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Net Zero Competition

JBLM units rewarded for sustainability efforts

I Corps HHB takes over top spot on leaderboard

By Jake Dorsey/Northwest Guardian

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The latest Joint Base Lewis-McChord Net Zero competition results are in, and there's a big new name at the top of the leaderboard.

I Corps Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion took first place in the large unit category, bringing home \$7,500 for the unit's Soldiers thanks to a combination of changed habits and concerted efforts.

This quarter's competition also saw the first involvement from Air Force units, with the 62nd Aerial Port Squadron and the 7th Airlift Squadron placing third (large) and first (medium), respectively.

I Corps HHB focused most on recycling and refuse reduction, according to its activity summary. The battalion added more small recycling bins to offices and larger ones to its dining facility, changed its printing policy and started recovering more glass and clothing into separate recycling bins.

Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Rizzo wrote that bins are spot-checked to make sure they're being utilized, with a newly assigned recycling NCO ensuring Soldiers are following the battalion's new recycling procedures.

Rizzo wrote that the change in attitude and protocol has cut the battalion's weekly trash level from two large containers to one.

Air quality was the other major focus. Rizzo wrote that Soldiers going to the same temporary duty locations have to ride together, cutting 352 car trips to and from SeaTac International Airport. The battalion also instituted other rideshare and group transportation requirements.

Even tobacco use wasn't off-limits. Rizzo wrote that the battalion cut the number of smokers in its ranks by 15 percent, with many switching to e-cigarettes instead.

The 7th Airlift Squadron took home \$3,500 for winning the medium category, defined as having 51 to 200 personnel. Lieutenant Colonel William Mickley wrote in the unit's submission packet the squadron at first had big ideas, but slowly worked its way down to what was feasible within the unit's budget.

The squadron implemented a reorganization of recycling items not included in the co-mingle process, such as glass, clothing and printer cartridges. Local recycling centers limited that attempt, Mickley wrote, but the unit created separate bins for those items to make sure they got recycled anyway.

Squadron members also worked with dimmed lights, or just turned them off, and worked on their carpooling policy, but the largest change was attitude.

Mickley wrote that by the end of the competition period, "squadron members were enthusiastic about helping," and that "the effects of our combined efforts are noticeable within the unit and will expand as each new member arrives and another departs."

Net Zero results

Large category (More than 200 personnel)

First: Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, I Corps — \$7,500

Second: Northwestern Joint Regional Correctional Facility — \$5,000

Third: 62nd Aerial Port Squadron — \$2,500

Medium category (51-200 personnel)

First: 7th Airlift Squadron — \$3,500

Second: (tie) C Company, 2nd Brigade Support Battalion, 2-2 SBCT; and B Company, 308th Brigade Support Battalion, 17th Fires Brigade — \$2,000 a piece

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