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Public Affairs Office**

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**Scouts learn about American Indian heritage**

INDIAN

By Spc. Sean Dillard  
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CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Soldiers from the 16th Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, ate corn and turkey while they discussed the history of American Indians on Nov. 21.

“The aim for all heritage celebrations is to educate everyone on the contributions that each group has made and makes today,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Chun, commander, 16th STB. “As well as to expose people to different cultures which have added to the melting pot that is America.”

During the ceremony speakers read poetry, talked about American Indian history and read the presidential proclamation.

“I am very proud of my culture and where I came from,” said Staff Sgt. Erica Perkins, special guest speaker, supply non-commissioned officer in charge. “Oftentimes people forget about the American Indian.”

Perkins, 25, from Lumberton, N.C., and a member of the Chippewa tribe, discussed the

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many traditions of her tribe.

“Personally, I learned a lot about a few of the different tribes of American Indians and am humbled by their dedication to serving a country that in the past had treated them less-than-courteous,” said Chun.

The event was organized by Sgt. 1st Class Delia Villa, joint node network platoon sergeant, Bravo Co., 16th STB.

“I am privileged to be given the opportunity to be able to put together something of this importance,” said Villa.

Along with Perkins and Villa, Sgt. Walter Ashcraft, Staff Sgt. William Wolfe, Sgt. Jolonda Terry, and Air Force Staff Sgt. Jewaun McElroy helped prepare the luncheon.



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Lt. Col. Christopher Chun, commander, 16th Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Williams, command sergeant major, 16<sup>th</sup> STB, present a certificate of achievement to Air Force Staff Sgt. Jewaun McElroy after American Indian Heritage Month luncheon, Nov. 21. McElroy not only assisted in the preparation for the luncheon, but also sang the national anthem. “American Indian Heritage is a part of all our history as Americans and is worth looking into”, said McElroy, a Temple, TX, native. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Sean Dillard)



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Soldiers from the 16th Special Troop Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade ate corn and turkey while Staff Sgt. Erica Perkins discussed the history of the Chippewa Indians, Nov. 21. Perkins talked about the traditions still held by the Chippewa tribe today. "I am very proud of my culture and where I came from", said Perkins, a native of Lumberton, NC. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Sean Dillard)