

First Soldier receives \$2k from Reserve Recruiting Assistance Program

U.S. ARMY RESERVE

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – Pvt. Dustin McMore of Conway, Ark., became \$2,000 richer July 16 as the first recipient of the Army Reserve Recruiter Assistance Program bonus.

To qualify for the bonus, McMore recruited his friend, Pvt. Trent Harris, also from Conway, into the Army Reserve.

McMore learned about the bonus opportunity from his recruiter, Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Covington Sr., just days after enlisting to be a food service specialist with the 460th Chemical Brigade.

“I make sure everyone I put in knows about AR-RAP and the SMART (Sergeant Major of the Army Recruiting Team) program. I also called my prior Soldiers and told them about it,” said Covington.

McMore and Harris, who will also

be a food service specialist with the 460th Chem. Bde., headed to basic training July 19.

The Army Reserve launched AR-RAP last month. Recruiter assistants earn \$2,000 for helping identify qualified recruits – an initial payment of \$1,000 when the potential recruit signs a contract, then a second \$1,000 upon successful completion of basic training.

Covington said he has high hopes for the program.

“I believe this is the tip of the iceberg. It’s going to change the way Reserve recruiting is done,” he said, adding that it helps eliminate mistrust people may have in recruiters. “When you have a referral there’s an automatic level of trust.”

To become a recruiter assistant, Soldiers must first complete online training at www.ar-rap.com.



SGT. 1ST CLASS LARRY J. MEARS

Pvt. Dustin McMore is presented a \$2,000 check from Megan Kincaid after being named the first recipient of a bonus offered by the Army Reserve Recruiter Assistance Program.

“So far more than 5,000 Army Reserve Soldiers have signed up for the online training, and this is an excellent indicator the program is working,” said Lt. Col. Robert Humphrey, chief, Army Reserve Accessions.

RAs may not establish Web sites to procure contact information, visit schools without the presence of locally assigned recruiters or place ads in newspapers and magazines on behalf of AR-RAP.

VA suicide hotline begins operations

ARMY NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON - To ensure veterans with emotional crises have round-the-clock access to trained professionals, the Department of Veterans Affairs has opened a national suicide prevention hotline for veterans.

“Veterans need to know these VA professionals are literally a phone call away,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson. “All service-members who experience the stresses of combat can have wounds on their minds as well as their bodies. Veterans should see mental health services as another benefit they have earned, which the men and women of the VA are honored to provide.”

The toll-free hotline number is 1-800-273-TALK (8255). VA’s hotline will be staffed by mental health professionals in Canandaigua, N.Y. They will take toll-free calls from across the country and work closely with local VA mental-health providers to help callers.

To operate the national hot line, VA is partnering with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services.

“The hotline will put veterans in touch - any time of the day or night, any day of the week, from anywhere in the country - with trained, caring professionals who can help,” added Nicholson. “This is another example of the VA’s commitment to provide world-class health care for our nation’s veterans, especially combat veterans newly returned from Iraq and Afghanistan.”

The suicide hotline is among several enhancements to mental health care that Nicholson has announced this year. In mid-July, the department’s top mental health professionals convened here to review the services provided to veterans of the war on terror.

VA is the largest provider of mental health care in the nation. This year, the department will spend about \$3 billion for mental health. More than 9,000 mental health professionals, backed up by primary-care physicians and other health professionals in every VA medical center and outpatient clinic, provide mental health care to about 1 million veterans each year.

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