

Civilians get a glimpse of the life of a soldier

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SPRINGFIELD - Members of Illinois Joining Forces and Illinois communities participated in "Military Immersion" training, July 7-8 at Marseilles Training Center, Marseilles, Illinois.

The participants traveled to MTC and experienced military life, interacted with service members and learned about the military. They were also shown military equipment, military vehicles and given new insight into how to best help and support service members, veterans, and their families.

Forty-two civilians in professions ranging from lawyers to health care providers participated in the two day event.



"These are people who are serving veterans every day, but don't necessarily know what the military experience is all about," said Erica Jefferies of Chicago, Director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs.

Jefferies said this event provides a little taste of the military life.

"This event has been fantastic and the Chinook flight at the end was a great finale," said Mike Bauer of Clarendon Hills, Illinois, with Ulta Beauty in Bolingbrook, Illinois. "This was a great learning experience for me and the other members of the Ulta logistical team today."

Staff Sgt. Mark Brienien of Joliet, Illinois, with G Company, Recruiting and Retention Battalion based in Joliet, Illinois, said the positive feedback from the civilians continued throughout the training and they all took something away from the experience.

"There are common misconceptions about the military in the civilian population," said Brienien. "It's good for the civilians to be able to see how we operate and get a glimpse into our everyday life."

"All this training gives these employers, college staff members, private business owners and members of various organizations a good understanding of what we do during training," said 1st Sgt. Johnny O'brien of Amboy, Illinois with G Company, Recruiting and Retention Battalion based in Joliet, Illinois.





