

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Eight Soldiers commission as second lieutenants

By Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann
SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Eight South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers took the Oath of Office and commissioned as second lieutenants during a ceremony at Mount Rushmore National Park, Aug. 15.

The second lieutenants recently completed Officer Candidate School through the SDARNG's 1st Battalion, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute).

In order to commission as officers, these Soldiers endured a culmination of three intense phases of training, which has prepared these officer candidates for the next step in their military career.

“We give them the opportunity to go through some stressful situations while we evaluate their ability to act under pressure and make decisions,” said Lt. Col. Deb Bartunek, 1-196th RTI commander.

Throughout the course, the officer candidates faced multiple tests in physical fitness, ruck marches up to 10 miles and their ability to lead squad and platoon-size teams tactically through combat scenarios.

“These Soldiers will leave the course with a toolbox of leadership skills to use when they manage and direct a platoon of their own,” said Bartunek.

Brig. Gen. Kevin Griese, assistant adjutant general of the SDARNG, guest speaker for the ceremony gave advice to the newly promoted officers.

“As you take on an assume the duties and responsibilities of a second lieutenant there will definitely be challenges but nothing you won't be able to overcome,” said Griese. “Trust in the training that you have received, keep in mind what you have learned, draw upon your experiences and make decisions.”

The second lieutenants will now be assigned to units across the state and will attend Basic Officer Leaders Course where they will continue to train in leadership, tactics and branch specific capabilities. Several presentations were made throughout the ceremony to include:

- The Battalion Leadership Award was presented to the 153rd Engineer Battalion, of Huron, for the greatest number of students graduating from Officer Candidate School.
- Second Lt. Mitchell Harms received the Endeavor Award for demonstrating the highest degree of consistent advancement, perseverance and devotion to duty during the training year.

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- Second Lt. Jeffery Marshall earned the Academic Excellence Award by attaining the highest academic rating for the school year.
- Second Lt. Brady Wolfe earned the Army Physical Fitness Award for scoring the highest on the Army Physical Fitness Test.
- Second Lt. Brady Wolfe earned the Erickson Trophy, awarded to the OCS graduate with the highest combined overall standing in leadership evaluations, academics, physical fitness and peer evaluations. It is given by the authority of the Department of the Army and the Air Force, National Guard Bureau, and is named in memory of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau at the time the award was initiated, Maj. Gen. Edgar Erickson. Wolfe also earned the Leadership Excellence Award for attaining the highest leadership evaluations during the training year.

The following is the list of graduating officer candidates:

Name	Home town	Unit of Assignment
2nd Lt. Michael Crumb	Lennox	730th Area Support Medical Company
2nd Lt. Mitchell Harms	Sioux Falls	1742nd Transportation Company
2nd Lt. Adam Holtquist	Sioux Falls	Forward Support Company, 153rd Engineer Battalion
2nd Lt. Jeromy Loken	Ipswich	Company A, 139th Brigade Support Battalion
2nd Lt. Jeffery Marshall	Huron	Forward Support Co., 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion
2nd Lt. Madison Stephens	Wall	235th Military Police Company
2nd Lt. Alex Toupal	Yankton	Battery A, 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion
2nd Lt. Brady Wolfe	Rapid City	211th Engineer Company

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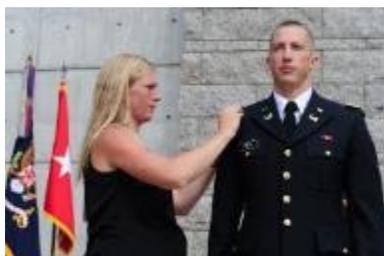
High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



150815-Z-CW157-274: U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Kevin Griese, assistant adjutant general of the South Dakota Army National Guard, administers the Oath of Office to eight newly commissioned second lieutenants during the Officer Candidate School commissioning ceremony at Mount Rushmore National Park, Aug. 15, 2015. The second lieutenants will be assigned to units across the state as future leaders in the South Dakota Army National Guard. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann/Released)



150815-Z-CW157-148: U.S. Army 2nd Lt. Jeffery Marshall, of Huron, S.D., gets his bars pinned on by his wife, Christina, and four daughters during the Officer Candidate School commissioning ceremony at Mount Rushmore National Park, Aug. 15, 2015. Marshall will be assigned to the South Dakota Army National Guard's 147th Forward Support Company in Watertown. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann/Released)



150815-Z-CW157-237: U.S. Army 2nd Lt. Brady Wolfe, of Rapid City, S.D., gets his bars pinned on by his wife, Liana, during the Officer Candidate School commissioning ceremony at Mount Rushmore National Park, Aug. 15, 2015. Wolfe will be assigned to the South Dakota Army National Guard's 211th Engineer Company. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann/Released)



150815-Z-CW157-185: U.S. Army 2nd Lt. Madison Stephens, of Wall, S.D., gets her bars pinned on by her parents during the Officer Candidate School commissioning ceremony at Mount Rushmore National Park, Aug. 15, 2015. Moran will be assigned to the South Dakota Army National Guard's 235th Military Police Company. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann/Released)



150815-Z-CW157-304: Eight South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers took the Oath of Office and commissioned as second lieutenants during the Officer Candidate School commissioning ceremony at Mount Rushmore National Park, Aug. 15, 2015. The second lieutenants will be assigned to units across the state as future leaders in the South Dakota Army National Guard. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann/Released)

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