



## ROTC Alumni Chapter Spring 2023 Newsletter



## President's Corner

Dear Gamecock Battalion Alumni,

JSU is back to ops normal after the past couple years of COVID impacts. The ROTC program is likewise going strong.

## Military Alumni of the Year Nominations



We are seeking additional nominations for our **2023 Military Alumni of the Year**. The **criteria** for consideration as the Military Alumni of the Year are:

- Must be a graduate of JSU
- Must be an officer on active duty or an active Guardsman or Reservist
- Must join or be a member of the JSU Alumni Association
- Must play an active role in promoting the university
- Must have shown outstanding military achievement
- Must be able to attend Homecoming to receive the award

**Selection Process:**

- Nominations may be submitted from any source to [eric.j.benefield@gmail.com](mailto:eric.j.benefield@gmail.com).
- Due by end of June accompanied by a written biographical sketch and photo.
- Individual is selected by consensus of the Chapter's Board.
- President notifies the individual telephonically and in writing.
- President also notifies JSU National Alumni Association.

**<https://www.jsu.edu/rotc/alumni/alumniyear.html>**

## Honorary Members

On April 4th, we inducted **Congressman Mike Rogers, Dr. Don Killingsworth, Dr. Christie Shelton, Dr. Maureen Newton and LTC Travis Easterling** as Honorary Members of our chapter. They are the first so recognized since 2013. We can add additional honorary members this fall and every fall when great supporters of the program are identified.

The process to add Honorary Members is in the by-laws as follows: Honorary Membership will be conferred upon each newly assigned Professor of Military Science. Upon the signed recommendation of one member, seconded by another member, and by a majority vote of the Executive Board, Honorary Membership may be conferred upon other individuals who shall have rendered notable service to the ROTC.

An honorary member shall have none of the obligations of membership in the alumni chapter, but shall be entitled to all of the privileges except those of making motions, of voting and of holding office.

## Senior Mentor

**Major General (Retired) Ken Roberts** will be serving our chapter in the role of Senior Mentor. He will not only help guide the activities of our chapter but will help us increase our contact with the cadets. We look forward to all the improvements MG (Ret) Roberts will bring in this role.

## Awards Ceremony



**The Spring Awards Ceremony is scheduled for 20 April 2023 at 1430 at Rowe Hall.** In conjunction with the other awards, the ROTC Alumni Chapter will present Alumni Association memberships to our graduates and new lieutenants. This will allow us to send them into the Army and the World as members in good standing of the Alumni Association.

Following the Awards Ceremony, the Alumni Association will be having its annual **Shrimp Boil** at the JSU Football Ticket Plaza (behind the student section and scoreboard) at 1700. Tickets are on sale for \$30 at [jsu.edu/shrimp](https://jsu.edu/shrimp).

**Spring Commissioning**



April 28, JSU ROTC will commission six new lieutenants. The six cadets who are graduating and commissioning are: **Deandre Brand, Wade Dasinger, Corin Dunwald, Windell Johnson, Shelby Little, and Roderick Thompkins**. We are proud of this group and wish them all the best as they start their new journey.

**Alumni Banquet & Homecoming**



**This year's ROTC Alumni Banquet is September 22, 2023.**

We hope everybody is able to make it and we look forward to seeing you then. We will recognize our Military Alumnus of the Year at the Banquet and at the Homecoming Football game the next day, September 23, 2023.

### **Year Group Leaders**

In order to make the span of control (or just communications) more manageable for our chapter, I have been recruiting year group leaders. The year group leaders will maintain contact with the alumni in the chapter who graduated their same year and assist us in keeping their information updated. This will also give us more opportunities to hear from alumni who want to be more involved. We have ten-year group leaders so far and continue to recruit.

**Update from LTC Travis Easterling, Professor of Military Science**

## **Enrollment**

The JSU ROTC Program is on the rise! In the last four years we have grown the program from 36 Cadets to 118 at the start of the school year. We had the third largest Freshman class in the Brigade behind only the two Host ROTC programs in Puerto Rico.



## **Camps and Schools**

Continuing the JSU tradition of strong performance at camp, our Cadets performed in the Top 35% of Cadets at Advanced Camp last year. Two of the fifteen Cadets we sent to Advanced Camp last year earned the RECONDO badge. To put that in perspective, UAB sent 25 Cadets to camp, last year, and only 1 earned the RECONDO badge.

Last year we sent seven Cadets to Basic Camp. The only universities that sent more to Basic Camp were the two universities in Puerto Rico. One of our Cadets earned a coin of excellence from the Secretary of the Army.

Four of our Cadets attended CTLT. They traveled to Germany, Fort Lewis, Fort Riley, and Fort Bragg where all got valuable experience shadowing lieutenants in leadership positions. Additionally, CDT Lacy graduated Airborne School and CDT Bettinger completed Air Assault School.

## **Scholarships and Academic Awards**

Three of our MSIV's earned the title of Distinguished Military Graduates. This honor recognizes them for being in the top 10% of Cadets nationwide.

Our Cadets received 8 of the 9 four-year National Guard Minute Man Scholarships valued in excess on \$467,000.

One of our Cadets receive a four year Army Reserves scholarship from the Civilian Aide for the Secretary of the Army valued in excess of \$58,000. CDT Mathew Hood was selected to participate in the Project Global Officer campaign. He got to spend two months at the University of Maryland IOT study Arabic. CDT Parton was also selected to participate in the Project Global Officer campaign. She will spend her summer in Taiwan learning Mandarin.



## **Recruiting**

2LT Casselberry, a May 22 graduate, was selected to be a member of the Nation-Wide Army Reserves recruiting campaign. She is representing JSU well.

The ROTC Army Career Exploration was the largest and most successful organic recruiting event for all of Cadet

Command last year. In Recruiting as in other areas, JSU punches well above its weight class.

The second annual Game Cock Challenge was a complete hit. Over eight JRTOC programs and 500 students attended the competition. This is an event we will continue to build upon and expect to benefit from for years to come. In addition to the our other events, JSU was selected to host the Alabama State Drill meeting this spring. We look forward to another great opportunity to showcase JSU and our ROTC program at this event.

## **Chapter Communications**

We hope to expand our communications with our members through the use of our Year Group Leaders. We also continue to communicate with you through this newsletter, the Jacksonville State University ROTC Alumni Face Book page and on Instagram at jsurotcalumni. "Like" our Face Book and Instagram pages and post a picture of your ROTC days there. If you are coming to Jacksonville, let me know and I'll meet you at Rowe Hall and give you the tour. We look forward to seeing you all at Homecoming if not sooner! Wherever this letter finds you, whether at the Pentagon, forward deployed, training to be forward deployed, or working hard in your community, I pray all the best for each of you. If you can't stay safe, just don't be too dangerous!

Go Gamecocks!

Jason Benefield  
ROTC Alumni Network President



COL, USA (Retired)

JSU Class of 1992

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