

MY LIFE

My Life as an Army Recruiter

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Abstract

The United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) is committed to “Providing Strength.” Recruiters must continue to prospect for qualified men and women day in and day out.

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In 1984, I enlisted in the United States Army as a Cannon Crew Member with a Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) of 13B. I performed this job for almost ten years until the Department of the Army (DA) selected me for recruiting duty in January 1993. I attended the Basic Army Recruiting Course at Fort Benjamin Harrison, IN from 25 April 1993 to 7 June 1993. Following right after graduation from the Army Recruiting Course, I reported to the Southern California Recruiting Battalion, San Diego Recruiting Company with duty at San Diego Central Recruiting Station where I performed duties as a detailed recruiter from 14 July 1993 to 5 January 1996. During the first part of 1993, I decided to put in a request to convert from MOS 13B to 00R which was later changed to MOS 79R. In January 1996, my first assignment as a full time recruiter was a Limited Production Station Commander (LPSC) for the University Recruiting Station, San Diego Recruiting Company where I was responsible for 8 Regular Army recruiters and 1 Army Reserve recruiter. This recruiting station is the largest recruiting station in the battalion. In April 1997, The Southern California Recruiting Battalion Leadership Team (BLT) selected me to be the Battalion Recruiter Trainer until January 1999. Upon completion of my tour of duty as Recruiter Trainer, I assumed duties of a Large Station Commander for the Chula Vista Recruiting Station, La Mesa Recruiting Company until May 2001. In July 2001, I reported to the Los Angeles Recruiting Battalion, Los Angeles, CA with duty at Fresno Recruiting Company as the Company First Sergeant from July 2001 to October 2004. In May 2004, the 6th Recruiting Brigade Command Sergeant Major selected to me to be the next 6th Recruiting Brigade Master Trainer. In October 2004, I reported to the 6th Recruiting Brigade Headquarters located in Las Vegas, NV as the Brigade Master Trainer until July 2006.

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My life as an Army recruiter all started when I received a mail from the Headquarters, United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC), Fort Knox, KY notifying of my selection to recruiting duty and my report date to attend the Basic Army Recruiting Course (ARC) at Ft. Benjamin Harrison, IN. My initial reaction was “Wow, I am going to be an Army recruiter!!” Being an Army recruiter was never in my dream nor have I ever considered of becoming one. I knew right then that my days in the Artillery field were coming near to an end. I reported to Ft. Benjamin Harrison in April 1993. The Basic Army Recruiting Course was a six weeks course where I learned the recruiter’s five critical tasks; Prospecting, Processing of applicants, Sales Interview, Delayed Entry Program Management, and Follow up. Besides learning the five critical tasks, the ARC enabled me to improve my leadership, interpersonal, and management skills. I graduated ARC in June of 1993 where I received the Basic Recruiter Badge. My first duty assignment after graduating from the Army Recruiting Course was with the San Diego Recruiting Company with duty at San Diego Central Recruiting Station. To be considered a qualified recruiter, I must demonstrate abilities to be able put at least two contracts per month. During this time, I was put on a New Recruiter Program for nine months where I undergone a series of observations, training, and evaluations from the Company First Sergeant and the Recruiting Station Commander. As a recruiter, I was responsible for prospecting processing, and enlisting qualified individuals into the Regular Army and Army Reserves (USAR) in support of the recruiting station mission and overall needs of the Army. My First Sergeant at that time was 1SG Nolen and my Station Commander was SFC Avila. I was fortunate to have two of the best leaders in the recruiting command who provided me with excellent training on how to be a great

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Army recruiter. While assigned as a detailed recruiter, I was responsible for three zip codes, two traditional High Schools, and a Community College. I completed the 9 month New Recruiter Program within the 5th month of being in the program. In the beginning of 1994, I received the Gold Recruiter Badge.

In mid 1994, I decided to convert from MOS 13B to MOS 00R. In October 1994, my conversion papers came back and awarded me the MOS 00R. In January 1995, I took over as the station commander for the University Recruiting Station located approximately 15 miles east of downtown San Diego, CA. It was a very challenging assignment. The station was a multi-man station and ranked number 39 out of 41 stations within the Southern California Recruiting Battalion. Being the station commander for the University Recruiting Station, I was responsible for commanding, supervising, training, and the welfare of 8 Regular Army recruiters and 1 Army reserve recruiter to accomplish the recruiting station mission with absolute integrity while observing all current policies and regulations. Station Commanders are the “Center of Gravity” of the U.S. Army Recruiting Command. In addition, the station recruiting zone consists of 14 traditional High Schools, 24 Zip Codes, 1 four year college, and a community college; a total area coverage of 18 square miles and an average monthly mission of 15 RA contracts and 3 USAR contracts. In 1996, I attended the Recruiting Station Commander Course at Ft. Jackson, SC where I received training on; Managing and Analyzing system resources, Evaluating and Training personnel, and driving performance with a recruiting station. Since this was my first time being a station commander, I went through serious trials and tribulations. During my first few days at the station, I was able to conduct a thorough assessment of the soldiers, their

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competency level, and the market. Based on my initial assessment, I found that recruiters were not motivated, teamwork did not exist, recruiters lack the will to win, and they neglected the station recruiting zone. My priorities were; to build a team, lead the station to success through proper training while providing purpose, direction, and motivation. Not long, production of the station increased, recruiters work as a team and got the taste of success. The recruiting ended up being the number 1 Large Station in the Southern California Recruiting Station during Fiscal Year 97. In June of 1996, I received the coveted Army Recruiter Ring for recruiting excellence.

