



Fall 2020 Alumni News Letter

First, I would like to introduce myself. I am LTC Travis J. Easterling and I arrived to the Gamecock Battalion in late June. I am an Aviation Officer and I commissioned in 2004 from Arkansas State University's ROTC program. I can tell you my Alma Mater and JAX is very similar and I am honored to recruit and train the next generation of leaders in our Army. I look forward to meeting all of you someday and I appreciate all the support you give this amazing program. Sincerely,

LTC Travis J. Easterling

26th Professor of Military Science



As most of you can attest, COVID-19 has impacted just about every aspect of our lives. Its changed the way we attend school, to the way we eat at a restaurant. I intended to address all of you and provide an update on the Gamecock Battalion at the Alumni dinner but it was cancelled. In an effort to provide an update, I wanted to give you by month snap shots of this semester.



Distributed Basic Camp and COVID-19 mitigations

August:

Normally, August is a preparation time for the Cadre. We spend the majority of this month refining syllabuses, publishing orders, and reserving training areas in order to ensure we have a good semester. Advanced Camp and Basic Camp were cancelled because of COVID-19 and Cadet Command wanted each program to execute a “Basic Camp like” training event at the university. The “Basic Camp like” training event was called Distributed Basic Camp went incredibly well. Some of the tasks we trained included: Drill and Ceremony, proper wear of military uniform, Land Navigation, Call for Fire, and Basic Rifle Marksmanship.



September:

September was a transition period for both the Cadre and Cadets. We started preparing the seniors for Operation Agile Leader (OAL). OAL replaced Advanced Camp this year and was executed in conjunction with four universities. Our preparation and the Cadets hard work directly impacted their performance at OAL. On 10 September, we held our first contracting ceremony of the school year. We also awarded additional scholarships to some very deserving Cadets. Your generosity made this possible and it absolutely increased our enrollment and esprit de corp. Both of the events were live streamed to Facebook so family could watch. The video has been watched more than 4,000 times and reached more than 7,000 peoples feeds.



October:

On 20 October, we held our second contracting ceremony for our Cadet S4 and Chaplin. It an honor to contract each of these deserving Cadets. We completed all the train up and executed OAL from 21-25 October. We coordinated with a local National Guard unit and had our Cadets fly into the Pelham Range. It was a great way to start of the training event. During OAL, our Cadets competed against other universities in Land Navigation, BRM, and Situational Training Exercises. The train up definitely paid off and they exceeded the average scores in each event.



Operation Agile Leader

November:

Students were not allowed to be on campus after Thanksgiving. This condensed the training time we normally would have but we finished the semester strong by executing Tactical Combat Casualty Care training and a Leader Professional Development (LPD). On 19 November, we conducted Platoon Attacks utilizing the program's paintball guns. It was a great team building event and I couldn't think of a better way to end the semester. We held the last contracting ceremony of the semester at the end of the lab.

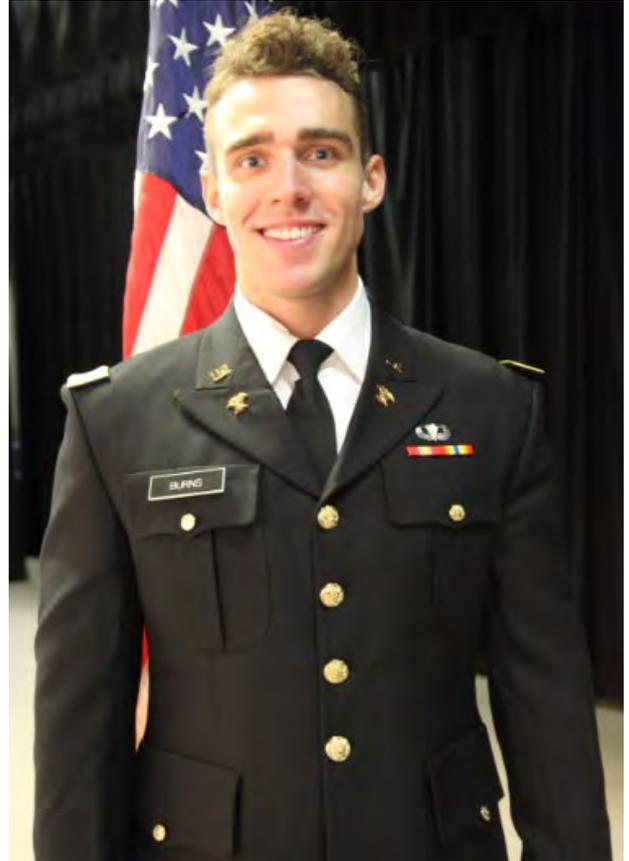


December:

The fall semester culminated with the commissioning of six new Lieutenants. It was an honor having Anthony Whitley be our guest speaker. I am excited to see what the future holds for each of these outstanding leaders. I hope everyone has a blessed holiday season, and I look forward to seeing what 2021 has in store.



