

Postcards from Iraq

Friends For Life, Memories Forever...



There are some amazing people here in Iraq. The people working over here are doing so under sometimes extreme conditions. They are Corps employees, military service members and contractors all working together and they manage to accomplish their missions with a helpful and friendly manner. There are amazing people for an amazing mission.

They are also some of the most interesting people you'll meet. From the very beginning of my deployment at the Trans Atlantic Programs

Center, I've met people who are fully committed to taking you from non-deployable to deployment ready in just a short week. Also, going through TAC helps you network with other employees who are going to the same areas before you get 'boots on the ground' as they call it, giving you a chance to find a battle buddy and making the transition into a new way of life a little easier.

The RSOI teams, more simply put the folks who meet you in the middle of nowhere with the gleaming red castle sign, who get you on your way are fantastic! They were there to catch us when we arrived at the separate airports along the way to our duty stations; they herded us, dazed and confused from lack of sleep and jet lag into vehicles and took us to the proper areas, making sure we knew where we were going and what we had to do when we got there. Without these teams helping us, I believe deployment movement would grind to a halt!

There are things to do when you get over here in you free time. I have played volleyball with random folks in the middle of the night, played rugby-like Ultimate Frisbee and I've been to the country line dancing night at the U.S. Embassy – Saddam's former palace. We've got internet in our rooms and really

everything we need to be comfortable and focus on the mission – the mission takes at least 65 hours of week...if not more.

Now that I am here I have logged into my system which was waiting for me thanks to G-6 and started working. I am an Internal Review Evaluator for the Gulf Region Division. The hours fly by at work – the email piles up and slowly dwindles down until it is all gone – just about the time we get off work. The best part about the whole experience...I get to work with people who are rebuilding the country, one project, one building, one brick at a time.



Laura Long
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On the left I am "dealing cards" with Army IDs in Iraq; On the right I am acting cool while lost in tent city under 130 heat and 60-mph wind gusts with my new friends somewhere in Kuwait.