



**18th Engineer Brigade
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18th Eng. Bde. Chaplain's Office hosts prayer breakfast

Story by Pfc. David Huddleston, 18th Eng. Bde. Public Affairs

SCHWETZINGEN, Germany – The 18th Engineer Brigade Chaplain's Office hosted a prayer breakfast at the German Cantina on Tompkins Barracks here Nov. 23.

“The purpose of the prayer breakfast was to bring Soldiers together to hear a good message and to offer spiritual resiliency,” said Staff Sgt. Shairese Smith-Banks, the 18th Eng. Bde. chaplain's assistant from Chicago, Ill.

Maj. Khallid M. Shabazz, a U.S. Army Europe chaplain for plans, world religions and ethics from Alexandria, La., served as the guest speaker for the event.

Being of the Islamic faith, Shabazz was an excellent candidate for the guest speaker because he could “present the Soldiers with somebody of the same religion as the majority of the population of Afghanistan,” said Smith-Banks.

Shabazz was able to provide information and answer questions Soldiers had about the Islamic faith, which is beneficial as they prepare for an upcoming deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The theme of the breakfast was “Who are you and what is your obligation?” The idea was to be able to ask yourself who are you when there is no one around to salute you, said Shabazz.

“He had a good story to tell about his life experiences and overcoming obstacles to get to where he is today,” said Lt. Col. Terrence Hayes, the 18th Eng. Bde. chaplain and a native of Grants Pass, Ore.

Shabazz presented his message by telling everyone a story about how he joined the Army, wanting to play All-Army basketball and instead became a chaplain. He spoke about his childhood, his time spent as an enlisted servicemember and his journey to find that his obligation was to God.

“He spoke to the crowd in a very engaging manner,” said Smith-Banks. “It didn’t sound like you were being preached to, and people got a lot out of it because they were actually engaged in listening to his stories and how they tied in with the message.”

The 18th Eng. Bde. Chaplain’s Office hosts a quarterly prayer breakfast and a weekly Bible study class on Tompkins Barracks.



Maj. Khallid M. Shabazz, a U.S. Army Europe chaplain, speaks at a prayer breakfast Nov. 23 on Tompkins Barracks in Schwetzingen, Germany. The event was hosted by the 18th Engineer Brigade chaplain’s office. (Photo by Pfc. David Huddleston, 18th En. Bde. Public Affairs)



Col. Paul M. Paolozzi, the commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade and a native of Utica, N.Y., presents Chaplain Khallid M. Shabazz, a U.S. Army Europe chaplain originally from Alexandria, La., with a certificate of appreciation Nov. 23 on Tompkins Barracks in Schwetzingen, Germany. Shabazz served as the guest speaker for the event and offered information about the Islamic religion to participants seeking more information about the major religion in Afghanistan. (Photo by Pfc. David Huddleston, 18th En. Bde. Public Affairs)