



13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

Public Affairs Office, Joint Base Balad, Iraq
APO AE 09391

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RELEASE No. [Assigned by Press Desk]

[09 16, 2009] Volunteers recognized for thousands of hours of service

13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION- Q-West, Iraq – A banquet was held at the Sgt. Audie Murphy room at Q-West, Iraq Sept. 15. to recognize the volunteers of the 16th Sustainment Brigade’s chaplain programs.

The 16th SB, out of Bamberg, Germany is on their last few weeks of a 15 month deployment here.

Maj. James R. Boulware, 16th SB chaplain and Radcliff, Ky. native said the volunteer work the Soldiers did gave them something to do to keep their minds off this long deployment.

“It kept up their spiritual, emotional and mental fitness and was a great morale booster,” said Boulware. “If things were not going to well at work at times, the volunteer work seemed to bring joy and satisfaction to them when they were at the chapel.”

Boulware said the volunteers serve weekly in the chapel services and programs in such areas as music ministries, making bulletins, teaching and many are just there to help wherever needed.

Boulware said over the course of the deployment, volunteers have served in prayer breakfasts, women's and men's conferences, a Mother's Day luncheon and other programs.

The conferences were new programs implemented and presided over by the volunteers since coming in July 2008 said Boulware.

"These Soldiers started a lot of new programs," said Boulware. "We provided them with the resources, encouragement and guidance and they did the rest."

Approximately 40 Soldiers were recognized for their service and all received certificates of appreciation handed out by Boulware and Col. Martin B. Pitts, commander, 16th SB.

Sgt. Maj. Betty Bowers, 16th SB, support operations sergeant major and Mount Pleasant S.C. native said she participates in the gospel service, and has been the head usher for the whole deployment.

"It brings me a great joy that I can serve others and that is what volunteering is all about," said Bowers.

Two others Soldiers were distinguished with being "Volunteer of the deployment".

Capt. Antinita Graham, 16th SB support operations officer and Houston, Texas native was one of the recipients of this distinction.

Graham said she has pastored the multi-cultural gospel service, planned both women's conferences, assisted in baptisms and volunteered in whatever capacity was needed.

"Everybody has a purpose in life, my purpose is to serve God, help people live better, happier and stress free lives," said Graham. "Volunteering makes it a lot easier to cope with all the issues and stress that go along with long deployments."

The dinner ended with a cake cutting ceremony and closing words by Boulware.

"We want to just say thank you for the thousands of hours you have given to volunteer," said Boulware. "Thank you for all your hard work and for sharing your gifts and talents."

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Col. Martin B. Pitts, commander 16th Sustainment Brigade and Maj. James R. Boulware, 16th SB chaplain present a certificate of appreciation to Sgt.

Joseph Hernandez, 16th SB and the chapel drummer. Hernandez has volunteered his services since the beginning of the deployment.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. John Stimac)