



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
BRAVO BATTERY, 1ST BATTALION, 79TH FIELD ARTILLERY
6007 ROTHWELL STREET
FORT SILL OKLAHOMA 73503

10 March 2016

Dear Friends and Family Members,

My name is Captain Robert Simmons. The Battery First Sergeant, First Sergeant Shandrel Stewart and I make up the Command Team for your Soldier during their time in Basic Combat Training. Your Soldier has arrived safely at Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 79th Field Artillery, part of the 434th Field Artillery Brigade at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Your loved one is here to learn how to become a Soldier in the U.S. Army. You can rest assured knowing that your Soldier is in the hands of the most dedicated and experienced Drill Sergeants and cadre in the Army. Bravo Battery Drill Sergeants and cadre are professional Soldiers with multiple combat tours and extensive training. We will instruct your Soldier in the Warrior Ethos, Warrior Tasks, and Battle Drills. Developing your Soldier is our mission. We are genuinely concerned about their health, welfare, and graduation from Basic Combat Training.

Over the next nine weeks your Soldier will learn a variety of skills that will transform them from a civilian into a Soldier. Your Soldier will gain the basic skills required to fight and win on the modern battlefield. Training will be very strenuous and demanding. The tasks your Soldier is performing are designed to build the discipline and self-confidence necessary to be a successful Soldier in today's Army. Physical training is a daily event. They will be taught the importance of customs, traditions, policies, and procedures of the U.S. Army. Soldiers will learn how to engage the enemy with a rifle, hand grenade, and through hand to hand fighting techniques. Lifesaving skills such as care for casualties through first aid and navigation with a map and a compass are an important component of your Soldier's military education.

Your Soldier is extremely busy so do not expect regular communication. Written communication is often more reliable than phone calls. I encourage you to write to your Soldier because support from home goes a long way. We will permit a call home within the first week of training as well as on weekends when their platoon is **deserving of the privilege** and when training requirements permit. If you wish to send a package, do not send magazines, weapons, food, or other contraband items (soda, candy, electronics, tobacco, pornography, etc). Examples of things that are ok to send are toiletries and

photographs. Letters and packages should be mailed to (get the PLT # from your Soldier):

(Line 1) Soldiers' Name
(Line 2) Bravo Battery, 1-79 FA, PLT #____
(Line 3) 6007 Rothwell Street
(Line 4) Fort Sill, OK 73503

Should an emergency arise, the only means of notifying your Soldier is through your local American Red Cross. To speak to a Red Cross Emergency Communications Specialist call: 1-877-272-7337. The field office in your vicinity will contact the Lawton, Oklahoma field office who will in turn contact me. In dire emergencies affecting immediate family members (sibling or parent), emergency leave may be granted. Other leaves of absence during training are not normally authorized. If in the unlikely event something should happen to change your Soldier's health and welfare, I, the Battery Commander will personally let you know.

For your calendar, Family Day will be on 12 May at 0900 at Destroyer Park (on-post) and Graduation will be on 13 May at 1000 at McMahon Memorial Auditorium (off-post). We have a Facebook page we use to keep you updated and more letters will follow with strip maps and directions to each location.

The policy for visitors to Fort Sill requires a pass to be issued for each non-DOD person over the age of 16 prior to access. Please visit <http://sill-www.army.mil/vcc/> for all information concerning Visitor's Passes. We have enclosed the background check form **(FS FORM 118a)** which you will need to complete and mail to:

Visitor Control Center (VCC)

T6701 Sheridan Road

Fort Sill, Okla. 73503

***Do NOT mail it to the battery as we cannot view your personal information.**

It is important that you make enough copies of this form for each person who you expect to attend the Family Day/Graduation before you fill them out and mail them. The reason is that this form has information such as your Soldier's name and special instructions to the VCC. Please send them to the VCC address within a week of receiving this letter so that we can ensure they are processed and your passes are mailed to each of you. We will work to mail all of the passes to the family members/friends about three weeks prior to Graduation. If a family member or friend decides to attend at the last minute they will simply need to go to the VCC prior to coming on base.

We encourage you to log into Facebook and search “Bravo Battery 1-79” or utilize the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/B179FA> . We keep this site up to date so you know what training your Soldier is doing. We also post pictures so you may get a chance to see your Soldier in action. The most up to date information about graduation and family day will be posted on our Facebook page.

The Army Family Team Building program provides valuable information that introduces families to the Army and the Army way of life. Families who complete the online training will gain a better understanding of what their Soldier is experiencing. In addition, upon our email receipt of your Level 1 certificate, your Soldier will be allowed a “shout-out” on our Facebook page in the form of a short video. The link to the training is below. If you have any questions feel free to contact me or my First Sergeant by email or phone.

<https://www.myarmyonesource.com/familyprogramsandservices/familyprograms/armyfamilyteambuilding/default.aspx>

In closing, your Soldier is our mission. Without them, we would not be here. I will do whatever it takes to see that your Soldier is successful, but your son or daughter has to want to become a part of the U.S. Army. Encourage your Soldier to succeed and they will, just like the many who have come before. Thank you all!

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Respectfully,

ROBERT J. SIMMONS
CPT, CM
Commanding

SHANDREL E. STEWART
1SG, USA
First Sergeant