



**JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER
AND FORT POLK
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
*News Release***



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1/509th Airborne Infantry to hold Deployment Ceremony

Fort Polk, La. --- The 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, will hold a deployment ceremony for the Soldiers of Alpha and Bravo Companies Friday, June 11th at 10 a.m. outside of battalion headquarters, on the corner of 15th Street and Mississippi Avenue.

The approximately 200 Soldiers of the Alpha and Bravo Companies will deploy in the coming weeks to the Central Command area of responsibility in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 509th, or Geronimo as they are known, is one of the Army's most elite units-- a parachute infantry unit highly trained in all levels of combat. Its full-time mission is portraying the opposing forces for all those who train at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk.

The 509th has not seen combat since World War II, although five members were selected to serve as Pathfinders, or advance scouts, for the 101st Airborne Division during the 1991 Gulf War. Their helicopter was shot down during a search and rescue mission. Two were Killed In Action and one became a Prisoner of War.

Since the Gulf War, The JRTC and the 509th have helped train more units that eventually deployed for worldwide missions than any other training center.

The ceremony is open to the public

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Media wishing to cover the event need to call Samantha Bingham at 337-531-4630 or 337-208-3629 to coordinate access.