



JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION



ROTC Alumni Chapter

March 2021 Newsletter

President's Posting

Dear Gamecock Battalion Alumni,

The Spring semester is in full swing and the JSU sports calendar has been exceptionally full. In addition to the normal spring sports schedule, the spring football conference schedule is also being played. I hope you will have a chance to catch a game on campus before the regular season ends. The weather has been great, and we may never have spring football like this again. If that means we do not have to deal with a pandemic ever again, it will be too soon.

The university announced over the last week or so that the fall school year should be getting back to a normal pace. I hope that plan stays the course and that the fall sports schedule follows suit. I will put out more information regarding the plan for Homecoming 2021 and hopefully the resumption of our annual ROTC Alumni Banquet. Of course, everything depends on what conditions relative to the pandemic look like later in the year.

On 22 February 2021, JSU had its annual Day of Giving event. In conjunction with that event, the ROTC Alumni Chapter posted a message on the Facebook page requesting your help to endow the ROTC scholarships established in memory of our classmates killed in action (KIA). The endowed status will help preserve these scholarships well into the future. We are asking each of you to consider donating to the ROTC Alumni Chapter. From there, contributions will be moved to the KIA scholarships to grow them towards an endowed status. Online donations can be made by visiting www.jsu.edu/givejsu. Click **"Donate Today!"** in the top right-hand corner and select the drop-down menu under **"Designate your Gift"**. Scroll down until you find **"ROTC Alumni Chapter"**. If donating by check, please mail them to the JSU Foundation, 700 Pelham Road N, Jacksonville, AL 36265, and note on the check that it is for the ROTC Alumni Chapter, fund #4510. We encourage you and your classmates to participate in this effort throughout the year.

We are seeking additional nominations for our 2021 Military Alum of the Year. The criteria for consideration as the Military Alum of the Year are:

- Must be a graduate of JSU,
- Must be an officer on active duty or active in the National Guard or Reserves,
- 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, and
- Must be able to attend Homecoming to receive the award.

Nominations for Military Alum of the Year may be submitted from any source but are due by 5 April 2021 and must be accompanied by a written biographical sketch and photo. The individual is selected by consensus of the Chapter's Board. The President notifies the individual both telephonically and in writing. The President also notifies the JSU National Alumni Association. Nominations should be submitted to either the Alumni Affairs office or to me at anthony.whitley36@yahoo.com.

The ROTC Department is projecting ten (10) Cadets will be commissioned during the spring ceremony scheduled for 6 May 2021 at 1300 hours at the Theron Montgomery Building (TMB). As always, I encourage all ROTC alumni to attend and take part in this culminating event for our Cadets. The Cadets scheduled to be commissioned are William Browning, Seth Emmenegger, Lucas Field, Caleb Lafollette, Dejon Matthew, Brandon Pate, Gabriel Rawls, Joshua Thomas, Jacob Van Slyke, and Timothy Vest.

I cannot wait to welcome them into our Alumni ranks!

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Update from LTC Travis Easterling, Gamecock Battalion Professor of Military Science

The Gamecock Battalion hit the Spring semester running. We executed our first and second Super Labs of the semester. Unfortunately, one Cadet tested positive for COVID while being activated for the Presidential Inauguration. He has fully recovered and is participating fully in ROTC events again. The addition of a Recruiting Operations Officer (ROO), Joseph Culver, and a Secretary, Lori Blackmon, have been enormous additions to the team. One of our Cadets, Bradley Turner, was recognized as Student of the Week. He is an extremely talented Cadet that participates in a multitude of on-campus programs. Shametria Braggs was awarded the George C. Marshal award this month. Only the top 1% of Cadets nationwide receive this award.

Retention from the fall to the spring semester was a big win. We lost very few Cadets and we had several new enrollments. Normally, our numbers reduce in the spring due to attrition but that did not occur this semester. The new students offset the losses and we were able to keep the enrollment number the same at 63. I am anticipating the program numbers to increase to approximately 85 for Fall 2021. Two incoming freshmen were awarded National ROTC Scholarships. We are working on recruiting a third National

ROTC Scholarship winner. We are still on track to Commission 15 Lieutenants this year. That will be the first time we have made a mission in almost a decade. We are working on making a mission for next year. We continue to partner with local JROTC programs and high schools around the area.

We are requesting Army funding to advertise JSU's undergraduate and graduate programs. I will meet with the graduate department quarterly to talk about scholarship options for graduate students. Mr. Culver is in the final stages of developing a ROTC scholarship and benefits information packet for the Office of Admissions. Our goal is to better educate prospective and current students about scholarship opportunities. To better prepare students for life after college, we brought a representative from First Command Investment Company to brief Cadets on financial planning.

Cadet Command is still planning to execute Advanced and Basic Camp. MSG Serna and I will be at Fort Knox, KY from 2 Jul to 9 Aug.

Presidential Inauguration



On 9 April 2021, JSU will inaugurate Don C. Killingsworth, Jr., Ed. D. as the University's thirteenth President. The ceremony will be held at Pete Matthews Coliseum at 1000 hours. The theme of the inauguration is "One University. One Family. One Legacy."

Dr. Killingsworth has been part of the JSU family for a long time. First, as a student, then in various working roles before being named President by the Board of Trustees. University presidential inaugurations are unique and do not come around that often. To find out more about the schedule of events and other information, please go to www.jsu.edu/inauguration.

Chapter Communications

Please remember our main sources of communication with fellow Alumni are through this newsletter, the [Jacksonville State University ROTC Alumni Facebook page](#), and on [Instagram at jsurotcalumni](#). If you have not done so, please “Like” our Facebook page and encourage your classmates to do the same. Once you do, you will receive information and communications posted on our page. If you have any questions or suggestions on how to improve our communication among all alumni, please email or call me. My contact information is listed below.

I wish each one of you a safe and productive spring.

Go Gamecocks!

Anthony

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Alumni Chapter Board of Directors

The current slate of board officers includes Secretary/Treasurer COL (Ret) Chuck Buxton, Scholarship Coordinator COL (Ret) Michael Dalesandro, and Directors LTC (Ret) Joe Serviss, COL (Ret) Ed Friar, LTC (Ret) John Hopson, LTC (Ret) Clay Goff, and LTC (Ret) Jason Czar. If you are interested in serving on the ROTC Alumni Chapter board, I encourage you to contact me directly. We would love to have you join the team!