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41st Trans. Co. returns from OEF, receives warm welcome home

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GRAFENWOEHR, Germany – The Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center here was jam-packed with the family, friends and loved ones Oct. 13 to welcome home 138 Soldiers from the 41st Transportation Company who returned to Germany after serving 12 months in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

While deployed the 41st Trans. Co., also known as the Frontrunners, served in three different locations across Afghanistan. They were Bagram Airfield, Camp Marmal and Camp Deh Dadi. They supported the 10th Mountain Division and 4th Combat Aviation Brigade during the Afghanistan surge from March through June by delivering various types of wheeled vehicles to the units.

After a year in a combat zone, Soldiers from the 41st Trans. Co. were happy to finally reunite with their families and were already making plans for the months ahead.

“My wife and I have been married for almost two years; half of that time I was deployed so it has been wonderful being able to spend so much quality time with her now,” said Spc. Sze Choi, a wheeled vehicle operator with the 41st Trans. Co. and a native of Los Angeles.

“My husband and I are planning on taking a few days just to relax and maybe make a road trip to Prague,” said Spc. Amber Williamson, a driver with the 41st Trans. Co. and a Denver native.

During the deployment, the 41st Trans. Co. moved more than 13,000 tons of cargo and drove more than 170,000 miles, completing more than 150 missions in all conditions and in the face of multiple enemy threats.

The Soldiers performed various missions to include material handling, security escorts for host nation civilian truck drivers and convoy logistics patrols, which delivered supplies to Regional Commands East and North.

“It was uplifting to see my Soldiers perform with such flexibility to the ever changing mission. We train to adapt, adjust and overcome, but it is heartening to see it happen before your eyes,” said 1st Lt. Dennis Rowe II, a 41st Trans. Co. platoon leader.

“This was my fourth deployment and, while coming home is always great, this time I got to redeploy with my wife. We served together downrange with the 41st (Trans. Co.), and because we are both Soldiers we understand the fast tempo of the reintegration process and are able to be each other’s support system as we adjust back into garrison life; doing all of this together is such a positive experience,” said Sgt. Aaron Alston, the 41st Trans. Co. operations noncommissioned officer.

“Our Soldiers were motivated at all times, even with three location moves,” said 1st Lt. Katie Steele, the executive officer for the 41st Trans. Co. “When things got tough, they gave 100 percent.”



First Sgt. Foy Dix leads the 138 redeploying Soldiers of the 41st Transportation Company into the Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center during their redeployment ceremony Oct. 13. (Photo by Spc. Robert Lynds, 18th CSSB Public Affairs)



Col. Avanulas Smiley preps the waiting family members and friends of the 41st Transportation Company as they are about to greet their redeploying Soldiers in the Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center Oct. 13. (Photo by Spc. Robert Lynds, 18th CSSB Public Affairs)



Spc. Sze Choi, a wheeled vehicle operator for the 41st Transportation Company, kisses his wife Tan after the 41st Trans. Co. redeployment ceremony in the Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center Oct. 13. (Photo by Spc. Robert Lynds, 18th CSSB Public Affairs)