Press Release

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Operation Mountain Awareness Opens Doors to Recruit Talent from Northeast

FORT DRUM, N.Y. (Sept. 1, 2022) -- Every “Climb to Glory” starts with a first step, and for dozens of new Army recruits and prospects from all over New York, Pennsylvania and New England, the ascent started Aug. 31 on Fort Drum.

“Do you guys know our motto? Climb to Glory! You all are starting your climb, and I appreciate each and every one of you being here,” Maj. Gen. (P) Milford H. Beagle Jr., 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander, told the future Soldiers and family members.

“Remember when you’re climbing, there is always someone here to help. Look around – your recruiters, your family members, they’re helping your climb right now,” he added.

The tour, dubbed Operation Mountain Awareness, coincided with the annual Mountainfest celebration on post. In addition to the festivities, visitors spent time touring Memorial Park to see the names of the 10th Mountain Division’s fallen Soldiers on bronze plaques and the Military Mountaineers Monument proudly showcasing the lightfighters’ alpine lineage to WWII. They browsed on-post amenities like the Exchange and the Commissary and had lunch alongside active-duty Soldiers at a military dining facility.

“I wanted to see how an Army base works. Just to get more into the mindset of being on an Army base is just a great experience overall. It’s much nicer than I expected,” said Carson Barrante, from Eden, New York, who is headed to Basic Training later this month.

The Army is “all-in” on competing for recruits with the best talent and work ethic, and for those who are looking to thrive in a team-oriented environment. Recruiters participating in the tour say the ability to bring prospective Soldiers onto an installation like Fort Drum is integral to showing them that the Army has what they’re seeking.

“It is really resonating with our recruits how close-knit the community is and how welcoming the Soldiers are to them,” said Staff Sgt. Donique Morrison, West Seneca, New York, Recruiting Office.

Morrison also said he believes that the emphasis this visit is putting on the team mentality is setting recruits up for success from the get-go.

“Everything we do is a team effort. Knowing how to be successful on a team is going to teach them to be successful as individuals,” he said.

Justin Oakes, who traveled to Fort Drum as a guest of the Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, Recruiting Station, brought his mother, father and brother with him to see the post. Oakes calls him family his “No. 1 supporters,” and he was especially pleased that they were included.

“The more information I get the better, especially since I can also immerse my family into it, because we aren’t a military family,” Oakes said.

When he dons the uniform, his intent is to join the ranks of the military police.

“It’s a decision I am making for my future. If I decide the Army isn’t going to be a lifelong career for me, I can use my training to get a job outside in my community as well,” Oakes added.

In the competition to recruit talent, it is just those sorts of opportunities that the Army provides that set it apart, according to Fort Drum’s senior commander.

“Never let anybody tell you what you can’t do. That’s what the Army will give you – the start toward the life that somebody told you that you could not have. We want to be the team you want to join,” Beagle said.

“The opportunities are all here for you to take.”

Picture to support this story can be found here:

www.dvidshub.net/news/428523/operation-mountain-awareness-opens-doors-recruit-talent-northeast

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