



## Media Release

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### CRDAMC recognizes Soldier of the Year, NCO of the Year

By Kim Zamarripa

FORT HOOD, Texas – Sgt. Benjamin Taylor was named Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center Noncommissioned Officer of the Year C.R Darnall NCO and Spc. Jyvaris Wooden was named the Soldier of the Year during a ceremony held Jan 17 in the hospital auditorium.

“The NCO/Soldier of the Year Competition is designed to incorporate the total soldier concept. I believe that is the only way to select the right individual to represent us at Regional and MEDCOM level,” CSM Roger Velarde, CRDAMC command sergeant major said.



**Figure 1: Sgt. Roydon DeSouza, CRDAMC nutrition care department, simulates transport of soldier to a MEDDAVAC helicopter during the Soldier and NCO of the Year competition (Photo by Kim Zamarripa, CRDAMC Public Affairs).**

qualification, warrior and battle tasks, day and night land navigation, an eight- mile road march, a written essay and a board.

The topic for the essay was selected by Velarde, and graded based on content, clarity, grammar and proper format.

Wooden, who is a CRDAMC pharmacy technician from Youngstown, Ohio, also was named Soldier of the Fourth Quarter, which makes him eligible to compete in the Soldier of the Year Competition.

“It’s very exciting, being able to participate in something that tests your capabilities as a soldier,” he said.

Candidates were pushed to their physical limits by the grueling pace, testing their physical and mental limits Velarde said.

“The competition is very rigorous,” he said. “I believe that is the only way to select the right individual to represent us at Regional and

MEDCOM level.”

The criteria for the Soldier of the Year is difficult because it incorporates all elements of being a soldier to include physical fitness, weapons

“I’m looking for something that is strategic for our unit, our post and the Army. In answering the essay question, I get to see what their values are, what’s important and what is the standard for the Army. Their answers confirm if they are paying attention and they are in tune with Army strategy.” Velarde said.



Figure 2: From left: Sgt. Benjamin Taylor and SPC Wooden and Spc. Jyvaris Wooden stand at attention as they are recognized as the CRDAMC NCO of the Year and Soldier of the Year (photo by Kim Zamarripa, CRDAMC Public Affairs).

Sgt. Taylor, who already has earned a Bachelor’s degree and is working toward getting a Master’s, said he saw the competition as a stepping stone to his ultimate goal of becoming an officer.

“When I was doing this I was not only looking to be successful, but significant,” he said. “I love leading soldiers, and being an NCO. I’m always willing to provide my knowledge and experience to help others achieve the things that I have. I want them to see that if I can do it, so can they.”

Taylor and Wooden are now training for the Regional Competition and CRDAMC leadership have confidence that these soldiers will continue to help the Army Medical Command remain strong and continue the 2020 mission.

The time and location of the Regional/MEDCOM competitions have not yet been determined, but

CRDAMC’s NCO of the Year and Soldier of the Year will be ready.

### CUTLINES

Figure 1: Sgt. Roydon DeSouza, CRDAMC nutrition care department, simulates transport of soldier to a MEDDAVAC helicopter during the Soldier and NCO of Year competition (Photo by Kim Zamarripa, CRDAMC Public Affairs).

Figure 2: From left: Sgt. Benjamin Taylor and SPC Wooden and Spc. Jyvaris Wooden stand at attention as they are recognized as the CRDAMC NCO of the Year and Soldier of the Year (photo by Kim Zamarripa, CRDAMC Public Affairs).