation and to bid farewell to his former senior enlisted adviser, Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel J. Roark.

“Command Sgt. Maj. Terenas comes to us with a great reputation,” Mennes said. “He’s a great tactician and leader, and he’s no stranger to this division. We are so excited about working with him and (his wife) Kelly.”

Terenas arrived at Fort Drum after serving as the senior enlisted leader of U.S. Army Cadet Command and Fort Knox, Kentucky. He was previously assigned to the division as brigade operations sergeant major with 1st Brigade and then as battalion command sergeant major of 3rd Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment.

“I have one pledge and one pledge only,” Terenas said. “I will not be average. I will give it my all every single day, and I will leave all of it on the field.”

Terenas said that if there is anything that 10th Mountain Division Soldiers should know about him it is that pledge.

“It doesn’t mean I will be number one in everything that I do or that I will win every day,” he said. “What it means is that when I set myself to the task of being command sergeant major of this division, I will give everything I’ve got until I have nothing left.”

Terenas said that he is committed to working with the division to engage and destroy all enemies that threaten the nation.

“If you call upon me, if you ask for me, if you’re in the fight and you ask for me I will come. Unless I am dead, I will be there,” he said.

The event was by invitation only due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, with a small gathering of family, friends and colleagues, but no formation of Soldiers. Mennes joked that having a private audience would allow for much longer speeches, as he spoke highly of both Terenas and Roark.

“Besides being a proven combat leader, Command Sgt. Maj. Roark has been an amazing Soldier, a man of honor, a role model, husband and friend,” Mennes said.

Mennes said that he was constantly amazed by the stories that Roark would share about his life, and that he was as eager as the other Soldiers listening to learn from those experiences.

“He is a role model for all of us, and also a true friend,” he said. “He cares about Soldiers more than anybody I know. It’s that passion for Soldiers that drives him, and I don’t know of anyone who loves them more than him.”

Roark said he appreciated all of the conversations he shared with Mennes, and he thanked the many officers and senior noncommissioned officers for maintaining the high standards of the 10th Mountain (LI) Division.

“The one thing I will say is that the officers, NCOs and Soldiers of this division do a tremendous job of managing a demanding high operation tempo while living their lives, raising their families and progressing their careers,” he said.

Roark welcomed Terenas and his family to the division and offered a piece of advice to his successor.

“Savor every moment. It goes fast,” he said.

For more information on Command Sgt. Maj. Roark's incredible career:

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/365428/retiring-senior-enlisted-leader-proud-have-worn-10th-mountain-division-patch

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