



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command
16th Sustainment Brigade
Public Affairs Office**

Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq
DSN (NIPR) 318-827-6101
DSN (SIPR) 302-243-5104
keith.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
3rd ESC Release #090624-1
June 26, 2009

Veteran NCO wants to make a difference

By Staff Sgt. Keith M. Anderson
16th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Staff Sgt. Matthew J. Fischer, squad leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, Washington Army National Guard, is on his third deployment to Iraq.

“This deployment has been different from my previous two deployments in many ways, mostly due to the fact that I am serving this deployment with the National Guard,” said Fischer, a 28-year-old native of Marysville, Wash. “Though I am no longer a fulltime Soldier, coming on this deployment has really helped me to grow even more as a Leader.”

Fischer said that he is able to share his experience with many of his Soldiers.

“With the National Guard I have been working with many Soldiers who, before this deployment have never lived the Army life, day in and day out,” said Fischer. “With that I have been able to teach them a lot and share my experiences with them in a way that they really respect.”

For Fischer, being an NCO is about being an example for Soldiers to emulate.

-more-

FISCHER/2-2-2

“Being an NCO, to me, means that you are a person of knowledge, strength, and direction, upholding the highest standards of our military,” Fischer said. “Trusted by others not only to lead the way, but to mentor, encourage, and motivate Soldiers to always exert their best qualities. Being an NCO means that taking the hard right over the easy wrong is never a question that lingers in your mind. Being an NCO is being the example.”

Fischer said that you must be willing to follow to lead.

“Really ensure that you understand what it means to be a leader, and the difference between what a Leader is, as opposed to ‘being in charge,’” said Fischer. “Never forget, you cannot effectively lead without first knowing how to follow.”

Two NCOs with very different leadership styles shaped Fischer the most, he said.

“My platoon sergeant during my first deployment was an ‘old school’ NCO who cussed me almost every day,” Fischer said. “However he never failed to ensure that I learned from my mistakes, nor did he ever let me quit or give up when I was feeling lost in my in-experience as a squad leader. As harsh as he may have been, he cared tremendously that I learn and grow as a leader.”

“My squad leader through the beginning of my first deployment, and a close friend after, had a much more personal style of leadership,” Fischer said. “He taught me through his actions how to really know each and every one of my Soldiers and learn their individual needs, strengths, and weaknesses.”

Fischer, who plays the drums and hopes to someday be a musician, said being an NCO is a very important job.

-more-

FISCHER/3-3-3

“When I look back at my career, I think the thing I will remember most about being an NCO is that I was in a position to make a positive difference in somebody’s life,” said Fischer.



Staff Sgt. Matthew J. Fischer, squad leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, Washington Army National Guard, is on his third deployment to Iraq. “This deployment has been different from my previous two deployments in many ways, mostly due to the fact that I am serving this deployment with the National Guard,” said Fischer, a 28-year-old native of Marysville, Wash. “Though I am no longer a fulltime Soldier, coming on this deployment has really helped me to grow even more as a Leader.”