

JFHQ NCR-MDW Employee Spotlight

Name: Master Sgt. Valetta R. Stewart

Years of Federal Service: 23 total, 18 Active Duty

Hobbies: Health and wellness, gardening, motorcycles, and travel

Where do you work? I'm assigned to the J1 at Fort Lesley J. McNair as an Administrative noncommissioned officer. I update and maintain documents and SOP's that govern the operations and activities for the Ceremonies and Special Events office.

What do you like best about your job? I am a

Reserve Soldier so the fact that I work at the U.S. Army Military District of Washington Headquarters and have the flexibility to help other offices all over Fort McNair, is a great opportunity. I have the chance to grow and learn something new on a regular basis. Working with Ceremonies and Special Events lets me witness the inner workings of things I've only seen taking place on TV or read about in the papers. Getting a birds-eye-view of the logistics of wreath laying ceremonies, the Presidential Inauguration, the Army ten miler, it's all much more complicated than I ever imagined.

What type of activities are you involved in? Everything I do is somehow centered on health, wellness and fitness. I am a raw food chef, a health vitalist, a personal trainer and a TaiJiFit instructor. It is my plan to offer TaiJiFit on Fort McNair and Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall very soon and I also hope to hold classes on vegan food preparation, eating healthy and the correlation between food disorders and disease.

Why is it important to be involved in these community activities? To be a catalyst and show people that food is responsible for so many facets of our bodily functions. Distress, disease, and disorders plague us and many of these can be improved greatly by altering our dietary intake, moving more functionally, drinking enough water to maintain optimal hydration and by resting sufficiently to allow the body to recharge, rebuild and regenerate highly oxygenated cells. We, as Soldiers, have to be mentally prepared, physically strong and emotionally flexible. It is hard to do that with food that is highly processed.



What is your most memorable experience during your time here at MDW? That's easy. I have two. First, shortly after I was assigned here from U.S. Africa Command, I was notified that I made the Command Sergeant Major Selectee list. I was out of town and got an email from my reserve coordinator in the J1 and received a congratulatory letter from, then MDW commander, Maj. Gen. Linnington. The second was working on the Presidential Inauguration. Having the shared responsibility of ensuring more than 2,000 people were credentialed and all things handled at the Capitol went well. That was amazing for me, a once in a lifetime thing.

Would you recommend working here to other Soldiers or federal employees? Absolutely, the great thing about being at Fort McNair is that you are close enough to everything, yet far enough away that you can still be productive and also share in the activities on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall and in the District.