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Hometown News Release

CONTACT: Lt. Col. Darrin Haas

OFFICE: 615.313.0662

darrin.w.haas.mil@mail.mil

Jasper Guardsman fights COVID-19 across the state

JASPER, Tenn. – Sgt. Joseph Brummett, a combat medic with Henderson’s Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, has spent more than a year travelling throughout the state as a member of the Tennessee National Guard’s COVID-19 Task Force. He has made it his mission to stop the spread of the pandemic since April 2020.

When he first began working for the Task Force, the initial mission was to test residents for the COVID-19 virus at various sites throughout the state. Brummett typically worked at the Nashville testing site, where the Guard worked alongside Tennessee Department of Health nurses and medical students at Nashville’s Meharry Medical College.

“A lot of the medical students and some of the professors from Meharry Medical College volunteered their time at the COVID-19 testing site in Nashville,” said Brummett. “At our busiest, we performed about 1,000 tests a day at the site. It was great to collaborate with future doctors during this process.”

Brummett also worked at “pop-up” testing sites where sudden clusters of positive COVID-19 cases were reported. He also worked in the intensive care unit at Memphis’ Methodist University Hospital providing care for COVID-19 patients. Due to his civilian experience working as an emergency medical technician at Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga, Brummett was familiar with the process of monitoring EKG machines and running lab samples.

The Task force began giving COVID-19 vaccines at vaccination sites in December 2020. In February 2021, Brummett was assigned as the non-commissioned officer in charge of the Bradley County vaccination site. He supervised five Soldiers as they checked in people who registered to receive the vaccine, registered walk-in vaccine recipients, and monitored people who received the vaccine for possible allergic reactions. He also administered COVID-19 vaccines. He now works at the vaccination center in his home town of Jasper.

Brummett stated that the battle against the pandemic has been a team effort between the Guard, state, local agencies, and the community.

“The success of this mission could not happen without the collaboration of the Tennessee National Guard, local agencies and the community,” said Brummett. “The leadership of this mission provide those of us who are performing the testing and vaccinating with the necessary resources when we need them. They also take our suggestions to heart when it comes to how the mission is conducted. This has been a great example of multiple agencies working together.”

- (30) -



Sgt. Joseph Brummett, a combat medic with Henderson's Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, prepares to administer a COVID-19 vaccination in Jasper on June 15. Brummett has participated in the Tennessee National Guard's COVID-19 Task Force since April 2020. (Photo by Sgt. Finis L. Dailey, III)

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