



JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION



ROTC Alumni Chapter

December 2020 Newsletter

President's Posting

Dear Gamecock Battalion Alumni,

Seasons Greetings! I hope you had an enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday and are looking forward to an exciting Christmas season. This year has been exceptionally challenging for all of us. The present pandemic continues to alter our lives and activities. It was such a disappointment that we had to cancel the annual ROTC Alumni Banquet. In the interest of health and safety of all involved, it was the best course of action. Homecoming weekend 2020 was not a total loss, however. Dr. and Mrs. Don Killingsworth hosted an alumni awards dinner on Friday, 16 October 2020, in Leone Cole Auditorium to recognize all the 2020 Alumni of the Year winners, including our Military Alumni of the Year, Chaplain (COL) Gregory J. Long. Chaplain Long currently serves as the Command Chaplain for the United States Army Reserve Command (USARC), Fort Bragg, NC. Despite not hosting our banquet, Chaplain Long and his family were treated exceptionally well by Alumni Relations Director, Kaci Ogle, and her staff. They went out of their way to ensure the alumni award winners had a great experience. As of now, the plan is to hold our banquet next year during Homecoming 22-23 October 2021. More information will be forthcoming later next year. I hope you can join us!

As a reminder, you can find us on [Facebook at Jacksonville State University ROTC Alumni](#) and on [Instagram at jsurotcalumni](#). If you have not done so, I encourage you to like the Facebook page to get chapter updates and news from the Gamecock Battalion. More importantly, share the page with alumni in your networks so they can be plugged in as well. If you have any questions or suggestions on communication, please let me know. I hope you and your families have a wonderful and safe holiday season. Go Gamecocks!

Anthony Whitley
anthony.whitley36@yahoo.com
256-453-2334

Introducing LTC Travis J. Easterling: New Gamecock Battalion PMS

With no banquet this year, we were unable to officially introduce the new Gamecock Battalion Professor of Military Science, LTC Travis J. Easterling. LTC Easterling is a native of Harrisburg, Arkansas. He commissioned as an Aviation Officer in May 2004 through U.S. Army's Reserve Officer Training Corps at Arkansas State University. LTC Easterling continued his education by receiving his Master's in Leadership and Management from Webster University in St. Louis, MO and graduating from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, KS.



After graduating Flight School at Fort Rucker, Alabama, LTC Easterling was assigned to the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade in Katterbach, Germany.

While stationed in Germany, he deployed, as a Platoon Leader, to both Afghanistan and Iraq. After graduating the Aviation Captain's Career Course, he was assigned to the 16th Combat Aviation Brigade in Fairbanks, Alaska where he commanded two separate companies. LTC Easterling deployed, as a company commander, to Pakistan and Afghanistan. LTC Easterling served as an Observer Controller and Trainer at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana after company command. After graduating the Command and General Staff Course, LTC Easterling moved to Fort Drum, New York and was assigned as the Operations Officer for 1-89 Cavalry Regiment and deployed to Afghanistan. After redeploying, LTC Easterling was reassigned to 3-10 General Support Aviation Battalion where he served as the Executive Officer and deployed to Operation Atlantic Resolve. Prior to selection as Professor of Military Science at Jacksonville State University, he served as Board President for the United States Army Combat Readiness Center in Fort Rucker, Alabama. He conducted over 12 major accident investigations while assigned to United States Combat Readiness Center.

LTC Easterling's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), Meritorious Service Medal (2 Oak Leaf Cluster), Air Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal (2 Oak Leaf Cluster), Army Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Citation, Army Superior Unit Award, Humanitarian Service Medal, and the Senior Aviator Badge. LTC Easterling and his wife Jessica have been married for over 16 years and have two girls Emma (13) and Gracie (11).

In addition to LTC Easterling, we also missed the opportunity to recognize the excellent Gamecock Battalion cadre: MAJ Nicholas Kolodziej, MSG Randy Serna, SFC Michael Parker, Mr. Eric Sloughfy, and Mr. Austin Bragg. We appreciate the leadership this team instills in the cadets. Thank you for all you do!

Military Alumni of the Year Nominations

We would like to open the request for nominations for our 2021 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 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 Alumni of the Year may be submitted from any source but are due no later than the end of June 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 Relations office or to me at anthony.whitley36@yahoo.com.

Fall Commissioning

The Fall 2020 Commissioning ceremony is scheduled for 1100 hours on 10 December 2020, at the Leone Cole Auditorium. There will be six Cadets receiving their commission: Tristan Baca, Cameron Burns, Christopher Kennedy, Hayden Radford, Joshua Thomas, and Taylor Thornton. I will be on hand to speak at the ceremony and to present these newly commissioned officers their Alumni coins. I encourage you to attend the upcoming ceremony or a future commissioning ceremony if you are able. It is a special time in the lives of these young officers and a great way to support them as new ROTC Alumni.



Cadet Scholarships – Your help is needed!

One of the most important Alumni Chapter responsibilities is to manage the many scholarships available to Cadets. Since we were not able to do that at the banquet this year, I would like to recognize the following receiving scholarships:

- Cadet Kathleen Patterson, ROTC Endowed Scholarship
- Cadet Tion Wright, Pierce Memorial Award Scholarship
- Cadet Toni Wright, Anniston Elks Lodge Scholarship
- Cadet Nolan Tritt, CPT Kyle Comfort Memorial Scholarship

To continue awarding these and other scholarships to deserving Cadets, they need to be funded. The Alumni Relations Office has sponsored some fundraising events recently to do just that. With those events, we were able to designate “ROTC Scholarship” when donating. I encourage each ROTC Alumni member to participate in future fundraising events or choose an ROTC Scholarship to which you would like to donate. This is a chance to give back. There are plans in the works to do some internal scholarship fundraising. More information to follow.

Alumni Chapter Board of Directors

The current slate of board officers include 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!

Stay connected!

Follow us on our social media accounts on [Facebook at Jacksonville State University ROTC Alumni](#) and [Instagram at jsurotcalumni](#)

