

South Dakota National Guard

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Rapid City Guard unit honored during homecoming ceremony

RAPID CITY, S.D. – About 90 Soldiers with the South Dakota Army National Guard’s Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment is were honored during a homecoming ceremony in Rapid City, Nov. 4.

Hundreds of family members, friends and community supporters assembled at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center to welcome home the Soldiers who returned to South Dakota in September after serving nearly a year throughout the Middle East.

“You know they got your back you can go forward and do your job knowing that everyone is behind you and supporting you and really the entire community,” said 1st Sgt. Michael Martin, 1-189th senior noncommissioned officer. “Being back is amazing. You really appreciate the things you have at home when you’re gone for a year.”

While deployed, the unit provided 24/7 combat life-saving aerial medical evacuation support with HH-60M Black Hawk helicopters to U.S. military and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria.

State and local government leaders to include Lt. Gov. Matt Michels, Congresswoman Kristi Noem, Rapid City Mayor Steve Allender and Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, SDNG adjutant general, spoke to the audience and addressed the Soldiers and their family members during the ceremony.

“To the members of the 1-189th, it’s great to have you back!” said Reisch. “The mission that you performed was critical to this nation’s strategic objectives in the Middle East, and by all accounts, you performed all aspects of this mission in an outstanding manner. I couldn’t be more proud of you than I am today and to have you home safe and sound.”

The unit completed over 500 flying missions from six locations and evacuated over 700 patients while providing enroute medical care to higher-level medical facilities. The Soldiers also worked with over 20 coalition nations to develop medical capacity and training while deployed.

The unit’s commander, Maj. Anthony Timanus, thanked the Soldiers for their efforts and praised the unit’s various sections for their contributions to the mission.

“We flew over 500 missions and 252 of those were live-combat missions,” Timanus said. “Every single location that we had a live mission, I know out of those 252 people that we picked up, there are people that are walking back home in the United States right now. You guys were amazing.”

Timanus and Martin were thankful to have their Soldiers home safe in time for the holidays.

“Your goal as a leader is always to come home with the same number of people that you left with,” Timanus said. “I couldn’t ask for more than that. It’s a great Christmas present.”

“We missed the last holidays and this just makes it all the more special because we’re going to be together on this one,” Martin said.

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



181104-Z-VD828-0105: South Dakota Lt. Gov. Matt Michels welcomes back members of the South Dakota Army National Guard's Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment during a welcome home ceremony in Rapid City, S.D., Nov. 4, 2018. The 1-189th returned home after a nearly year-long deployment providing combat life-saving aerial medical evacuation support to U.S. military and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Brandon Julson)



181104-Z-VD828-0199: U.S. Army Sgt. First Class Adam Armstrong is welcomed home by members of the South Dakota Army National Guard during a ceremony for 89 Soldiers with Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment in Rapid City, S.D., Nov. 4, 2018. The 1-189th returned home after a nearly year-long deployment providing combat life-saving aerial medical evacuation support to U.S. military and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Brandon Julson)



181104-Z-VD828-0035: U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Callen Clavel hold his daughter during a welcome home ceremony for his unit, Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, South Dakota Army National Guard, in Rapid City, S.D., Nov. 4, 2018. The 1-189th returned home after a nearly year-long deployment providing combat life-saving aerial medical evacuation support to U.S. military and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Brandon Julson)



181104-Z-VD828-0229: U.S. Army Maj. Anthony Timanus, commander of Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, South Dakota Army National Guard, addresses hundreds of family members, friends and community supporters gathered during the welcomed home ceremony for his unit in Rapid City, S.D., Nov. 4, 2018. The 1-189th returned home after a nearly year-long deployment providing combat life-saving aerial medical evacuation support to U.S. military and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Brandon Julson)



181104-Z-ZZ999-0008: U.S. Army Chaplain Maj. Jared Dupont sings a patriotic musical selection during the welcome home ceremony for Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, South Dakota Army National Guard, in Rapid City, S.D., Nov. 4, 2018. The 1-189th returned home after a nearly year-long deployment providing combat life-saving aerial medical evacuation support to U.S. military and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Tyler O'Connell)



181104-Z-ZZ999-0007: U.S. Army Sgt. Anthony Eckman is welcomed home by members of the South Dakota Army National Guard during a ceremony for 89 Soldiers with Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment in Rapid City, S.D., Nov. 4, 2018. The 1-189th returned home after a nearly year-long deployment providing combat life-saving aerial medical evacuation support to U.S. military and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Tyler O'Connell)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact the SDNG Public Affairs Office at (605) 737-6721 or e-mail ng.sd.sdarnng.list.pao@mail.mil.