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TN Nat. Guard Training Institute Honored as "Institution of Excellence"

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee Army National Guard's 117th Regiment Regional Training Institute was honored as an "Institution of Excellence" through an accreditation process conducted by the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) on Feb. 12. This is the highest accreditation level possible.

The unit was awarded a certificate of accreditation for this honored status based on a recommended rating from the TRADOC Accreditation Team. The unit still had to complete its required mission of educating Soldiers while preparing for the evaluation visit.

"The results of this accreditation and the level of support to our State proves the assigned Soldiers emulate the discipline, structure and passion to hold themselves responsible for a positive learning environment and work climate to exceed basic military standards," said Col. Chuck Tilton, 117th RTI Commander.

"In addition to receiving an Institution of Excellence rating, TRADOC also informed us that we were one of the first institutions to meet all of the standards with no deficiencies," said Sgt. Maj. Hank White, 117th RTI Operations Sergeant Major. "This distinction also gave us the honor of being among the first National Guard Regional Training Institutions to receive this prestigious award twice!"

A TRADOC Institution of Excellence rating is obtained by achieving a score of 95 percent or higher during a TRADOC accreditation visit. This award means the unit is meeting all the same standards as their Active Duty Army counterparts.

"Earning this rating for the second time truly shows how dedicated we are to mission accomplishment. This rating is a direct reflection of their efforts on a day-to-day basis, ensuring the students who attend receive the level of training they deserve in order to prepare them for their future duties," said Warrant Officer Victoria Murphy, Human Resources Technician for the 117th RTI.

There are four levels of accreditation: Institution of Excellence, requiring a 95-100 percent rating that marks the institution as having exceeded TRADOC requirements; Full Accreditation, requiring an 80-94 percent rating that satisfies the TRADOC requirements; Conditional Accreditation, with a 60-79 percent rating and requiring the institution to correct deficiencies and submit a report for approval; and Candidate of Accreditation, with a 0-59 percent rating and the requirement of reevaluation within 12 months.

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"The result of the 117th RTI receiving a 98.4 percent compliance rating of the Army's Accreditation Standards reflects the level of support of Army National Guard leadership, ensuring the RTI has the manning, fiscal and equipment resources to meet these standards," added Tilton.

Each TRADOC training institution was evaluated against 30 Army standards which address the doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) domains. The DOTMLPF standards were instituted in 2007.

"I commend the 117th Regiment RTI for the dedication and hard work that contributed to this coveted distinction," said Army General Robert Cone, Commander, TRADOC Headquarters, in the citation accompanying the award. "Their efforts to maintain strong DOTMLPF functions will ensure our leaders and Soldiers possess the qualities and skills necessary to dominate across the spectrum of conflict."

"The 117th RTI has demonstrated the highest level of mission performance as noted by the external evaluation," said Tilton.

The RTI consists of the RTI Headquarters and four Battalions. The First Battalion conducts Military Police Training, Second Battalion conducts Armor Reconnaissance Scout Courses, Third Battalion includes Officer Candidate School and the Motor Transport Operator Course, and Fourth Battalion instructs the Automated Logistics Specialist and Unit Supply Specialist Courses.

TRADOC also oversees 32 Army schools organized under eight Centers of Excellence, each focused on a separate area of expertise within the Army (such as Maneuver and Signal). These Centers train over 500,000 Soldiers and service members each year.

"This award is a direct reflection of the long hours, hard work and sacrifices the members of this unit have made to ensure we are a successful organization. It is a true testimony to our members and their drive to exceed the standards," exclaimed White.

"There is no greater honor than serving your country and being able to do so with such an outstanding group of professionals. The 117th Regiment as a whole, is an organization dedicated to the training of Soldiers," said Master Sgt. Andrew Caravello, Chief Instructor, 117th RTI. "Institution of Excellence is not just an accreditation rating, it is our mission."

CAPTION:

Staff Sgt. Gregory Baum, instructs a recent Cavalry Scout class on engaging targets on a live fire range using an M240B machine gun.

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