

and women of the member locals of the Denver Area Labor Federation, past and present, to whom we owe a great debt of gratitude. Many of us in this country forget how far we've come. There was a time when fundamental decency and equity for working people were not a part of our shared values—a time when collective bargaining, workplace safety, minimum wage and benefits were not part of our common experience. For many of us in our community, decent working conditions and the basic employment benefits needed to subsist in our society are still out of reach. I am deeply appreciative of the invaluable work that the Denver Area Labor Federation and its member locals continue to do to advance the cause of a livable wage, worker rights and protections and to promote decent health care. DALF has made a tremendous impact on our community and implicit in its success has been the fundamental recognition that good wages, job security and quality health care builds a healthy and prosperous community.

Please join me in commending the Denver Area Labor Federation. It is the strong leadership that this organization exhibits on a daily basis that continually enhances our lives and builds a better future for all Americans.

CONGRATULATING FORT BENNING  
ON RECEIVING THE ARMY COMMUNICATIONS OF EXCELLENCE  
CHIEF OF STAFF AWARD

**HON. MAC COLLINS**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 1, 2003*

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I have been a Member of Congress for ten full years, going on my eleventh year now. Since 1993, when I was elected, the "Home of the Infantry," Fort Benning has consistently been selected as the best installation in the nation, and a few times as best in the world.

As a politician, something inside me wants to take credit for that, but as a statesman, I realize that it has been the fine leadership of people like Major General Paul Eaton and Colonel Joe Torres and those who have preceded them who are really responsible for the outstanding performance of Fort Benning.

As a major power projection platform for the Army, Benning serves a very transitional community of soldiers. With our war in Iraq and Afghanistan, more than 7,000 Fort Benning troops are stationed overseas. Obviously, this kind of deployment leaves a hole. Additionally, several thousand more soldiers from other bases have passed through Benning's gates to receive specialized training before deploying to the field. This has placed a great deal of demand on the services offered.

But, in spite of all of these challenges, Fort Benning has been recognized again this year as one of the top 10 military installations in the world with the Communities of Excellence Chief of Staff Award. Competing on the Training and Doctrine Command level, Benning has demonstrated a better, more efficient, faster way to provide outstanding service to the community which calls Fort Benning home.

Additionally, Fort Benning is an integral part of the tri-community, Columbus, GA, Phenix City, AL, and Fort Benning. The military and the civilian communities strive to mutually support one another and each community compliments the others. This is the result of tireless effort by the military, the community leaders of Columbus, and Phenix City. Their effort has paid off and I am glad to see it recognized with this award.

Fort Benning, while it has a proud legacy as the foremost training center of the Army, is only a patch of Earth and some buildings. It is the people who work there that make it an outstanding example of military efficiency and service. It is the dedication of those people and the leadership of its commanders which drive the level of excellence higher each year.

The consistent performance of Fort Benning reflects well on the Army and demonstrates why Fort Benning is a shining example of the Army being all it can be.

I congratulate Major General Eaton and his fine staff on receiving this award and thank them for their service to America and to the community which makes Benning its home.