



Ohio Adjutant General's Department

Mike DeWine, Governor

Major General John C. Harris Jr., Adjutant General

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For Immediate Release

Ohio Army National Guard cuts ribbon on new Cleveland Heights recruiting office

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The Ohio Army National Guard held a ribbon-cutting ceremony Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020, at its new recruiting office at 1921 S. Taylor Road in Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Col. Mark Hatfield, Ohio Army National Guard chief of staff, presided over the ceremony with a small group of officials in attendance, including Cleveland Heights City Councilwoman Mary Dunbar.

"We appreciate the warm welcome we've received from the Cleveland Heights community as we open our first storefront here," Hatfield said. "A brick and mortar facility allows us the opportunity to engage face-to-face with those who want to join the more than 11,000 other Ohioans who proudly serve their community, state, and nation as a member of the Ohio Army National Guard."

Staff Sgts. Haroon Thomas and Lance Franklin have been assigned to the location as the recruiting noncommissioned officers.

"Working in this area is special to me because many of my family members attended, graduated, and even taught at Cleveland Heights High School," Thomas said. "My family and friends are proud of the person I have become and I owe all of my success to the National Guard."

Franklin called serving in the Ohio Army National Guard and being able to help his community "a dream come true."

"I enjoy helping others succeed and reach their goals in life, and that's why I chose recruiting," he said.

Because of COVID-19, the Cleveland Heights recruiting office is open by appointment only, which can be scheduled by calling (440) 465-1656.

There is a rich history of Ohio National Guard service in Cuyahoga County. Ohio's oldest unit, the 112th Engineer Battalion, based in Brook Park, was organized on Sept. 18, 1837, in

Cleveland as the Cleveland Grays and has served in the Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the War on Terrorism. During World War II, the battalion landed at Omaha Beach on D-Day in support of the 1st Infantry Division and earned the Presidential Unit Citation. Two Cleveland area members of the 37th Infantry Division received the Medal of Honor for their heroic deeds: 2nd Lt. Albert Baesel of Berea during World War I, and Cleveland native Pfc. Frank J. Petrarca during World War II.

The Ohio National Guard, which turned 232 years old on July 25, includes about 11,400 members of the Ohio Army National Guard who serve their communities, state, and nation during times of natural and man-made emergencies.

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EDITOR'S NOTES: Photos from Tuesday's ribbon-cutting are available at <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/6306872/ohio-army-national-guard-cuts-ribbon-new-cleveland-heights-recruiting-office>.

Video from the event is available on the Ohio Army National Guard Recruiting Facebook page at www.facebook.com/OHarmyguardrecruiting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Stephanie Beougher, public information officer, at (614) 506-3490 or stephanie.k.beougher.nfg@mail.mil.

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