

VIRTUAL ARMY EXPERIENCESM

2007 VAE COVERAGE HIGHLIGHTS

- “Everyone should experience this and think of those serving our country so we could have this freedom,” Tamez said. “It was intense to see how vulnerable you are and how hard it is to fire the weapons,” team member Michael Lawler agreed. “I now have a respect for those out there serving out country.” –*Island Breeze*, March 9, 2007
- Daniel Pecvich of Pensacola, Fla., says, “Kind of makes me want to join the Army. I kinda liked it. It makes me think of how people over in Iraq are doing so I have more appreciation for those people.” –*WTVY News 4 (CBS)*, March 23, 2007
- “It gave me the feeling I was helping my country,” said the Spring Hill resident. “It helped me make up my mind that I would like to join the Army.” –*Saint Petersburg Times*, April 1, 2007
- Outside, Jordan was still reeling from the experience. “If I could, I would go back through the line right now,” he said. “It shows you what it is like in combat. It shows you what you have to do.” –*Missourian*, May 27, 2007
- “Playing the game makes me want to go more,” said Casey Clark, 17, of Clinton, Iowa, who will head to Army basic training in about a month. “I’m ready to serve and die for my country.” –*The Rock Island Argus*, June 2, 2007
- “Once inside the combat area of the simulator, people sat in tanks and virtually fired guns at moving targets on enormous screens. Without any external light and the loud, realistic sounds, the effect was a feeling of actually being in battle.” –*Peoria Journal Star*, July 22, 2007
- “This was educational because I never was able to go into the Army, and I got to see what these guys do,” said Jimmy Ward. “It is very different from what I anticipated.” –*Army News Service*, February 27, 2007
- By the reaction of some participants, it seems the Army’s story really is being told successfully. “Being a prior vet, this was really good,” Le Rudolph said. “I fought in [Operation] Desert Storm, and this brought back memories.” –*Army News Service*, Feb 27, 2007
- “It was incredible, absolutely incredible,” said Linda MacIsaac. “It gave me an appreciation of what our military men and women do. Thank God we have them.” –*Army News Service*, February 27, 2007
- “This is one of the best assets I’ve seen for recruiting,” said Maj. Isaac Williams, the head of Army recruiting for Hillsborough County. His staff had arranged meetings with nearly 15 potential recruits by the end of the day. –*Saint Petersburg Times*, April 1, 2007
- Bill Sanger and Holly Czarneck said the experience just confirmed what they already felt—that soldiers have a tough job. “I know exactly what the Army’s like by seeing stuff like that,” Sanger said. –*The Wichita Eagle*, May 20, 2007
- Kelly Pawlak of Clarence Center said she and her children—Kim, 14, and Jacob, 12—enjoyed the experience. “It was unbelievable,” she said. “It was very true to life.” She said she started crying when the simulation was over, thinking about how U.S. troops dedicate themselves and put their lives on the line for other Americans. –*Buffalo Daily News*, August 12, 2007
- Frank Zoretich, a Wickliffe resident and Korean War veteran, said the activity was as good for children to get a taste of the Army as it was for helping him reminisce about his own wartime experience. –*The News-Herald*, September 3, 2007
- “The Virtual Army Experience is one of the most popular booths here, and with reason...it rocks.” –*GGL WIRE*, October 2007
- “It gives you an idea of what is going on over there,” Wilbur said. “You get an understanding of what our soldiers are going through.” –*Muskogee Phoenix*, October 29, 2007
- “The team-based experience immerses participants in military operational roles, using teamwork, leadership and high-tech equipment in a mission to capture a terrorist leader.” –*Tulsa World*, October 27, 2007
- “I’ve never done anything like that,” said Joan Torres, 52, of Pensacola, minutes after shooting at enemy positions—shown on projector screens—from the Humvee. “I had never even played a video game before. I felt like a soldier.” –*Pensacola News Journal*, November 10, 2007
- Korean War veteran Jack Backawski said the experience was as authentic as it could get. “It’s realistic. Driving down enemy streets shooting insurgents in that hummer couldn’t get anymore realistic,” he said. –*Island Breeze*, March 9, 2007

