



**Major Cedric L. Burden
United States Army**



Major Cedric Burden is a 10-year veteran of the United States Army and is currently serving as part of the *Why We Serve* speakers program. He has recently returned from an assignment in Iraq and is speaking to groups around the country about his personal experiences serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In September 2006 Burden returned from a 12-month deployment to Iraq, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom as an Infantry Company Commander. Burden was first deployed with the 1st Battalion 327th Infantry Regiment to Huwajah, Iraq, and then in Rashaad, Iraq, where his company conducted long range reconnaissance missions, air assault operations, and combat patrols.

Burden is currently stationed in Fort Bliss, Texas where he serves as an infantry company maneuver trainer at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). CPT Burden's current task is to transform and train the Army Evaluation Task Force into a Future Brigade Combat Team. Raised in Gary, IN, Burden graduated from Roosevelt High School and received a Bachelor's of Science degree in Mental Retardation Education from Tuskegee University. While serving in the U.S. Army, Burden attended Troy State University and completed his Master's of Education degree with a concentration in Criminal Justice. Burden is married to an OIF Army veteran, and they have one son, Jahleel.

When asked why he chose to serve, the captain responded: "I always wanted to be a soldier. Ever since I was a child, I use to watch Army movies and dress in Army fatigues. In my heart of hearts, I know I possess the qualities to help people in many ways and the Army enables me to accomplish this on several fronts. Freedom is not free, someone has to do hard things during hard times, and I will be that person to preserve our American way of life."

Burden's decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Overseas Service Ribbons (2nd award), Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Combat Infantryman's Badge, Expert Infantryman's Badge, Army Parachutist Badge, the Air Assault Badge, the Ranger tab, and FORSCOM General Aubrey "Red" Newman Award.