

## **ARNG Patriot Academy**

### **What is it?**

The Patriot Academy, based at the MUTTC, is the nation's first accredited military academy that awards a high school diploma. The Patriot Academy enrolls qualified initial entry Soldiers that have not completed their high school education and provides them with the opportunity to earn a high school diploma. Soldiers receive full-time military pay and benefits as they receive education and military training. While at the Patriot Academy, students work in a web based environment to complete high school degree requirements. Soldiers use the federal tuition assistance program for enrollment into the degree program. Soldiers conduct military training to include instruction on military operations in urban terrain, traffic control points, and other skill areas. Enlistees attend Army BCT and then arrive at the Patriot Academy to begin their studies. Upon graduation from the Patriot Academy, the Soldier attends advanced individual training (AIT). Upon completion of AIT, the soldier returns back to his state or territory.

### **What has the ARNG Done?**

The Patriot Academy stood up operations in June 2009, with an initial enrollment of 47 Soldiers/students and staff/cadre strength of 38. The Patriot Academy now sees the year-round enrollment that provides a sustained enrollment of 250 students each day of the year. The Patriot Academy has graduated 123 Soldiers between March 2010 and November 2010. The staff/cadre has grown to 67 strong.

### **What continued efforts does the ARNG have planned for the future?**

The Patriot Academy is designed to grow to a throughput of 500 Soldiers/students per year. Further expansion at MUTC or other locations is possible for the future. The program investment in the future is more cost-effective than absorbing the opportunity cost of ignoring a plentiful resource.

### **Why is this important to the Army National Guard?**

Research shows that the lifetime cost of dropping out of high school is approximately \$260,000. A study in Illinois and Ohio indicated that the potential cost to a state government for a dropout is over \$200,000. Extending this loss out, a Texas study indicated that a one year group of dropouts will cost the state about \$19 billion over 50 years. A similar study in California estimated the lifetime loss to the state of one year of dropouts is over \$46 billion. An Indiana article noted that about half of the adults on welfare lack a high school diploma and about three out of four unemployed adults have literacy problems. The high school diploma is also an indicator of success in the military – more valuable than the General Equivalency Diploma (GED). Focusing on potential loss, however, is not the bottom line. Tapping this 3-million strong pool of talent with a program that promises an education and a jumpstart on a career is a powerful formula.