During the spring of 1997, the Southern California Recruiting Battalion selected me to be the Battalion Recruiter Trainer (RT). As the Battalion RT, I was the advisor to the Battalion Leadership Team (BLT) and responsible for conducting and coordinating a Battalion Annual Training Conference and the training of over 120 recruiters. One of the first things that I learned as a recruiter trainer was that you have to be very approachable. Recruiters should be able to talk to you and you for any assistance in any matter without hesitation. During my tenure as the Battalion Recruiter Trainer, USAREC implemented the automated system and fielded the Army Recruiting Information System (ARISS). My role during the fielding of the ARISS was to train all the Company Leadership Teams (CLT), Recruiting Station Commanders, and the recruiters on the proper use and operation of the ARISS. It took us almost one year to field, and train the entire battalion. During the FY 99 Annual Training Conference, the Battalion Leadership Team (BLT) selected me as the "Recruiter Trainer of the Year FY 99."

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Upon completion of my tour as the Battalion trainer, I requested to run the Chula Vista Recruiting Station; another Large Station. Chula Vista Recruiting Station was in a big turmoil at the time. Chula Vista Recruiting Station belonged to the La Mesa Recruiting Company under the command of CPT Demelli and First Sergeant Richardson. Three consecutive station commanders of the station received a Relief for Cause NCOER due to lack of leadership and station production. There was another big challenge waiting for me as I took charge of the station. The size of the station was 9 Regular Army recruiters and 1 Army Reserve recruiter. The station average mission every month was 10 Regular Army contracts and 2 Army Reserve contracts. Each year, we always ended up writing over 160 combined volume contracts. Although the station had a great market for recruiting, there were similar problems as the University Recruiting Station. No team work, recruiters were out of control, they were not working the market, and they were also in the bottom five of the battalion in terms of production. Again, after my initial assessment of the station, I came into conclusion that Leadership was the only thing missing at the station. Recruiters of the station were sharp, highly motivated, but lack guidance from a station commander. Through effective training, mentorship, and counseling, I was able to get each individual recruiter reach their potentials. With my leadership along with the motivation and enthusiasm of recruiters, we were able to set a record in the battalion for writing 28 contracts in one month. In Fiscal Year 2000, the station became the number 1 station in the battalion and ranked among the Top 10 percent in the 6th Recruiting Brigade.

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Upon completion of my tour at Chula Vista RS, I became the Company First Sergeant for the Fresno Recruiting Company. The company falls under the Los Angeles Recruiting Battalion. The Battalion Commander at that time was LTC Kemp who was later replaced by LTC Marsh upon completion of his two year tour as the Battalion Commander and the Battalion Command Sergeant Major was CSM Funk. The story of the Fresno Recruiting Company was no different than the two previous recruiting stations that I ran as a station commander. Fresno Recruiting Company is located in the Central Valley between San Francisco and Los Angeles, CA. The company composed of a Company Commander, a First Sergeant, 33 Regular Army recruiters, 2 Army reserve recruiters, a Civilian Recruiter, and a Company Administrative Secretary. The time that I assumed responsibility of the company, Fresno Recruiting Company ranked number 7 out of 7 companies in the Los Angeles Recruiting Battalion. It took me almost 15 months to fix the existing problems of the company. The Battalion Leadership Team almost lost confidence in my abilities as a company First Sergeant and was considering firing or replacing me. Before, I was concentrating so much with the recruiters instead of the station commanders. I failed to realize that station commanders were placed in that position for many reasons but mainly to run the stations and be in charged of the stations. As I shifted my focus on the station commanders, I started to witness and increase of great work ethic from the entire company and the production started to rise. In Fiscal Year 2001, the company rose to the top and became the number company in the battalion and number 5 overall in the 6th Recruiting Brigade out of 52 companies. I have to mention that without the help of a great officer, CPT George O. Mims, later promoted to Major, the success of the Fresno Company would have never happen. Major Mims was “The Best” officer I’ve ever worked for. He listened to his NCOs, provided with his clear Vision and

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Command Philosophy, and allowed his NCOs to execute the mission. I spent three years as the company First Sergeant and I could have done it for 5 more years.

In 2004, the 6th Recruiting Brigade Command Sergeant Major, CSM LaPlante selected me to be the Brigade Master Trainer. My job as the Brigade Master Trainer was to train the trainers across 9 battalions including 2,300 recruiters. I was also responsible for training management of the brigade area of operation covering 15 western states and the Pacific Rim. In February 2005, the United States Recruiting Command implemented the new recruiting doctrine. Bottom line is, the sales doctrine became obsolete. Instead, recruiters focus more on assisting future soldier prospects develop life goal setting and illustrate how these goals can be accomplished.

In conclusion, Leadership does make a difference. Units in the recruiting can only be as successful as what leaders can provide.