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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release No. 12-033

March 06, 2012

Warrior competition to identify top service members

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – The United States Army Maneuver Support Center of Excellence and Fort Leonard Wood plan to host the 2012 Best Warrior Competition April 6-12 here.

About 30 competitors are expected to participate which will consist of 2011 drill sergeants, noncommissioned officers, advanced individual training platoon sergeants, Soldiers, joint service member NCO's and junior enlisted members of the quarter for the installation.

“Competitors are chosen by their brigades throughout the year as the best of the best,” Staff Sgt. Benjamin Facio, Fort Leonard Wood 2011 Drill Sergeant of the Year, said. “They have demonstrated above average qualifications in terms of mental agility, physical strength, and exemplify the total Warrior concept through their values and Warrior Ethos.”

Winners will be selected to represent Fort Leonard Wood for six categories: Drill Sergeant of the Year, Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Advanced Individual Training Platoon Sergeant of the Year, Soldier of the Year, Joint Service Member NCO of the Year and Junior Enlisted Service Member of the Year.

Competitors will face six full days of events from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Tasks for the competition will include marksmanship/weapons, first aid, duty specific tasks, physical readiness, and responses to a formal board.

“Participants will primarily work to complete individual tasks, but may be graded on how well they work as a team. They are evaluated not just on the task but overall as a Soldier how they carry themselves,” Sgt. 1st Class Kiana Bell, Fort Leonard Wood 2011 Advanced Individual Training Platoon Sergeant of the Year, said.

(more)

Bell said this year's Best Warrior Competition will prepare competitors to think on their feet and manage fatigue if they move on to the next level of competition.

The local Drill Sergeant of the Year winner will go on to participate in the Training and Doctrine Drill Sergeant of the Year competition scheduled to take place at Ft. Eustis, in Newport News, Va., from June 23-30,.

The other winners will go on to compete in various other competitions throughout the year.

Fort Leonard Wood will nominate a runner up to fill each of the competing positions in the event that the primary nominee fails to meet the eligibility criteria.

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Photo outline:

Official Service Photo 2011 winners:

Fort Leonard Wood 2011 Drill Sergeant of the Year Staff Sgt. Benjamin Facio

Fort Leonard Wood Advanced Individual Training Platoon Sergeant of the Year Sgt. 1st Class Kiana Bell

Fort Leonard Wood Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Staff Sgt. Jessie Salas

Fort Leonard Wood Soldier of the Year Spc. Milana Taylor

DSC_0014: Working with Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Wells, Maneuver Support Center of Excellence and Fort Leonard Wood command sergeant major, Staff Sgt. Facio and Sgt. 1st Class Bell are credited with spearheading a new Drill Sergeant and Advanced Individual Platoon Sergeant Indoctrination program during their tenure here. The program which began in Sept. 2011, is offered monthly to provide newly arrived Drill Sergeants and Advanced Individual Platoon Sergeants certification on range safety, training aids, the Engagement Skills Trainer, Wet Bulb temperature, hot/cold weather injuries and the procedures they will need to know while they are assigned here.

Facio.jpg: Fort Leonard Wood's 2011 Drill Sergeant of the Year Staff Sgt. Benjamin Facio Facio says it was a humbling experience to win the 2011 competition here and he is ready to get back to his unit, to train more Soldiers and get back to the fight.

Bell.jpg: Sgt. 1st Class Kiana Bell has enjoyed seeing a bigger picture of the Army in her recent role as Fort Leonard Wood Advanced Individual Training Platoon Sergeant of the Year. "For me the experience has enhanced my skills as a leader and makes me a more versatile person. This has been a great opportunity."