



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Sixty-eight enlist in Tennessee National Guard at Jackson baseball game**

**JACKSON** – Baseball fans were on their feet and cheering at the May 16 baseball game between the West Tennessee Diamond Jaxx and the Birmingham Barons at Pringles Park in Jackson.

This time it wasn't because of a home run. It was to honor 68 young men and women from throughout Tennessee who raised their right hands taking the oath of enlistment into the Tennessee Army National Guard during "National Guard Night" at the park. The event has become an annual occasion in Jackson.

Maj. Gen. William "Mike" Maloan, Deputy Commander of the Tennessee Guard's Joint Force Headquarters in Nashville, administered the oath to the young adults as they stood on the baseball diamond. With families and friends watching, the recruits swore to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the State of Tennessee against all enemies, foreign and domestic."

At the conclusion of the swearing-in ceremony, the new soldiers received a loud, standing ovation from the crowd, which was followed by a dazzling fireworks display. "It makes me proud to see so many fine men and women stepping up to serve their country," Maloan said, "and to see the support these new soldiers have received from their families and the community." Gen. Maloan threw out the first pitch.

"It was exciting to take the oath in front of my family and friends," said Pvt. Brian Turner, from Medon, Tennessee, who will join the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment. "Now I really look forward to getting to my unit to begin training for deployment." Turner will be leaving for Iraq with the 278th ACR in late 2009.

During the game, fans could climb the Guard's portable rock wall and view armored humvees and numerous weapon systems on display. The Guard provided the flag honor guard while Spec. Shalunda McElrath, of Jackson, sang the National Anthem. This was followed by an Apache helicopter fly-over.

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### **CUTLINES:**

**Photo #1: Sixty-eight young men and women recite the oath of enlistment into the Tennessee Army National Guard at the game between the Diamond Jaxx and Birmingham Barons game at Pringles Park in Jackson.**

**Photo #2: Pvt. Brian Turner from Medon, Tennessee, and his son, Brian Jr., enjoy the game prior to the oath of enlistment.**

**Tennessee Army and Air National Guard press releases can be found at**

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