

## **SERGEANT DEBORAH L. SILLS**

### **205<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion**

#### **CSM Doug Russell Award 2001 Recipient**



SGT Deborah Sills is a native of Sudbury, Massachusetts. She graduated from Sudbury High School in 1992 and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminology from the University of Southern Maine. SGT Sills enlisted in the Army in June 1997 to be a 98C, Signals Intelligence Interceptor/Analyst. She was the Distinguished Graduate from 98C Advanced Individual Training.

While in Thailand for Exercise Cobra Gold '98, then SPC Sills, along with the Trojan Spirit NCOIC, developed a briefing on Trojan Spirit operations that convinced the Third Marine Expeditionary Force commander to include the Marine Trojan Spirit system in their deployment doctrine. SGT Sills and her team continued to train the Marine Trojan Spirit team and assist them in keeping their system operational. She

earned the respect of Marine commanders and forged an unprecedented bond with the Marine 1<sup>st</sup> Radio Battalion.

In September of 1999, on very short notice, SGT Sills deployed with the Trojan Spirit Team to East Timor in support of Australian Operation Stabilise. As part of the first 50 persons on the ground, the Trojan Spirit team supplied the Australian, New Zealand, and US forces with the "Commonwealth Network," ensuring communications during a critical period of time. For US forces, the Trojan Spirit was the only Top Secret connectivity in East Timor, providing commanders from US Army Pacific and Pacific Command critical information for developing US support strategy. At the end of the US involvement in Operation Stabilise, SGT Sills and her team were lauded by the commanders of the Australian and New Zealand forces as well as by commanders of the US Marine and Army contingents.

During Cobra Gold '00, the Trojan Spirit team maintained an astounding 100-percent connectivity. SGT Sills' team so impressed the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Commander and Command Sergeant Major that they were the only non-division Soldiers to receive both

the Commander's and CSM's coins for excellence. The team's performance also earned each team member certificates from the Commanding Generals of Thailand's army, Singapore's army, and the Commander of US forces. SGT Sills was personally selected as the outstanding J2 NCO of the exercise, and was recommended for a Navy Achievement Medal.