

U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

contact: paoci@eur.army.mil
phone: 49-6221-57-5815 / DSN 370-5815
fax: 49-6221-57-6376 / DSN 370-6376



RELEASE #2007-11-14-03

Nov. 14, 2007

GRAFENWOEHR SERGEANT EARNS DISTINCTION AS EUROPE'S TOP ARMY MEDIC FOLLOWING 60-HOUR COMPETITION

By Ann Torphy

U.S. Army Medical Department Activity-Bavaria Public Affairs Office

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany -- A medical NCO here proved he has mastered Army medical and Soldier tasks when he was named "Top Medic in Europe" for 2008 in the rigorous 60-hour Expert Field Medical Challenge.



PHIL TEGTMEIER

Staff Sgt. Gabriel Camacho slides down the inverted rope on the obstacle course at the Grafenwoehr (Germany) Training Area while competing for the title of Europe Regional Medical Command NCO of the Year in February. Camacho took on the same course Nov. 4-6 as part of the Expert Field Medical Competition that earned him the title of U.S. Army Europe's "Top Medic" for 2008.

Staff Sgt. Gabriel Noel I. Camacho, NCO-in-charge of education and training at U.S. Army Medical Department Activity-Bavaria scored highest among nine candidates to earn top honors in the Nov. 4-6 event. Camacho will represent U.S. Army Europe in the Army Medical Command EFMC at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas next spring.

Command Sgt. Maj. James Diggs of the Europe Regional Medical Command hosted the awards ceremony for the EFMC at the Camp Aachen Chapel here. During the ceremony, Brig. Gen. David A. Rubenstein, USAREUR command

surgeon and commander of the Europe Regional Medical Command, presented Camacho the USAREUR EFMC trophy, an Army Achievement Medal and a commander's coin of excellence.

"You're all winners," Rubenstein told the candidates at the closing ceremony during which he announced the winner. "But one of you just had the most points. I'm going to

fund the top six of you to go back to Fort Sam Houston to compete for the title of Army's best medic."

Camacho was thrilled with Rubinstein's announcement to send six competitors to San Antonio.

"I am extremely excited to compete in the MEDCOM EFMC. This event has given me a clear perspective in terms of what I need to build upon in order to be successful at Fort Sam Houston. I sincerely hope I see all the same candidates from Europe compete down in San Antonio as well. We will definitely show the rest of the Army that there are warrior medics in Europe," he said.

"I truly appreciated the camaraderie. All the competitors supported each other as we engaged every gruesome event in the competition," added Camacho. "One of the great things about the competition was that it did challenge you both physically and technically. These are two aspects of being a combat medic that are crucial when fulfilling your duties while deployed, so it does help you gauge your combat readiness."

The sergeant said he attributes his success to "all the positive support from Bavaria MEDDAC that motivated me to give it my best throughout the competition."

Camacho also credited the support of his family. "I also have to point out the tremendous support I had from my wife and children, who have always inspired me to stay tough and give it my all," he said.

Candidates for the EFMC competition must have earned either the Expert Field Medical Badge or Combat Medical Badge. Camacho has both badges.

The EFMC competition consisted of challenges in land navigation; medical skills in a field setting; an obstacle course, and a 12-mile road march with full gear in three hours or less. Candidates were also tested on communication and warrior skill tasks.

In addition to Camacho, the EFMC competitors included Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Pace, Staff Sgt. Clifford Dash, and Sgt. Brian Ulrich of Landstuhl Regional Medical Center; Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Vatcher of 30th Medical Brigade; Staff Sgt. Dustin Miller of the 212th Combat Support Hospital; Sgt. Capillo Advincula of the U. S. Army Medical Department Activity-Heidelberg, and Sgt. Daniel Deluna and Cpl. Jeremiah Potts of the 123rd Medical Support Battalion, 1st Armored Division.



www.hqusareur.army.mil