

EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY ARMY ROTC

ROTC Alumni Newsletter Fall 2023



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Colonels' Pride! *By LTC Jim Plutt Jr.*

To Alumni, parents, friends, and Cadets of EKU Army ROTC,

The last six months have flown by and the program has accomplished a significant amount. First, I'd like to commend our Cadets for maintaining a 3.4 GPA across the program for the fall semester. Their work in the classroom is central to their future as Army leaders and it's great to see these results. We held our first branch reveal night where 24 of our senior's learned their future career path in the Army. If you are an alumnus that would be interested in donating branch insignia for a future branching reveal event, please reach out. We'd love to be able to hand worn branch insignia to a Cadet receiving their branch to connect the past to the future within the program. Additionally, we've already commissioned six lieutenants since our spring commissioning last May at our fall and winter ceremony. We remain on-track to commission 16 more next year at our Spring ceremony.

This upcoming spring, we have numerous major events planned. We will conduct our military ball, 26.2-mile Mountain Main Memorial March, and Joint Field Training Exercise (JFTX) while reintroducing the "Colonels Crucible" as a 2-person competition locally in the EKU training area.

My priority remains to assess and improve the facilities, training, and opportunities that our cadets have access to which allow us to remain a world-class program. I appreciate the strong alumni network that anchors our ability to do so.



Support the Colonel's Battalion

Your donation to the Military Science and Leadership Cadet Development Fund will help prepare the next generation of U.S. Army Officers.

Link for giving:

<https://securelb.imodules.com/s/1763/giving19/interior.aspx?sid=1763&gid=2&pgid=524&cid=1360&dids=36>

For more information on how you can support the Military Science and Leadership Program, contact Claire Jennings at Claire.Jennings@eku.edu

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Cadet Summer Training by Cadet Madison Anest



Cadet Summer Training (CST) is a 35-day training event that all MSIII Cadets, attending colleges and universities nationwide, must complete in order to fulfill commissioning requirements. Generally attended during the Summer between their MSIII and MSIV year, Cadets travel to Fort Knox, Kentucky (KY) within specific time periods that coincide with one of ten total regiments. CST provides Cadets with the opportunity to enhance individual soldier skills such as basic rifle marksmanship, land navigation, and tactical combat casualty care (TCCC). Additionally, Cadets fulfill various leadership positions throughout their time at Fort Knox and are evaluated on their leadership aptitude and performance both in garrison and field environments. The training event culminates in three separate Field Training Exercises (FTX) where Cadets conduct numerous missions in a tactical environment. Cadets work alongside their platoon and foster invaluable team cohesion and interpersonal relations with their peers. I attended 7th Regiment this past Summer and had the privilege of learning from and working alongside many amazing Cadets and individuals from all across the country. I enjoyed rifle marksmanship, the obstacle course, and all three FTXs. I felt they contributed the most to overall platoon cohesion which greatly benefitted mission execution in a field environment. The lessons and knowledge I gained from my peers and platoon Cadre during my time at CST expanded my perception of leadership and shaped me into a more adaptive, decisive, and confident leader which I am excited to apply towards my future career as an officer.

Colonels Challenge by Cadet Aliya Hatfield

Colonel's Challenge is a 3-day event for new incoming freshman to immerse them into the ROTC experience at EKU. I participated for many reasons, but overall to push myself out of my comfort zone. I want to pursue a career in the military and the scholarship helped me afford coming to college. My experience in Colonel's Challenge was great. It was an amazing way to connect with my new peers that I will be around for the upcoming years in this program. I gained a great group of friends I can trust and go to before college even started. Colonel's Challenge also gave me insight on what I would be learning in my time in ROTC. It was a great foundation in learning about what ROTC entails before the semester begins as well as get to know the leadership within the program. I learned about various opportunities within the program such as Color Guard and Ranger Challenge. My favorite part was meeting new people and being able to connect with numerous Cadets already within the program. Overall, I had a great experience!



Cadet Troop Leader Training by Cadet Daniel Green



This summer after I completed CST at Fort Knox, KY, I was able to attend Cadet Troop Leader Training (CTLT) at Fort Moore, Georgia. I shadowed a 1st Lieutenant (LT) with Echo Company, 1-29 Infantry (IN), 316 Cavalry Brigade. Where my experience differs from other cadets' CTLT experiences, is that while they are usually shadowing a United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) 2LT Platoon Leader, I was shadowing an Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) 1LT Executive Officer (XO). The unit I was with, 1-29 IN, was the schoolhouse unit for most of the courses that Combat Arms soldiers can attend. Examples include the U.S. Army Sniper Course, U.S. Army Combatives, Stryker Leaders Course, and many more. While I got to shadow the courses within my unit, I was also able to observe parts of U.S. Army Ranger School, Infantry Basic Officer Leader Course (IBOLC), and the Clarke Simulation Center. While I was there, I was given a full guided tour of the National Infantry Museum (NIM) where I was told the history of the United States Army Infantry. Overall, as someone wanting to branch Infantry, this experience was eye opening to say the least, and I will never forget the lessons I learned from senior NCOs and senior Officers who I got to speak with. I will carry those lessons into my Army career to make myself and those I lead better at defending our great nation.

