

Female Signal Soldier sets historical mark at The Citadel

By Lt. Col Mark Rosenstein

SFC Kristen Nelson, a Signal Soldier recently made history by becoming the first Army female NCO to serve as permanent cadre at the Citadel in Charleston, S.C.

An official statement from the U.S. Army Human Resources Command, Signal Enlisted Branch offered congratulations to SFC Nelson a 25U Soldier. "Her selection exemplifies her outstanding performance and future potential to the Regiment and our Army."

SFC Nelson was born in Dudley, Mass where she attended Shepherd Hill regional high school. She entered active duty in 1996, attended basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C. and graduated Advanced Individual Training as a 25U, Signal Support System Specialist, from Fort Gordon, Ga. Her duties have taken her around the country and world. At Fort Drum, N.Y. she served as a retransmission team leader, Signal support systems team chief, battalion S-3 schools NCO, and an information systems operator-analyst. At Fort Gordon she served as an instructor/ writer. At Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. she served as a senior drill sergeant and at Fort Stewart, Ga., she served as a communications chief. In 2009, she deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn.

Her military education includes the Warrior Leadership Course, the Advanced Leaders Course, the Senior Leaders Course, the Drill Sergeant School, the Total Army Instructor Course, the Equal Opportunity Leaders Course, and the U.S. Air Force Airlift Planner Course. Her civilian education includes an Associate of Science degree in early childhood education.

Her service is recognized with the Bronze Star Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Army Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters, and the Army Good Conduct Medal among others.

In her own words

"I initially joined the Army to further my educational goals, however, I now find that the Army provides me with a rewarding environment to learn, grow, and lead. My continued service in the military allows me to support my family while serving my country. I joined the Signal Corps



SFC Class Kristen Nelson serving as the 26th Signal Brigade Support Battalion S-6 communications chief.

because it afforded me the best opportunity to contribute to the mission. I felt that a job in communications would suit me best. Army communications was on the cutting edge of technology, was oriented towards the future, and was my number one choice for military service.

My most memorable experiences include being a drill sergeant where I had the privilege of training civilians and making them into Soldiers and deploying to Iraq where I had the honor of serving our country in combat and the responsibility of ensuring every member of my S-6 team returned safely. I look forward to continuing to grow as an NCO, serving as a first sergeant and becoming a command sergeant major. The Army has undoubtedly made me a better person and leader."

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