

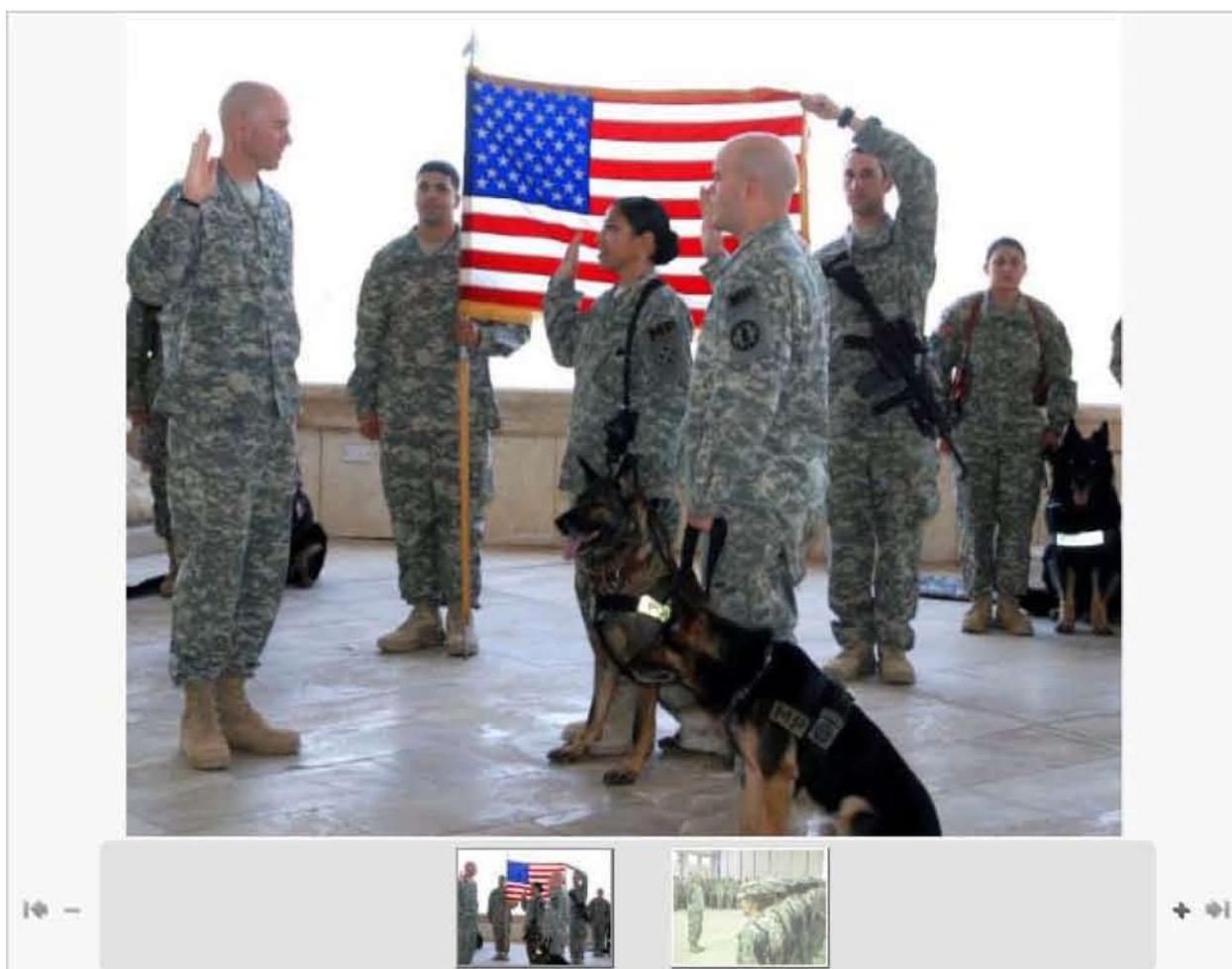


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## 4th Inf. Div. achieves highest retention rate in Army

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By Pvt. Andrew Ingram



**Photo Credit: Courtesy photo.**

*Capt. Kurt Rowland (left) gives the oath of enlistment with Sgt. Gloria Gonzalez (middle), and Sgt. Brandon Sanford, as they both re-enlist for six years in the Army on Dec. 31 at Al Faw Palace in Iraq. Gonzalez and Sanford are dog handlers for the Provost Marshal Office, 4th Infantry Division.*

FORT CARSON, Colo. (July 8, 2009) -- While contributing to the Army's mission to retain a highly trained, all-volunteer force, the 4th Infantry Division accomplished the highest retention rate of any division during the 2009 Fiscal Year.

The retention rate Army-wide is high this year, said Sgt. Maj. Scott Leeling, the command career counselor for the 4th Inf. Div. The Army surpassed its goal of retaining 55,000 Soldiers by nearly 20 percent, re-enlisting an aggregate total of more than 70,000 Soldiers by June 30.

The 4th Inf. Div. achieved 100 percent of its retention mission for the fiscal year by Feb. 5, retaining 1,848 Soldiers, he said. As of June, the 4th Inf. Div. reported 3,776 Soldiers re-enlisted, 204 percent of its retention mission.

The "Ivy" Division earned the highest retention rate of any division in the Army, said Leeling. The division's brigades are currently split between Fort Carson and Fort Hood, Texas, and the division headquarters is preparing for a move to Carson. The entire division should be headquartered at Fort Carson by this fall, a spokesman said.

Command Sgt. Major Daniel A. Dailey, senior enlisted leader of the 4th Inf. Div., said he believes Soldiers are staying in the Army, because they are better prepared and have a better understanding of their duties and responsibilities than ever before.

"The kids joining today know what they're getting into," Dailey said. "They know that they're going to be wartime Soldiers."

Dailey also acknowledged the current economic situation as a reason Soldiers choose to stay in uniform; however, he said he believes that Soldiers "Stay Army" for more than just job security.

The 4th Inf. Div. leadership's dedication to its motto, "Mission-Soldier-Family-Team," is one example of the many reasons why "Ironhorse" Soldiers chose to re-enlist, explained Dailey.

In addition to the honor and privilege of serving in today's Army, Soldiers, who accomplish their missions thousands of miles from their homes, know that their families are safe and provided for in a strong home-based community, he added.

This community and security provided by the Ivy Division and Army is something that many modern corporations do not provide for their employees, said Dailey.

Leeling also attributed the high retention numbers to a leadership that Soldiers respect and want to follow.

"(The Leaders) put an extreme emphasis on taking care of our Soldiers and their families," Leeling said.

The Ironhorse Motto of Mission-Soldier-Family-Team has reassured many Soldiers about remaining in the service because they know that their lives and families are valued, said Dailey.

"We have 22-year old squad leaders who know all of their Soldier's children by their first name," Dailey said.

Reflecting this unity, 1,371 of the 3,776 Soldiers who re-enlisted from 4th Inf. Div. stayed with the Ivy Division.

Leeling said many Soldiers re-enlisted during the division's recent deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 07-09.

He explained that one reason Soldiers re-enlisted during the 15-month deployment were tax-free bonuses; another was a high level of job satisfaction.

"Soldiers are more eager to re-enlist when they're doing what they came in the Army to do," said Leeling.

The 4th Inf. Div.'s Soldier-first attitude has allowed it to contribute to the Army's ongoing mission while retaining highly trained, quality Soldiers, said Dailey.

Making the mission, the Soldier, family and team a top priority has created a loyal unit of individuals who are willing and able to serve and continue to serve the nation, he said.