SMA Kenneth O. Preston

Sergeant Major of the United States Army

Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston was sworn in as the 13th Sergeant Major of the Army on January 15, 2004. SMA Preston has held a variety of leadership positions throughout his career ranging from cavalry scout to command sergeant major.

As Sergeant Major of the Army, Preston serves as the Army Chief of Staff's personal adviser on all enlisted-related matters, particularly in areas affecting Soldier training and quality of life. He devotes the majority of his time to traveling throughout the Army observing training, and talking to Soldiers and their families. He sits on a wide variety of councils and boards that make decisions affecting enlisted Soldiers and their families and is routinely invited to testify before Congress.

Preston is a native of Mount Savage, Md., and was born Feb. 18, 1957. Preston entered the Army on June 30, 1975. He attended Basic Training and Armor Advanced Individual Training at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Throughout his 30-year career, he has served in every enlisted leadership position from cavalry scout and tank commander to his current position as Sergeant Major of the Army. Other assignments he held as command sergeant major were 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas, 3rd "Grey Wolf" Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, 1st Armored Division in Bad Kreuznach, Germany, and V Corps in Heidelberg, Germany.

His most recent assignment was as the command sergeant major for Combined Joint Task Force 7 serving in Baghdad, Iraq.

His military education includes Basic Noncommissioned Officer's Course, Advanced Noncommissioned Officer's Course, First Sergeant's Course, M1/M1A1 Tank Master Gunner Course, Master Fitness Trainer Course, Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer's Course, and the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy.

His awards and decorations include two Legions of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, four Army Meritorious Service Medals, one Joint Service Commendation Medal, four Army Commendation Medals, three Army Achievement Medals, nine Good Conduct Medals, two National Defense ribbons, the Southwest Asia Service Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, four NCOES Ribbons, the Army Service Ribbon, five Overseas Ribbons, the NATO Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal (Government of Kuwait), two Joint Meritorious Unit Awards, an Army Meritorious Unit Commendation and the Department of the Army Staff Badge.

He and his wife have three children.