

Features



MSG Garrett W. Cox Promoted to Sergeant Major

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Bloomfield, MO - Master Sergeant Garrett W. Cox was promoted to Sergeant Major in a ceremony held at the Stars & Stripes Museum on Saturday, June 26, 2022.

"The adjutant General of Missouri has reposed special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity, and professional excellence of MSG Garrett Cox. In view of these qualities and his demonstrated leadership potential and dedicated service to the United State Army, he is therefore, promoted to Sergeant Major effective date of December 20, 2021," stated CPT Crystal Cecil-Sevier, MC for the ceremony.

Major Jonathan E. Holem presided over the ceremony.

"We are very pleased to be joined by Cox's wife Kendra; his daughters Olivia and Adelyn; mother, Jessica Cox; father, Roger and wife Sharon Cox. Also in attendance were his brother SSG Heath Cox and family, his brother Jake Cox, and his sister, PFC Madison Cox.

PFC Madison Cox sang the National Anthem which was followed by the invocation by MAJ Holem.

According to Holem, Cox enlisted into the Missouri Army National Guard as a cook in December of 2000 attending basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky and completing advanced individual training at Fort Lee, Virginia. He reclassified into the Military Police Corps in 2003 and then the medical corps in 2021.

His deployments include Guantanamo Bay, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kosovo.

He has been a valued asset to the organization and currently serves as the chief medical NCO for the 229th Multifunctional Medical Battalion. Over the past twenty years MSG Cox completed numerous assignments to include serving as the Joint Operations Center NCOIC, Homeland Response Force Region 7, NCOIC, First Sergeant, 1137th Military Police Company, J5/7 Training NCO, Army Substance Abuse Coordinator, Interim Branch Chief 31B & 88M Reclassification Course, Homeland Response Force NCO, 205th Military Police Battalion Plans NCO, Military Police Platoon Sergeant, Senior First Cook, Military Police Squad Leader, First cook, Military Police Team Leader, and Food Service Sergeant.

Cox holds a BS in Criminal Justice with an emphasis in Law Enforcement and Corrections. His military education includes the United State Army Sergeants Major Academy, Company Command/First Sergeant's Course, Army Communities of Excellence PH1, Homeland Response Force Liaison Course, Military Police Senior Leaders Course, Disaster Planning, Counter IED Trainer, Police Transition Team, Arm Basic Instructors Course, Military Police Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, and Warrior Leader Course.

MSG Cox's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, National Defense Ribbon, Kosovo Campaign Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Overseas Service Ribbon, NATO Non-Article 5 Medal for the Balkans Ribbon, NATO ISAF Medal, Meritorious Unit Citation, Missouri National Guard Long Service Ribbon (15 years), Missouri National Guard Kosovo Campaign Ribbon, Missouri National Guard Afghanistan Campaign Ribbon, Missouri National Guard Iraqi Campaign Ribbon, Missouri National Guard Expeditionary Ribbon, Missouri National Guard State Emergency Duty, Missouri National Guard Governor's Unit Citation, Louisiana National Emergency Service Ribbon, and the German Armed Forces Badge in Bronze.

"Thank you to Kendra, Seth, Adelyn, and Olivia for your love and support as well as Mom, Dad, Sharon and to Maddie for sharing her day," commented Cox. "Also thank you to Wes and Robert, Steve, Gene for their mentorship and friendship."

"Needs of the ARMY is a broad reaching and multiple use term. My original MOS I wanted was in medical, but due to a hearing issue, I was told I could not join the

Army," continued Cox. "The gentleman at MEPS said I was disqualified from service due to high frequency hearing loss."

"My response was of shock and a bit of anger, but I asked him who he knew that issued orders in high frequency, and that I was there to join by choice, and not the same choice as many of the other people there. After spending the day going through the battery of testing I had talked to many of my fellow applicants who were only there because the judge had given them a choice of incarceration or service. After a few more moments, he responded with, well get a waiver and come back then."

"This is where I first got acquainted with needs of the Army because due to this hearing waiver, I was only allowed to be a cook or in supplies. Then 9/11 changed a lot of things. The 1137th was deploying, but not taking on cooks, so all of a sudden hearing wasn't a big deal and the Army guard had a need for MPs. Deployments were another "need of the Army", it seems there is never enough folks to fill all the positions. After returning it wasn't long until the 1175th had spots that needed filling and because I was an MP that could cook, well needs of the Army got me again.

"I volunteered to go to Afghanistan due to a vacancy on the 205th roster. That was a blessing and where I met Kendra and as you guessed it, the needs of the Army pulled her onto the roster as well. And because of that I have a great family. My son, Seth, could not make it down, but my two beautiful daughters are here, and although they don't tend to agree with the needs of the Army, they have been as supportive as kids can be and for me."

The majority of his career has been spent as a Military Policeman. MAJ Phillips selected him as 1SG of the 1137th and he spent five years in that role being able to lead, mentor, and work with great soldiers. Col Payne took him to the Joint Operations Center to assist in the restructuring there and he was able to see some of the processes and inner workings of the State Guard. He then applied for a nationwide vacancy as an Operations Sergeant Major with the 229th Medical BN. LTC Kurt Mungestat and CSM Chad Mead selected Cox to fill that position. They took a chance on him and told him they saw an opportunity to broaden the knowledge and expand the Medical BNs Operations and PLanning Cell based off of his past experiences and not just being in the medical career field. Again the drive force was the needs of the Army.

Cox graduated 21 years to the day he enlisted and being told his hearing wouldn't allow him to be a medic. Well the NEEDS OF THE ARMY is a broach reaching and

multiple use term, so he will see what's next in his career.

Cox and his family currently live in Linn, Missouri and he is serving with the National Guard 229th Medical Battalion located in Fulton, MO.

Pictured above are Major Jonathan E. Holem, Sergeant Major Garrett Cox, and CPT Crystal Cecil-Sevier.

This article: [MSG Garrett W. Cox Promoted to Sergeant Major](https://showmetimes.com) was first published on <https://showmetimes.com>.

Written by Dee Loflin

Date: June 28th 2022



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