

South Dakota National Guard

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SD Guard Warrant Officer Candidate School graduates 11 soldiers

By Pfc. Alexis Stevens – 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

RAPID CITY, S.D. – South Dakota Army National Guard graduated 11 new warrant officers in a ceremony held on Camp Rapid in Rapid City, August 1.

The Warrant Officer Candidate School recruits soldiers to become warrant officers and subject matter experts their respective fields. The program develops their leadership and communication skills to make them stronger leaders in their units.

“The biggest challenge of the course, is bringing these people together, who may or may not know anything about each other, and getting them to work as a cohesive team,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Clinton Store, senior instructor for the WOCS with 1st Battalion, 196th Regional Training Institute.

This years WOCS graduating class was unique in its combination of two different course options. Five of the WOCS soldiers took part in the “fast track course,” which consisted of two consecutive weeks of training in South Dakota. While the other six WOCS soldiers participated in the “traditional training course” from October 2019 through March 2020, one weekend a month during this time.

“The WOCS course was extremely challenging, but my classmates and I all agree that it was worth it,” said Warrant Officer 1 Jared Schrupp.

Before graduating, all WOCS soldiers completed training at the 200th Regional Training Institute, Fort McClellan in Anniston, Alabama. The soldiers were tested both physically and mentally, they were taught skills that prepared them as officers for the challenges that lay ahead.

Warrant officers make up the technical foundation of the U.S. Army, specializing in a technical area.

The warrant officer’s duty is to help their fellow soldiers maintain, operate and integrate Army systems and equipment across the full spectrum of Army operations building the South Dakota Army National Guard into a stronger and united force.

The WOCS graduates and their new unit assignments include:

WO1 Brian Bierema, Ordnance, 665th Surface Maintenance Company (Mitchell)

WO1 Tane Bramblee, Ordnance, Forward Support Company, 109th Engineer Battalion (Rapid City)

WO1 Randi Brickey, Adjutant General Corps, Joint Force Headquarters (Rapid City)

WO1 Joseph Dressler, Quartermaster, Joint Force Headquarters (Rapid City)

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WO1 Christopher Johnston, Quartermaster, 109th Engineer Battalion (Rapid City)

WO1 Morgan Kiley, Quartermaster, 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion (Watertown)

WO1 Stephen Morgan, Field Artillery, 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion (Watertown)

WO1 Marty Nygren, Ordnance, 147th Forward Support Company (Watertown)

WO1 Robert Royer, Ordnance, 665th Surface Maintenance Company (Mitchell)

WO1 Jared Schrupp, Quartermaster, 881st Troop Command (Sturgis)

*Staff Sgt. Stephanie Kinsella, Certificate of Eligibility

*Staff Sgt. Eric Lesnar, Certificate of Eligibility

*While some of the candidates accept their appointment as warrant officers during the graduation ceremony, others choose to defer their appointment until an available assignment at a later date.

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200801-Z-WF991-0031: The Warrant Officer Candidate School graduates 11 new warrant officers in a ceremony held at Joint Force Headquarters, Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., August 1, 2020. The new warrants officers were evaluated on the fundamentals of leadership and basic military skills, ensuring competent, committed leaders have been appointed. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Alexis Stevens)



200801-Z-WF991-0033: The South Dakota Army National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Marlette addresses the Warrant Officer Candidate School graduating class during a ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters, Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., August 1, 2020. The WOCS soldiers are subject matter experts their respective fields to help their fellow soldiers maintain, operate and integrate Army systems and equipment across the full spectrum of Army operations. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Alexis Stevens)



200801-Z-WF991-0074: Warrant Officer Randi Brickey coins Master Sgt. Luke Brickey, her husband, with a silver dollar during the Warrant Officer Candidate School graduation ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters, Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., August 1, 2020. The silver dollar is an honored tradition that a newly commissioned or appointed officer hands a silver dollar to the first enlisted soldier who salutes them. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Alexis Stevens)



200801-Z-WF991-0050: Warrant Officer Candidate School graduating class 20-001 recites the Oath of Office during the WOCS graduation ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters, Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., August 1, 2020. The new warrants officers were evaluated on the fundamentals of leadership and basic military skills, ensuring competent, committed leaders have been appointed. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Alexis Stevens)



200801-Z-WF991-0081: Warrant Officer 1 Christopher Johnston's family pins him during the Warrant Officer Candidate School graduation ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters, Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., August 1, 2020. Newly appointed warrant officers have their bars pinned by individuals who have supported them throughout the program. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Alexis Stevens)



200801-Z-WF991-0102: Warrant Officer 1 Marty Nygren salutes Sgt. 1st Class Nate Schnee during the Warrant Officer Candidate graduation ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters, Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., August 1, 2020. Known as the Silver Dollar salute, a silver dollar is then given to an enlisted soldier acknowledging the respect due to the warrant officer's new rank and position. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Alexis Stevens)

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