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Tennessee National Guard recruits retake oath before family and friends

SMYRNA, Tenn. – The Tennessee National Guard's Recruiting and Retention Battalion held an enlistment ceremony at the Smyrna Bowling Center in Rutherford County for new recruits whose family and friends were unable to attend their original enlistment ceremony due to COVID-19 restrictions on July 23.

The nine recruits in attendance originally swore-in during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic and were not able to have a traditional ceremony with family and friends in attendance. Now, with many restrictions lifted, recruits experienced the time-honored tradition with their loved ones.

"It felt like isolation not having my family able to come see me graduate from Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training," said Pfc. Brandon Morehead, an Army supply specialist with Tullahoma's 1st Battalion, 107th Aviation Regiment. "It's good to finally have my family see me and be proud of what I've accomplished within the military."

His parents, like many in attendance, were happy to see their child accomplish his or her goals.

"It was just nice to be able to see him up there and swear in since we were unable to go see him at Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training," said Jamie Morehead, Brandon's father.

The oath of enlistment is a time-honored tradition every enlisted service member is required to repeat and adhere to upon entering military service. Maj. Helena Mann, Recruiting and Retention Battalion Commander of Bravo Company, administered the oath to the recruits.

"I'm honored to swear-in the future of the Tennessee National Guard," said Mann.

Food and games of bowling were provided following the ceremony to celebrate the enlistment of Tennessee Army National Guard's newest members.

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New Soldiers with the Tennessee National Guard raise their right hand and repeat the oath of enlistment with their friends and family in attendance at the Smyrna Bowling Center on July 23. (Photo by Sgt. James Bolen)

Pfc. Brandon Morehead poses with his brother, mother, and father after he swears in to the Tennessee Army National Guard at the Smyrna Bowling Center on July 23. (Photo by Sgt. James Bolen)

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