



## 2009—Year of the NCO

U.S. Army noncommissioned officers (NCOs), often referred to as “the backbone of the Army,” are professional, innovative, resourceful leaders who are invaluable to our military’s mission success. Secretary of the Army Pete Geren designated 2009 as the “Year of the NCO” to recognize, thank, and honor these leaders, as well as provide tools, training, and education for the NCO Corps.

With more than 200 years of service, NCOs have a rich history of tradition in our Army. They have demonstrated leadership, dedication, courage, and resourcefulness in the many missions they have accomplished for our Army. Today’s NCOs are more skilled, resilient, and accomplished than ever while they remain grounded in heritage, values, and tradition. They truly shape the future of the Army, as they train, lead, coach, and mentor fellow Soldiers. The NCO Corps has distinguished itself as an accomplished, dedicated, and professional group of military men and women.

Throughout 2009, the Army worked to bring awareness about the NCO Corps and express gratitude and honor to these unique Soldiers. Initiatives, programs, policies, and events throughout the year enhanced awareness and public understanding of today’s NCOs’ roles and responsibilities, and accelerated the development of NCOs through education, fitness, and leadership development programs.

As 2009 comes to a close, let us join in the celebration of one of America’s greatest assets—the NCO Corps—and continue to honor this valuable group of professionals now and in the future.

For more information regarding NCOs, visit <http://www.army.mil/yearofthenco>.

The NCO Corps has established a tradition of excellence through the work of its NCOs, both past and present. Here, SFC Daniel MacDonald, an Army Reserve Soldier with the 304th Civil Affairs Brigade and NCO-in-Charge of the brigade’s personal security, patrols the streets of Mahawil, Iraq, March 18, 2009. (U.S. Army photo by SFC Gonzalo (John) Gonzalez.)