

Postcards from Iraq

Ya'at'eeh from Baghdad

By Theresa Esplain
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Ya'at'eeh from Camp Liberty, Baghdad, Iraq.

As a civilian working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) out of the Albuquerque District, I'm concluding a one-year tour in Baghdad. Working in partnership with the armed forces and Iraqi ministries, Corps volunteers throughout the U.S. are striving to improve and strengthen the Iraqi economy overseeing a variety of essential service projects involving electricity, water, sewer, hospitals, schools, fire and police stations and other new facilities. Although we wear the same desert camouflage uniform as the armed forces, our insignia says "USACE Civilian" and our main focus is helping rebuild this country.

The Iraqis appreciate our efforts and know our work will benefit them for decades to come. We're offering them a brighter future far different than what Saddam envisioned. We're making a positive difference in their lives and I can honestly say, likewise, this remarkable experience has made a difference in my life as well.

During my tour I have had the privilege of meeting and befriend-

ing several military active duty Native's from various tribes throughout the U.S. and most have safely deployed back to the U.S. There can never be enough said about the sacrifice, dedication, and unselfish service our military men and women give to this cause every day. The Iraqi people definitely want peace and cherish their newfound freedom. As I get ready to redeploy stateside, I hope and pray that someday harmony will come to this nation.

In conclusion, I'm grateful for the opportunity to volunteer for duty here. The Corps motto, ESSAYONS, means "LET US TRY" and for all of us at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers supporting this mission, it is a phrase we proudly embrace. ESSAYONS!

Theresa Esplain
Admin Assistant
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*Proud member
of the Navajo Nation*



Administrative Assistant Theresa Esplain (left)
and co-worker Melinda Marquis



Theresa Esplain and CSM Randall Cady.



Crossed Swords at Baghdad's International Zone.