

Falcon Brigade career counselor to compete at Corps

Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Mills
Avn. Bde. Public Affairs

Most Soldiers, when given the opportunity to compete against their peers at a Soldier of the Year board, will say they're doing it for career enhancement, personal accolades, or to gain experience for a promotion board.

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Quick, career counselor, 3rd Infantry Division Combat Aviation Brigade, is not one of those Soldiers. Quick went to the 3rd ID Career Counselor of the Year Board so he could create a study guide for other career counselors.

"I never saw a Career Counselor of the Year study guide," Quick said, "and to make it, I had to go through the board to see what it was like."

Not only did Quick learn first hand about the board, but he also won it. Next week he will travel to Fort Bragg and the XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters where he will compete for the XVIII ABN Corps Career Counselor of the Year.

The Career Counselor of the Year Board is like any other board, said Quick, except the questions asked are only about retention. In order to make it to the board you have to "make mission," said Quick. There

are three basic types of Soldiers the career counselors work with, Quick said, initial enlistment, mid-career enlistment, and career enlistment. You have to meet your goals for each area, and all the areas combined, in order to make mission.

Once you've made mission, and are within all other military parameters such as height and weight, you can compete at the board.

The board itself is made up of the division retention sgt. major and several senior non-commissioned officers from the division career counselor office. They ask questions that go into the details of retention. Many of the questions are the same types of questions a Soldier would ask the career counselor in his office.

There's a Army Reserve career counselor on the board as well. A good career counselor, Quick said, will be able to help a Soldier transition from the Active Army to the Reserves.

"If people want to get out," Quick said, "you have to tell them the benefits they could have and how they could continue their career."

If Quick makes it through the XVIII Airborne Corps Career Counselor of the Year Board with a

win he will compete at the U.S. Army Forces Command competition, October 31.

The Corps and FORSCOM competitions will be tougher than Division, said Quick. There'll be more "situational-type" questions. Besides questions about programs like officer candidate school and warrant officer school, and the details pertaining to programs like those, the board will ask more complicated, broader questions.

"They may ask questions like, 'How can we improve retention overall?'" said Quick. Answering questions like those will demand a broad knowledge base of the system, and a lot of preparation and hard work.

Quick, though, said that for the Division-level board he didn't have to work hard at all. "I didn't study that often," he said. "If every counselor knows the job they can win this board."

"Hard work and a good work ethic is how he succeeds," countered Master Sgt. Barry Norris, brigade career counselor, 3rd ID CAB. Since joining the aviation brigade two weeks before deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III in late 2005 Quick has

enlisted more than 400 people, Norris said.

Quick's hard work, combined with his extensive knowledge base helped win the board, said Norris. "What he doesn't know he knows where to look," Norris said.

Quick doesn't have to look too far beyond his own website, www.armyreenlistment.com, which lists information and resources for Army reenlistment. Quick had seen a need for a more convenient way to access information that's readily available on the web so he created the website.

Norris, who uses it in conjunction with the Total Army Retention Program website, said Quick's site is easier to use than the TARP site. "That's where I get all of my information," he said.

Creating a board study guide, creating a website and helping Soldiers with their careers is all part of the way Quick works. The reason he became a career counselor, he said, was to reach as many Soldiers as possible.

"Being a squad leader and helping Soldiers, you can help 10 at a time," said Quick. "(As a career counselor) you can help countless Soldiers, a battalion and brigade at a time."



Sgt. 1st Class thomas Mills

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Quick prepares to compete at Fort Bragg to be the XVIII Airborne Corps Career Counselor of the Year.