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Mississippi Guardsmen earn thunderbolt patch

By Capt. Murray Shugars
2/198th Combined Arms Battalion

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq —Soldiers from the Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 2/198th Combined Arms Battalion, of the Mississippi National Guard, formed up at the Base Defense Operations Center to receive a combat patch here September 13.

“It has been a proud Army tradition since World War One to award the Soldier with this emblem of participation in combat operations,” said Lt. Col. Kerry W. Goodman, commander, 2-198th CAB, and a native of Meridian, Miss. “I am proud to present this symbol of service personally to these great Americans and to shake each hand.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Perry T. Campbell, command sergeant major, 2/198 CAB, conducted the ceremony for the unit based out of Senatobia, Miss

“Last time the 155th Brigade Combat Team deployed to Iraq in 2005, some Soldiers never formally received the combat patch. Soldiers just starting wearing it without ceremony,” said Campbell, a Senatobia, Miss. native. “The patch is important and deserves an

occasion, for it represents a milestone in a military career. More than that, it instills pride and tightens the bond between Soldiers. It's a symbol of selfless service.”

The patch signifies wartime service, but it meant different things to different Soldiers. To one Soldier with less than a year in service, the patch represented a rite of passage.

“When I was in basic training and advanced individual training, all my NCOs had combat patches. They said that you earned that by going to war and that you wore the patch of whatever unit you deployed with,” said Pvt. Chadwick S. Davis, electronic warfare crew specialist, and Grenada, Miss., native. “I wanted one since then, and I’m proud to wear the thunderbolt patch of 155th.”

For other Soldiers, the combat patch was a symbol of personal sacrifice.

“My little sister, Miracle, cries when I talk to her on the phone and keeps asking me when I’m coming home. She’s going in 4th grade, and I always helped her with her homework. When I go home, I’m going to have to explain why I had to leave,” said Spc. Daktaryaie D. Fox, of Kosciusko, Miss., radio operator, Base Defense Operations Center. “I’m going to show her this patch on my right shoulder and explain that it shows my service. I’m going to tell her that I’m wearing it for her and my family and my friends. I’m wearing it for my country.”



Contingency Operating Location, Q-WEST, Iraq – During a September 13 ceremony awarding the houlder Sleeve Insignia for wartime service, Lt. Col. Kerry W. Goodman, commander and a native of Meridian, Miss., addresses members of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, Mississippi Army National Guard, out of Senatobia, Miss. Hereafter, these Soldiers will wear on their right shoulders the Thunderbolt patch of their parent unit, the 155th Brigade Combat Team. Photo by Capt. Christopher Wilton



Contingency Operating Location, Q-WEST, Iraq – Commander of 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, Mississippi Army National Guard, out of Senatobia, Miss., Lt. Col. Kerry W. Goodman, of Meridian, Miss., places a Shoulder Sleeve Insignia on the guidon bearer of Headquarters and Headquarters Company during a September 13 ceremony. For their wartime service, the Soldiers will hereafter wear on their right shoulders the Thunderbolt patch of their parent brigade, 155th Brigade Combat Team . Photo by Capt. John Satterfield