

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Youth compete in 153rd En. Battalion Warrior Challenge

By Sgt. John Hittle
153rd Engineer Battalion

HURON, S.D. — The South Dakota Army National Guard's 153rd Engineer Battalion held a unique and challenging recruiting event – The Warrior Challenge 2012 – on July 21 in Pierre.

More than 120 high school and college students and young adults participated in the event to receive a glimpse of the training and activities the 153rd performs.

Capt. Thomas Wilcox, of Huron, and commander of the 153rd's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, felt the event went exceptionally well.

"The Warrior Challenge 2012 was a tremendous success. We had over 120 young men and women from around the state representing the battalion's seven units," he said. "The participants ran through six challenging and exciting lanes giving 100 percent effort. It gave them a small taste of the training and activities we perform in the 153rd."

The youth participated in events ranging from a capture the flag paintball lane, Humvee pull lane, construction lane, wounded warrior lane, M-16 weapons qualification lane and the U.S. Army's new proposed combat physical fitness test.

All the battalion's companies were represented by teams competing for individual awards. A traveling trophy was the top prize for the company with the highest overall score, which was presented to the 153rd's Forward Support Company from Parkston.

The battalion had put on similar events in the past with great success. The inaugural Warrior Challenge and support to regenerate these types of events started with Howard resident and 153rd Engineer Battalion commander, Lt. Col. Patrick Pardy.

"Lt. Col. Patrick Pardy was the main force behind this. This event was a tool to boost recruiting in the state," said Wilcox. "The battalion, prior to transformation, use to do something similar to this at the Yankton Boy Scout area."

Wilcox said this was a demanding day requiring teamwork and camaraderie, and the Soldiers and young adults arose to the challenges and made this event a success.

"It was a hot day by the river and the participants and Soldiers represented the South Dakota Army National Guard with pride," he said. "The support from the companies was unprecedented."

High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/southdakotationalguard
Additional stories and information are online at www.facebook.com/southdakotationalguard



120721- A-AB123-001: High school and college students and young adults compete in the wounded warrior lane to evacuate a casualty during The Warrior Challenge 2012 held in Pierre, S.D., July 21, 2012. (SDNG photo by Sgt. John Hittle)(RELEASED)



120721- A-AB123-002: South Dakota Army National Guard coaches and young adults representing the 153rd Engineer Battalion, Forward Support Company, of Parkston, S.D., pose with the traveling trophy for having the highest overall score after The Warrior Challenge 2012 held in Pierre July 21, 2012. (SDNG photo by Sgt. John Hittle)(RELEASED)

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