



As we've discussed several times, the purpose of the Year of the NCO is to enhance NCOs' education, fitness, leadership development and pride in service through the implementation of programs and policies that support the sustainment and growth of the NCO Corps. The Year of the NCO recognizes the leadership, professionalism, commitment, courage and dedication of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps and strives better inform and educate Congress, government institutions, and the American people of the roles, responsibilities, and the quality of service of our NCO Corps.

During the first week of June, we'll be taking the full measure of USASMDC / ARSTRAT's current and future NCO Corps as we test, probe, and evaluate our Regional NCO and Soldier of the year winners. By the end of the week, we'll have determined which of these outstanding NCOs and Soldiers will have the honor of representing the command at the Army's Annual NCO and Soldier of the Year "Best Warrior" competition.

The NCO and Soldier of the Year "Best Warrior" competition are all about Soldiers demonstrating their knowledge, skills and abilities. Each of the NCOs and Soldiers competing to be named USASMDC/ARSTRAT NCO and Soldier of the Year have already achieved a major milestone. Each has successfully competed at the regional level and has earned the right to compete for the command's top honor by winning their Regional NCO and Soldier of the Year competition. Each has displayed the four key attributes expected of all Soldiers: they are highly skilled, extremely fit, have outstanding discipline, and are committed to the profession of arms. They are professional Soldiers.

I'm very pleased to introduce this year's regional winners, they are:

Eastern Region:

Soldier of the Year – SPC Roy E. Dilworth III, Bravo Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, Fort Meade, Maryland
NCO of the Year – SGT Matthew S. Davidson, Bravo Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, Fort Meade, Maryland

Western Region:

Soldier of the Year – SPC Kyle M. Behrens, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado
NCO of the Year – SGT Sarah C. Haskins, 4th Space Company, Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado

European Region:

Soldier of the Year – SPC Matthew A. Heard, Charlie Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, Landstuhl, Germany
NCO of the Year – SSG Jonas A. Moody, Bravo Detachment, 1st Space Company, U.S. Central Command – Regional competition. Currently assigned 1st Space Company, 1st Space Brigade, Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado

Pacific Region:

Soldier of the Year – SGT Travis D. Parsons, Echo Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, Okinawa, Japan
NCO of the Year – SSG David Padilla, Delta Detachment, 1st Space Company, 1st Space Battalion, Misawa Air Base, Japan

Each of these Soldiers will now compete against each other; on the rifle range, Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), in Mounted Operations Urban Terrain (STX Lanes) exercises, in land navigation, and finally before a board of senior enlisted leaders who will truly test their mettle. After a grueling week, only one NCO and one Soldier will have earned the right to be called the USASMDC/ARSTRAT NCO and Soldier of the Year.

The fact that only one NCO and one Soldier can win the honor of representing the command at the Department of the Army level by no means diminishes the achievements of the other regional winners. Each of these outstanding Soldiers epitomizes all of the traits of a Professional Warrior. They all should be justifiably proud of their accomplishments, just as I am proud to have Soldiers of their caliber within our command.

Next month, I'll happily disclose the winners of the USASMDC/ARSTRAT NCO and Soldier of the Year competition. Until then, please join me in congratulating these Soldiers on a job well done!

SECURE THE HIGH GROUND!