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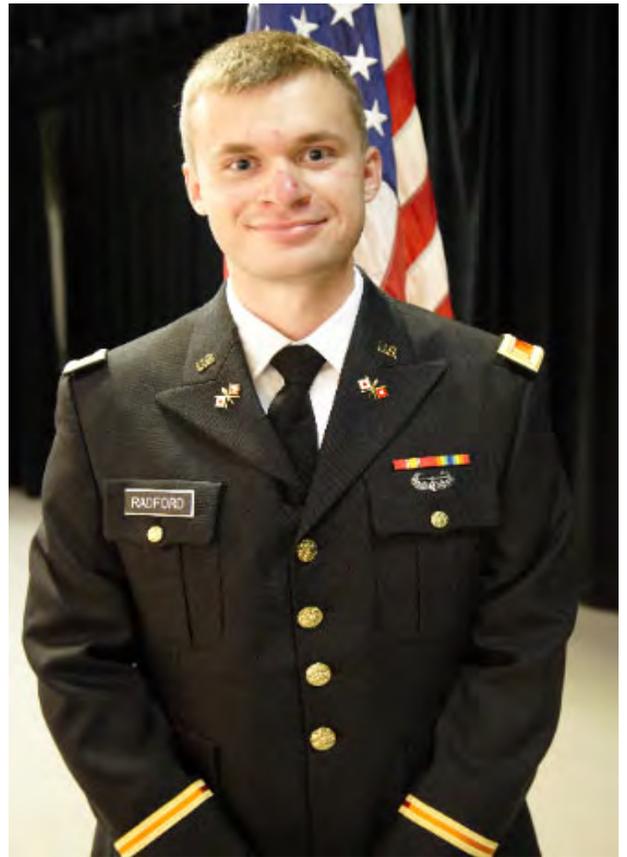


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Commissioning Ceremony



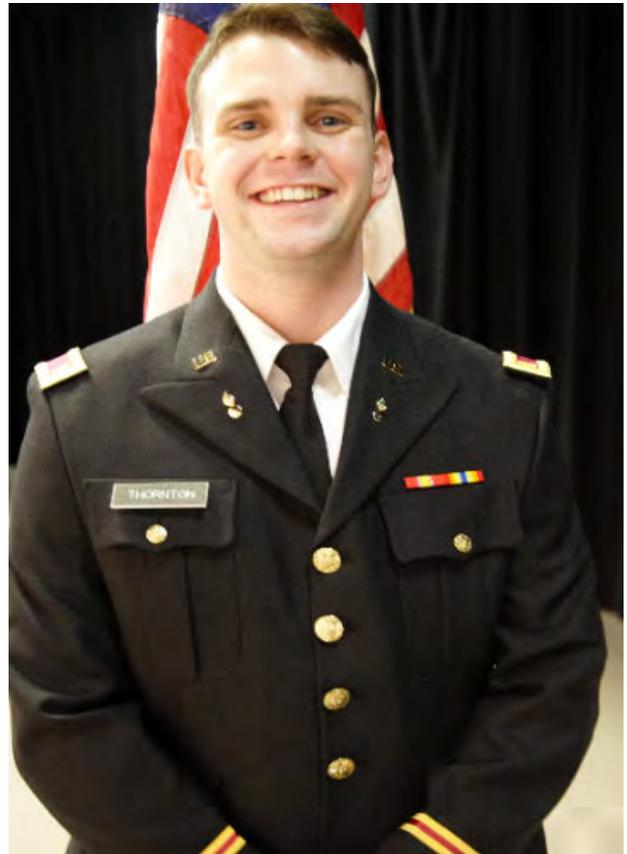
2LT Kennedy



2LT Radford



2LT Thomas



2LT Thornton