

Balfour Beatty sponsoring Soldier program

Public Affairs staff report

Balfour Beatty participates in cell phone for Soldier program



Bins such as this one are located at the Post Exchange, Commissary, Post Office and Youth Services to collect unused cell phones for the Cell Phones for Soldiers project, which was brought to Carlisle Barracks by Balfour Beatty. courtesy photo.

Dec. 10, 2008 -- Many people agree that one of the hardest things for this country's servicemembers is not having the ability to call home and talk to their families during today's frequent and often long deployments. To help these brave men and women, two teenagers from Norwell, Mass., started a non-profit organization called Cell Phones for Soldiers, which provides a way for deployed Soldiers, Marines, sailors, airmen, and Guardsmen to call home without racking up a huge phone bill.

Carlisle Barracks' housing partner Balfour Beatty Communities has brought this project to the post so local people can help the deployed servicemembers.

Cell Phones for Soldiers was started three years ago, and operates by collecting unused cell phones that people donate from communities across the country. The cell phones are sold to a company called ReCellular, who refurbishes approximately half the phones they receive and sells them to wholesale companies around the world. The other half of the phones that cannot be refurbished are dismantled and recycled for materials such as gold, silver, platinum, copper, nickel, iron, cadmium, lead and plastic.

The money generated from selling the phones is used to purchase pre-paid calling cards for deployed servicemembers, said Kathy Beecher, the resident specialist/outreach coordinator for Balfour Beatty, as well as the coordinator for Cell Phones for Soldiers at Carlisle Barracks. Each donated cell phone provides one hour of talk time.

Beecher brought the program to Balfour Beatty and it has been expanded to all 44 Balfour Beatty sites in 21 different states.

Balfour Beatty has set up collection baskets around Carlisle Barracks at the Post Exchange, Commissary, Post Office and Youth Services, as well as their own office. The project will run through January 2008, and end in a presentation of the phones at the corporate Balfour Beatty office. Balfour Beatty will continue to take donations after the presentation, explained Beecher.

For more information, contact Kathy Beecher at 243-7177 or kbeecher@bbcgrp.com, or visit www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com.

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