

**South Dakota National Guard
Public Affairs Office
2823 West Main St.
Rapid City, S.D. 57702**

**Phone 605-737-6721
E-mail PAO@sd.ngb.army.mil**

**April 9, 2008
PAO 04-09-08**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Guard's transformation provides public affairs opportunities

By Spc. Andrew Turner and Pvt. Alex Abraham

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. – The Army National Guard's recent transformation provides a new opportunity to expand the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment's (MPAD) support throughout the state.

The opening of its new office, Friday, at the local Army National Guard armory adds eight new traditional military journalist positions to support the overall public affairs mission.

The 129th MPAD's mission is to provide command and public information, through print and broadcast journalism, to the members of the South Dakota National Guard and community members throughout the state and beyond. The unit has a long history of telling the National Guard story worldwide through military and civilian media outlets.

Lt. Col. Mark Johnston, 881st Troop Command commander, understands the benefits of having a public affairs office in Sioux Falls in addition to Rapid City, stating that two thirds of the SDNG is on the east side of the state. Johnston shared his valuable experience with the unit, discussing the advantages of utilizing today's information technology to tell the National Guard story to the public.

Having 15 years of military and civilian experience in public affairs, Johnston emphasized using modern tools such as Podcasts, forums, and online blogs.

-30-

FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact Maj. Orson Ward at (605)-737-6721, cell (605)-431-8753 or Capt. Lona Wiens at (605)-737-6540.

Photo outline: (Sioux Falls, S.D.) - Lt. Col. Mark Johnston, commander 881st Troop Command located in Sturgis, S.D., shares his military and civilian public affairs experience with his subordinate unit, the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment 2,

during its first drill in Sioux Falls. Army Photo by 1st Sgt. Donald Matthews
(RELEASED)

Link to Photo: <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/released/080405-A-5701M-488.jpg>