



Ohio Adjutant General's Department

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Ohio Army National Guard Soldiers earn \$3 million through G-RAP

COLUMBUS – When Pvt. Alex Spence enlisted in the Ohio Army National Guard, his brother, Spc. Ian Spence, earned an easy \$2,000. For Ian, this was his fourth referral as a Guard Recruiting Assistant, but for the Ohio Army National Guard, Alex's enlistment marked the 1,500th recruit to sign up under the National Guard's grassroots recruiting initiative called the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program or "G-RAP."

Since G-RAP's inception in December 2005, Ohio National Guard Soldiers across the state have earned a total of \$3 million helping to put their friends, relatives, classmates and coworkers in uniform. The program has been highly successful in Ohio, which ranks No. 2 in the nation for the number of active recruiting assistants.

The program allows traditional guardmembers like Ian to volunteer to take a brief online course to become a Recruiting Assistant (RA). They then talk to their peers about the benefits of joining the Ohio National Guard. If the person is interested, the RA refers the person to Docupak, the fulfillment agency that administers the G-RAP program. Assistants like Spence can earn \$2,000 for each individual who enlists in the National Guard, ships and graduates from basic training. As of July this year, the Ohio Army National Guard had more than 5,500 active G-RAP participants.

"Alex was looking at joining the Marines, but he saw what I was doing, and that I was getting college paid for, so he was willing to listen to what the Guard had to offer," Ian said.

With his enlistment, the younger Spence got a \$20,000 enlistment bonus, student loan repayment, the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program, which pays 100 percent state

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college tuition, and Montgomery GI Bill benefits, which add up to \$509 a month. This is in addition to the monthly paycheck he will earn for attending one weekend of training a month.

“He got the whole package,” said Sgt. 1st Class Mark Hobbs, a recruiting command team leader in Cincinnati, the city the Spence boys call home.

A criminal justice student at Cincinnati State, Alex chose to join his brother’s unit, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 174th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, because it would let him stay close to home to finish his degree. Ian serves as an Avenger team chief, while Alex will work radar repair upon completion of his military schooling. He ships to Initial Entry Training on Oct. 30.

Being a single guy living on his own, Ian admits the money offered through the G-RAP program really helps out. “I’m not an aggressive RA, I just talk to people about the Guard when the subject comes up. After being in (the Guard) for six years, I draw from personal experiences and talk about the benefits that can help. I know because I used all the benefits.” State and federal education benefits combined cover a significant amount of his expenses as a full-time student at the College of Mount Saint Joseph.

Ian’s laid-back approach to G-RAP has proven to be successful as so far, he has earned an extra \$8,000 in the last year.

Asked whether he will jump on the G-RAP bandwagon, Alex said, “Yes, I can already think of a few friends who should join.”

CUTLINE: Sgt. 1st Class Mark A. Hobbs (from left), Pvt. Alex Spence and Spc. Ian Spence display a \$2,000 check Oct. 4 earned by Ian Spence for his brother’s enlistment into the Ohio Army National Guard through the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program. Ian has three other G-RAP contracts, earning him a total of \$8,000 as a recruiter assistant. Photo courtesy of Ohio Army National Guard Recruiting Command.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: The Ohio National Guard Public Affairs Office at 614-336-7000 or Diane Farrow at 614-376-5005. Please visit our public website for more information about the Ohio National Guard at www.ohionationalguard.com