

Dept. of Military Affairs: New commander takes charge of 426th Regional Training Institute as unit bids farewell to Col. Meredith

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FORT MCCOY, Wis. — Col. Carl Meredith, the outgoing commander of the 426th Regiment Regional Training Institute (RTI), relinquished command to Lt. Col. Paul Gapinski during a formal change of command ceremony May 15 at the Wisconsin Military Academy at Fort McCoy.

Brig. Gen. Matthew Strub, the Wisconsin National Guard's deputy adjutant general, commended the commitment to quality displayed by the RTI under Meredith's command.

"The impact of the leadership here is immeasurable," stated Strub. "The quality leaders produced by the RTI are the future of the Army."

The 426th RTI is the Wisconsin Army National Guard's educational institution, providing a professional learning environment, quality instruction and training support. Through the Wisconsin Military Academy, housed at Fort McCoy, the 426th trains future leaders through its Officer Candidate School and Warrant Officer Candidate School. It also provides world-class technical education for field artillery military occupational specialty qualifications and field artillery noncommissioned officer education system, as well as truck driving, unit movement officer, master resilience, combat lifesaving and other courses.

Meredith touched on the many accomplishments of his team throughout his command, including keeping their doors open throughout COVID-19, achieving one

of the top two accreditation scores in the nation and an attrition rate of just 3 percent.

“People succeed here because of the excellent culture of this organization,” stated Meredith. “People will always remember how they were treated here.”

He concluded his remarks by painting a picture of each of his assignments at the RTI leading up to command and the organization’s culture of dignity and respect that permeated each one.

Gapinski, the incoming commander of the 426th RTI, expressed thanks to Meredith, his friend of many years.

“You set an example here that is absolutely the model for emulation,” stated Gapinski. “Your iron resolve, balanced with patience and calmness and your skills as a commander has been essential in navigating the complex situations that arose during your time in command.”

Gapinski shared a vision of what his command tenure will look like.

“My command philosophy is simple,” he said. “Be respectful and genuinely care for your teammates.”

The 426th RTI is one of the Wisconsin Army National Guard’s four major subordinate commands, which also include the 32nd “Red Arrow” Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, and the 64th Troop Command.