



United States Army Criminal Investigation Command

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I'll raise you two 4-stars!

Army Senior Leader's Recognize NCO Special Agent

By Colby Hauser
CID Public Affairs

Quantico, VA, April 16, 2012— Throughout history, the success or failure of America's military has been directly linked to the caliber of non-commissioned officers (NCOs) serving within its ranks.

For the CID Special Agent serving as a Protective Service Officer (PSO), the responsibility is immense and failure is never an option – they just can't afford a "bad day at the office."

During a standing room only ceremony at the Pentagon recently, two of the Army's senior leaders made time to promote Master Sgt. Keith Ford, a CID special agent with the Protective Services Battalion, 701st Military Police Group (CID), and recognized his contributions to both the Army and the NCO corps.

"This is a guy you personally trust your life to," said Gen. Robert W. Cone, the commanding general of the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). "This is what a non-commissioned officer is; this is what leadership is about."

Ford, a 22 year veteran who has served on almost every type of protection detail within the Department of Defense, was handpicked by both Gen. Odierno and Gen. Cone to serve as their PSO.

"I've been in the Army just about 36 years and this is the first time I've ever seen two 4-star generals promote anybody," said Gen. Raymond Odierno, the chief of staff of the Army, during the ceremony. "I am honored that he is working for me as my protective service officer and I look forward to working with him over the next several years."

Having grown up in northeast Washington, D.C., Ford's initial assignment to PSB was a bit of a homecoming, but he was a little apprehensive about working as a Protective Service Special Agent for the top brass.

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FORD

“I was working felony investigations when I got the call to come serve as the PSB detachment sergeant,” Ford said. “I was skeptical when I first got the assignment, but after my first mission, that was long gone. I love it.”

CID special agents are responsible for investigating felony level crime of Army interest worldwide and are some of the most highly trained criminal investigators in law enforcement. Over the course of a career, special agents can find themselves assigned to the Protective Services Battalion, a highly specialized unit within CID that demands a very unique skill set from its members.

Much like the Secret Service, CID special agents assigned to PSB are tasked with providing personal protection for key Department of Defense and Department of the Army officials worldwide. This unique mission is mandated by Congress and includes protecting the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Army and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When requested, PSB Special Agents also provide protection for foreign military dignitaries, general officers and VIPs visiting Army installations at home and overseas.

“He has earned the trust of not only his peers, but the leadership itself,” Gen. Odierno added. “He’s about team, he makes difficult things look easy and ensures that everybody is doing the right thing at the right time.”

Over the last seven years, Ford has provided protection for the senior leadership of not just the Army, but the Department of Defense and foreign dignitaries as well.

“I’ve worked for the French Chairman of Defense, the Indonesian Chief of Staff, and most of the senior leaders of the DoD,” Ford said. “Without a doubt, I’ve got the best job in the Army.”

The professionalism of CID Special Agents assigned to PSB has to be without question as they are often front and center on the world stage. Many say it is their unwavering dedication to the mission that often drives these special men and women who put their lives on the line to ensure that the military leadership stay safe and can accomplish their mission.

“When it’s all said and done, a PSO is responsible not just for the principal but for the entire team,” Ford said. “That is a heavy burden for anyone because at this level you cannot fail, not ever.”

“Every day is game day, because that’s what the boss needs and that’s what the boss gets,” he added.

The hallmark of a PSO is the trust he or she earns between their team and the principal. Without that foundation, neither one can do what has to be done.

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“I can just tell you we do what we do because of guys like Master. Sgt. Ford,” Gen. Cone said during the promotion ceremony. “We don’t have to worry about our personal safety because of guys like this.”

Before publishing the orders, Gen. Cone relayed a story of how Master Sgt. Ford came to be his PSO. After assuming command of III Corps and Fort Hood, TX, and preparing to deploy to Iraq, Gen. Cone was in need of not just anyone to serve as his PSO, but the very best.

“I called back to CID and I said we’ve got to have the best you have,” Gen. Cone said. “And I got what I asked for.”

For more information on Army CID visit www.cid.army.mil

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CUTLINES



Gen. Raymond Odierno (Right), the chief of staff of the U.S. Army, and Gen. Robert Cone (Left), the commanding general of the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command, stand with Master Sgt. Keith Ford, a U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command special agent assigned to the Protective Service Battalion, 701st Military Police Group (CID), during his promotion ceremony at the Pentagon, Mar. 19, 2012. Ford is currently serving as Gen. Odierno's Protective Service Officer and is directly responsible for his personal protection. (U.S. Army photo)

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Maj. Gen. David E. Quantock (Left), the provost marshal general and commanding general of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, congratulates Master. Sgt. Keith Ford, a U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command special agent assigned to the Protective Service Battalion, 701st Military Police Group (CID), during his recent promotion ceremony at the Pentagon. Ford is currently serving as Gen. Raymond Odierno's Protective Service Officer. (U.S. Army photo)

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Master Sgt. Keith Ford (Left), a U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command special agent assigned to the Protective Service Battalion, 701st Military Police Group (CID), provides security for Gen. Raymond Odierno (Center), the chief of staff of the U.S. Army, as he is interviewed by a reporter following an event in New York City, NY. (U.S. Army photo)

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