

## Mr. and Mrs. Drill Sergeant

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Richard and Katherine Williams must have had a premonition. The Army only recently changed its motto, but the Williamses acted on it long before the commercials, the ads and the recruiters. When they were married in 1997, their day jobs, their part-time jobs, their families and their lives all came together as one. Their own Army of One.

Mr. and Mrs. Williams—both civil servants, both Reserve soldiers, both living in the same house. They will hit the streets with all the knowledge, strength and skill of trained sergeants—drill sergeants. The 100th Division Drill Sergeant School currently houses one of the first husband and wife teams to enter the drill sergeant course at the same time.

Richard was a single parent of three, a bored, active-duty communications specialist. He was interested in becoming a drill sergeant, but being a specialist, he was ineligible, so he left active duty to find something else. The move proved to be the turning point in his life.

“I’ll admit my life was never demanding,” said Richard. “I was interested in being a drill sergeant ever since basic, but never wanted to make the commitment because the school was a year long.

“Soon after leaving active duty, Richard got a job as a firefighter in Louisville, Ky., and joined the Reserve right away. “I always liked the military life and I wanted to stay with it,” he said.

He joined the 8/229 Aviation Regiment here where he met Katherine who was a sergeant there as well as the unit administrator. After drilling together and dating for two years, they married.

“It was sort of a Brady Bunch thing,” said Katherine. “I had three kids and so did he. It was a big step to double the size of the family.” According to the Williamses, having their own army of children was a real handful. They had to keep finding someone to watch the kids when they went to drill every month. The time they were activated for six months was a nightmare. “When we were activated for a tour in Bosnia we both had to be gone from the kids for a long while. It was very difficult for all of us. If it was just one of us, that would not have been so bad. We just couldn’t do it at the same time again,” Katherine admitted. “With so many young kids, we knew we couldn’t keep drilling at the same time every month either, so I transferred to the 100th Division,” said Richard. “That way we would drill at different times.

“He continued to work as a communications specialist supporting the Drill Sergeant School on post in a Reserve status. After working in that capacity for a time, he said it finally dawned on him that he could realize his forgotten dream of becoming a drill sergeant. It was not long before he was accepted. Richard said he was caught by surprise the day he went in to see the Commandant of the school to apply.



Sgt. 1st Class Marian Cosgrove has words with Staff Sgt. Richard Williams as his wife, Staff Sgt. Katherine Williams, looks on with an 'I told you so' look. Both sergeants attended the 100th Division Drill Sergeant School at Ft. Knox, Ky.



**WHO'S THE HEAD OF THIS FAMILY?** Staff Sgt. Katherine Williams shows hubby Staff Sgt. Richard Williams that she can do anything he can do by graduating from drill sergeant school in the same class as him. Both are drill sergeants teaching boot camp in Kentucky.

“The Commandant told me they would like to see more females apply to the school to be drill sergeants. I went home immediately to tell my wife,” he said. “I thought it would be cool for the two of us to be drill sergeants.

“Katherine was so excited about the prospect, she had her application packet completed in a week.” “My basic training drill sergeant was the foundation of my military career,” she recollected. “Being a drill sergeant was in the back of my mind ever since then, but I just figured a lot of recruits felt the same way because of the impact of the sergeant. I really wanted to spend my (military) career overcoming a challenge and then find another to tackle.” She continued to work as a unit assistant during the week until her life was turned around with the application to drill sergeant school. They were both accepted and got into the same class.

The Williamses said the first problem they had to tackle was the hardest. They had to figure out how to take care of their children while they were both away at Fort Knox. It was complicated and took a lot of planning and family support, but they were very happy when it was all worked out and they were able to attend the school together.

“I was wrong when I thought I met all the challenges the Army Reserve had to offer me,” she confessed. “This school has (Air Assault School) beat. This is the hardest training I’ve ever had.”

According to their Drill Sergeant Instructor, Sgt. 1st Class Marian Cosgrove, the pair of students are doing better than they think they are. “I freaked out when I heard they were married. I thought they would disrupt the class, bringing their civilian problems with them. I was sure we were in for a world of hurt,” she said with a smile.

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