

# OTC honored for accomplishments

By Emily Howard

Fort Hood Herald

Simulating battle situations has become a crucial part of training soldiers for war. At Fort Hood, both the Operational Test Command and III Corps have excelled in battle simulations this year — and have been recognized for it.

The Operational Test Command and III Corps will be honored with the Department of Defense award for excellence in models and simulations.

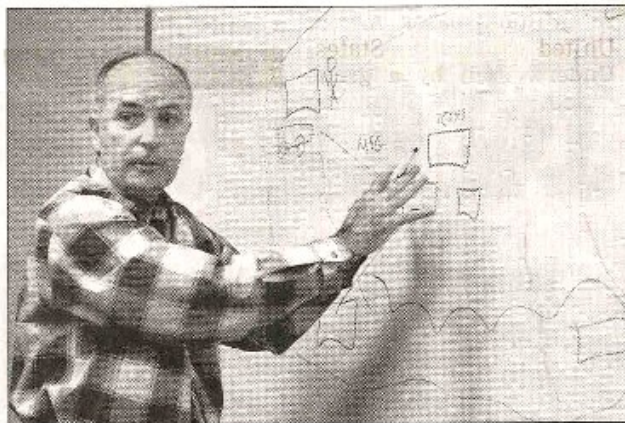
Sixty-eight departments were nominated for the award throughout the Army, and four were selected — two from Fort Hood.

The awards will be formally presented next month at the Pentagon.

The award the test command received its award for the Simulation Testing Operations Rehearsal Model, or STORM. Before systems can be bought or fielded, testing must take place, and that is where the test command comes in.

With the Army's growing constraints of supplying troops to fight wars, the Army must begin to rely on other methods with which to supply the requirements such as troops, land, and funding in order to properly conduct operational testing, according to Sofia Sanchez, the test command's public affairs officer.

STORM is a faster, less costly, and more efficient way



Herald/STEVE TRAYNOR

**Jim Miller, a senior military analyst with Alion Science and Technology, explains the STORM simulation system used for combat preparation at Fort Hood.**

to test systems and make sure they are battle-ready, Sanchez said.

The STORM system simulates realistic battle situations so new Army equipment can be tested.

The STORM system has been vital in testing recent Army projects such as the Stryker vehicle, the FBCB2 (Force Battle Command Brigade-and-Below), and the Blue Force Tracker.

The Warrior Skills Trainer, a training simulator consisting of cardboard and plasma screens, also received the Defense Department award.

The Warrior Skills Trainer, created by engineers at III Corps, allows a small group of soldiers to train like they were in a large group. Over 6,000 Fort Hood soldiers have been trained with the system while preparing to

deploy to Iraq.

"We are able to do things we could really only do in combat, and do it safely," said Georgia McAteer, the warrior training center's battle commander.

With the training simulator, soldiers are able to travel the streets of Baghdad, or any other city.

"I could see convoys that were not really there," McAteer said. "It was the coolest thing I've ever seen."

With systems like STORM and the Warrior Skills Trainer, the Army is able to more efficiently prepare soldiers for war.

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