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Cookeville Soldier Named Top Recruiting and Retention NCO in the Southeast

By: 1st Lt. Kealy Moriarty, Tennessee National Guard

KEY WEST, Fla. – Staff Sgt. Aaron McDermott, assigned to Alpha Company, Recruiting and Retention Battalion for the Tennessee National Guard, was awarded the Southeast Recruiting and Retention NCO of the Year, after competing against recruiters from nine different states and territories, Nov. 20.

The top recruiters from AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, PR, SC, and VI competed during a week-long battalion board meeting, hosted by the Florida National Guard, to recognize the top Strength Maintenance Area Group III Recruiting and Retention NCO. There are seven SMAGs in the country; group III represents the southeast region.

The board is knowledge-based and consists of questions regarding their craft, basic soldier skills, and leadership skills while evaluating their production, retention, and how they contribute to their community.

“To begin this process, Staff Sgt. Aaron McDermott competed against over 100 recruiters in the state of Tennessee to then be selected as one of the top nine recruiters in the state. After this, the top nine compete before a board to then be selected as the Recruiting and Retention NCO of the Year,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Owens, Recruiting and Retention’s command sergeant major. “From there, he competed in a regional board against nine other Recruiting and Retention NCO’s of the Year in the Southeast region. His accomplishments in achieving this award go to prove his hard work, and hard work ethic really paid off.”

McDermott now qualifies to compete in the National Recruiter of the Year Board held in Spring 2021.

“This has been the greatest personal achievement in my military career, the amount of work I put into this process was gratifying, and I enjoy every minute,” said McDermott.

McDermott became a recruiter in 2017 and resides in Cookeville, Tennessee, with his family. He sends special thanks to his wife Jill and daughters Ava and Adalyn for their unwavering support towards his career and to the Recruiting and Retention Battalion family.



(Courtesy Photo: Staff Sgt. Aaron McDermott poses with his wife Jill after being awarded the Strength Maintenance Area Group III (Southeast region) Recruiting and Retention NCO of the Year, Nov. 20.)

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