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## *Gulf Region Division Noncommissioned Officer inducted into Corps of Engineers' Sergeant Audie Murphy Club*

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Gulf Region Division



Col. Dale Adams, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division deputy commanding officer and GRD Command Sgt. Maj. Aloy Alcivar present Staff Sgt. Thomas Washington with the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club medallion. (USACE photo)

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** – In an evening ceremony here Oct. 29 senior leaders of the Gulf Region Division inducted a noncommissioned officer into the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Sergeant Audie Murphy Club.

Col. Dale Adams, GRD deputy commanding officer, and Command Sgt. Maj. Aloy Alcivar presented the medallion and certificate of membership to Staff Sgt. Thomas Washington in the presence of

Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps officers and noncommissioned officers working for the command.

Adams said Washington "embodied the spirit of the award" created to recognize outstanding noncommissioned officers who have contributed significantly to the development of the NCO corps.

Washington was inducted at the conclusion of a 6-month assignment as the human resources specialist for the Gulf Region South district at LSA Adder.

During this assignment he accomplished all personnel correspondence for the unit's Army and Navy military and Department of the Army civilian members. He conducted personnel accountability for eleven Indirect Fire attacks and provided twice daily armed escort for Iraqi National employees.

The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club recognizes exemplary noncommissioned officers for exceptional professionalism and leadership abilities, in particular their ability to provide for the welfare of the individual Soldier.

Sergeant Audie Murphy is the most decorated Soldier in U.S. Army history with 33 awards and decorations including the Medal of Honor earned in World War II. The son of Texas sharecroppers, he enlisted and fought in campaigns in North Africa, Italy, France and Belgium with the 3rd Infantry Division. Rising from Army Private to Staff Sergeant, and given a "battle field" commission as a 2nd

Lieutenant, he was wounded three times.

Discharged in September, 1945, he was invited to Hollywood by actor James Cagney but did not have a starring role until 1949. In the following 25 years he appeared in 44 films, primarily westerns and the most notable autobiographical *To Hell and Back* made in 1955 that held the record as Universal's highest grossing picture until surpassed in 1975 by *Jaws*.

Audie Murphy is also well known for speaking out about his struggles with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, then known as "battle fatigue", and efforts to improve health care benefits for war veterans. He was killed at the age of 46 in an aircraft accident on May 28, 1971. He was interred with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery June 7, 1971.

Washington returns to his assignment with the United States Army Garrison – Hohenfels, Germany.

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