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Future Heroes attend 2nd Annual American Hero Expo

SMYRNA, Tenn. – The Tennessee Army National Guard’s Recruiting and Retention Battalion partnered with Motlow State Community College, Nissan, local first responders, and others to host the second annual American Hero Expo at Smyrna’s Volunteer Training Site on Sept. 26. High school students from across Rutherford County met and learned about different career fields from the men and women directly serving their community.

The expo showcased different pathways students can take after high school. More than 300 students had the opportunity to explore these various options with participating organizations like the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, Smyrna Fire Department, and the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency.

“I think it’s so important for students to be able to see a career field they might want to be a part of and get to talk to individuals to know exactly what it’s like to be in that field,” said Smyrna’s Mayor Mary Esther Reed. “It gives students an opportunity to make a decision prior to college if that is the path they want to follow.”

The event started when students arrived at Smyrna’s Volunteer Training Site and were assigned to various instructors specializing in careers like criminal justice, emergency medical services, cyber, and information technology. Many of the students then took classes on first-aid triage with emergency medical service students from Motlow and learned about urban search and rescue and canine enforcement from officers with the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department. Then the students toured various tactical vehicles from different agencies and learned about their functions and capabilities. Lastly, the students put what they learned into practice and responded to a simulated natural disaster requiring them to triage simulated casualties.

“I hope all the young men and women who attended take away how important they are as future leaders in our communities,” said Lt. Col. Richard Stackpole, Tennessee Army National Guard’s Recruiting and Retention Battalion Commander. “Community service, whether it is with the National Guard, EMS, fire department, police, will help keep our communities safety.”

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Students pose with a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter during the second annual American Heroes Expo at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site. Over 300 students from across Rutherford County received hands-on training from men and women from different areas of college, career, and technical education. (Photo by Sgt. James Bolen)

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