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Hometown News Release

CONTACT: Lt. Col. Darrin Haas

OFFICE: 615.313.0662

darrin.w.haas.mil@mail.mil

Tennessee National Guard commissions new officers

SMYRNA, Tenn. – Family, friends, mentors, and fellow Soldiers filled the auditorium as 17 officer candidates graduated from the 117th Regiment’s Officer Candidate School and commissioned as second lieutenants in the Tennessee National Guard on Aug. 22.

Held at Smyrna’s Volunteer Training Site, each Soldier received their commissions as federally recognized officers in the Tennessee National Guard and promoted to the rank of Second Lieutenant.

To become an officer, each Soldier either attended an 18-month hybrid-training program in Smyrna and Fort McClellan, Alabama, or an accelerated course at Fort McClellan. While training, the candidates were tested mentally, physically, and placed in high-stress situations to teach them how to be combat leaders.

Maj. Michael Grant, the OCS Commander, administered the Oath of Office and expressed what it meant to be a part of training the new officers.

“It is a great honor to work with the most professional and competent officers and noncommissioned officers in the National Guard,” said Grant. “It has been a privilege to evaluate, train, and develop future leaders of the Army.”

Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee’s Adjutant General, and guest speaker for the ceremony, offered advice to the graduates.

“You’ll be responsible for everything good or bad your subordinates do, but your new task will be to give them vision and purpose,” said Holmes. “Our Soldiers are driven by that purpose. You’re no longer one of them, but their leader.”

Jerimiah Borrajo, a Bethpage native, was announced as the class Distinguished Honor Graduate and recipient of the Erikson Trophy. He was also awarded an Army Commendation Medal for his leadership, academic, and physical performance throughout the class.

“OCS has been an arduous journey that has taught me more about myself and being a better leader,” said Borrajo. “The Tennessee Army National Guard will be receiving 17 of the finest Officers ready to take on any challenge.”



Each candidates' family were given the honor to pin on their graduate's rank, signifying their status as a second lieutenant. Following that, they then conducted the time-honored tradition of the Silver Dollar Salute where the newly commissioned second lieutenant presents a silver dollar to the first enlisted Soldier who salutes them.

The new 17 commissioned officers will now lead Soldiers in the Tennessee Army National Guard as they join the more than 2,000 other Tennessee Officer Candidate Graduates who went before them.

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Officer Candidates from Officer Candidate School Class 64 graduated OCS and earned their commissions as second lieutenants in the Tennessee Army National Guard at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site on Aug. 22. (Photo by Sgt. James Bolen Jr.)

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