

A New Army Medic: Health Care Specialist (91W)

(NAPSA)—As a 91W Health Care Specialist, Sergeant Jamison E. Gaddy successfully inserted a chest tube into a patient during the intense conditions of Operation Anaconda. A surgical procedure of this nature is usually reserved for emergency surgeons. Through extensive Army medical training, 91W soldiers, like Gaddy, are able to provide our young fighting men and women first-rate health care as the war against terrorism continues.

During battle, Army units depend on a proficient medic. And the advanced skills of a 91W health care specialist can mean the difference between life and death.

Who are the 91Ws? They are the Army's new elite combat medics. And immediately upon graduation, many in the first class of 91Ws traveled halfway around the world to care for 200 combat casualties and to assist in more than 100 surgeries—all during the Army's heaviest combat to date. Some performed medical treatments for 72 hours straight, saving numerous lives.

"Unlike other medical personnel, 91Ws are not only trained to work beside doctors performing lifesaving procedures, but to perform these procedures, such as advanced airway treatments, ourselves," said Sgt. Gaddy of the 274th Forward Surgical Team. "Our extensive medical training enables us to provide more immediate critical care for those severely injured during combat."

The Army Medical Department (AMEDD) developed the 91W medic, a.k.a. 91 Whiskey, to operate as a key part of small, mobile medical detachments. These detachments are in direct response to the needs of the Trans-



The U.S. Army has a need for a new kind of medic.

formation Army—the Army-wide vision for innovations, in training, health care, technology and equipment to create a faster, more flexible force. These new medics combine the skills and training of two military health care occupations—Licensed Practical Nurses and Combat Medics. As some of AMEDD's core medical assets, 91Ws possess the medical skills needed to care for today's 21st century soldier.

To become a 91W medic, all medics receive advanced medical training in both health care specialties at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, lasting for 16 weeks, as compared to the 10-week course required for Combat Medics or Licensed Practical Nurses. These highly motivated, disciplined health care specialists also earn certification from the National Registry of Emergency Technicians in basic trauma-life support and trauma-AIMS, which consists of trauma assessment, advanced airway treatment, IV therapy, and medication and shock management.

But training isn't all that is needed to sustain the force. In crash courses, 91 "Whiskeys" challenged themselves to learn about

cutting-edge medical equipment such as portable ultrasound and digital x-ray machines. Technologies of this caliber have never been used in combat situations. The first-rate medical training coupled with top-notch medical equipment and resources makes the 91W the best combat medic in the world.

"Being a 91W health care specialist, I had no doubts about the abilities of myself or my team to treat wounded soldiers," stated Sgt. Gaddy. "This deployment reaffirmed for me that our medical detachment is prepared to deliver quality care in any environment."

Besides performing medical procedures on U.S. Army personnel, 91W soldiers also cared for Allied forces, Northern Alliance soldiers and even extended their services to civilians, including children, when needed. In addition to these responsibilities, they trained and supported other Army medics, providing education in advanced airway management, CPR, basic trauma-life support; and maintained up-to-date emergency medical technician licensure.

With the latest in training and technology, the AMEDD provides soldiers with unmatched health care. In addition to its traditional combat medical role, the AMEDD also includes the Army's fixed hospitals and dental facilities; preventive health, medical research, development and training institutions; and a veterinary command that provides food inspection and animal care services for the entire U.S. Department of Defense.

For more information about medical technician opportunities in the U.S. Army, visit the Web site at <http://www.goarmy.com>.