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## **Chattanooga Guardsman plays pivotal roles during COVID-19 mission**

**DECATUR, Tenn.** – Command Sgt. Maj. Keith McArthur, the battalion command sergeant major with Trenton’s 230th Engineer Battalion, was tasked by the Tennessee National Guard and the Tennessee Department of Health to help implement the state’s COVID-19 vaccination plan.

McArthur joined the COVID-19 task force in February 2021. His initial responsibilities were to provide support to state health department administrators as they established vaccination sites throughout Tennessee and to ensure that those sites were certified to administer the COVID-19 vaccines.

In March 2021, McArthur became the liaison officer for the task force’s eastern region. He supervises more than 40 Soldiers at 10 vaccination sites administering the vaccine. McArthur’s experience managing large military teams prepared him for this role.

“When we were establishing the vaccination sites, I dealt mainly with administrative tasks and with the certification of the sites,” said McArthur. “In my current role, I’m going out to these sites and engaging directly with health department administrators, nurses, and residents who are coming to get vaccinated. It is very rewarding to see the work done behind the scenes making a positive difference in the lives of the people here.”

McArthur stated how he enjoyed working with younger Soldiers while serving as a liaison officer. While his position as a battalion command sergeant major allows him to view the National Guard’s goals from a big picture perspective, this role has given him a ground-floor view of the COVID-19 task force’s operations.

“This mission has been good for me as a senior NCO,” said McArthur. “I take the things that I learn in this role back to my unit. Those insights allow me to interact with my younger Soldiers on a more personal level.”

McArthur praised the Soldiers working the vaccination sites as vital to the success of the Guard's COVID-19 mission.

“The people of Tennessee should be very proud of these men and women,” said McArthur. “It takes people at all different levels to accomplish the mission, but our Soldiers on site are the ones making it happen.”

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Command Sgt. Maj. Keith McArthur, the battalion command sergeant major with Trenton's 230th Engineer Battalion, consults with a county health department employee at a COVID-19 vaccination site in Decatur on June 15. McArthur has assisted the Tennessee Department of Health in the establishment and supervision of COVID-19 vaccination sites throughout the state. (Photo by Sgt. Finis L. Dailey, III)

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