Nurse Summer Training Program by Cadet Madelyn Ruthsatz

The Nurse Summer Training Program (NSTP) is a 28-day program for Cadet Nursing Students to get immersed in the day-to-day life as an Active-Duty Army Nurse in the Nurse Corps. After I completed CST, I flew to Fort Cavazos in Texas to begin my training. I served over 130 hours across several different units, but particularly the Labor and Delivery floor. I got amazing hands-on experience practicing many skills such as IV insertion. I helped in over 15 births and got to observe cases in the Operating Room (OR) as well. I shadowed several 1LTs and CPTs and was able to ask them lots of questions about the numerous routes we can take as an Army Nurse. We also had a class over Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) and earned the PHTLS certificate after the hands-on completion of this training. Overall, NSTP has been one of the best clinical experiences I have had thus far and has helped me gain an immense over the Army Nurse Corps. I will value my experiences and newfound knowledge throughout my upcoming nursing career come May 2024.



Homecoming by Cadet Jordan Watson

On Friday October 13th, Eastern Kentucky University's (EKU) ROTC program participated in the Homecoming parade to build fellowship around the community and the Cadets within the program. The MSIII's marched and called cadences to the MSII and MSI cadets. While MSIVs were in full battle rattle and threw out candy to the residents of Richmond. The Cadets showcased their discipline and teamwork, impressing the onlookers with their precision. Spectators cheered as the ROTC program displayed their dedication to both the university and the local community, fostering a sense of pride and unity. The following day, October 14th, our Cadets provided security at the EKU football game. Our Battalion's Color Guard was also present at the game. The Battalion helps with football games throughout the semester to show support to the football team and university. We also are in charge of the infamous cannon, in which a blank is shot off when EKU scores.



Ranger Challenge by Cadet Chloe Hampson



On October 27th, 2023, EKU's Ranger Challenge Team traveled to Fort Knox to compete in 7th Brigade's (BDE) Bold Warrior Challenge. The competition involved a series of events spanning from Friday afternoon to Saturday. These mission sites varied from mentally challenging to physically demanding tasks and were designed to promote teamwork. The participating teams competed in order to get the opportunity to advance and compete again at Sandhurst against the other BDEs while representing 7th BDE. The EKU team spent the entire semester preparing and training five days a week leading up to the competition. Our team worked together great and even finished 1st place in the One Rope Bridge event. The team continues to have optimism of performing even better at the competition next year, and coming up with ideas on how we can improve.

University of the Cumberland *by Cadet Evan Dunaway*



The fall 2023 semester for Patriot Company, located at the University of the Cumberland has conducted several labs to train and teach Cadets for many of the tasks to be used in our future career as Army Officers. Patriot Company started the semester with land navigation where MSI and MSII's had the opportunity to sharpen their navigational skills learned in class out on a land navigation course. The MSIII's had a much harder course so that they can be better prepared for the upcoming CST land navigation course. Following the land navigation lab, Patriot Company conducted four tactics lab over four consecutive weeks. These tactics labs are to simulate battle drills that a platoon may use in a combat situation. The leadership is rotated amongst the MSIII's between the four tactics labs. Following the tactics labs, Patriot Company conducted a field craft lab to teach MSI, MSII, and MSIII's proper camouflage techniques, how to conduct aid and litter, how to set up a claymore, and how to radio in a nine-line. The lab before FTX, Cadets will have another opportunity to practice their skills in land navigation in preparation for both day and night land navigation at the fall FTX. Later in the semester, our Cadets will conduct Cadet Water Survival Training (CWST) which will help MSI's and MSII's to develop survivability skills in the water. MSIII's will be tested in their water survivability skills that they have learned in their previous MS level years. Our satellite program only continues to grow at the University of the Cumberland and the program looks to add more Cadets in the following 2024 spring semester.

Airborne School *by Cadet Joshua Seabrooks*

Over the summer I went to Airborne School at Fort Moore Columbus, Georgia. There, I learned how to properly exit from an aircraft and how to land falling from the sky. Airborne School was a total of three weeks and each week you participated in a Physical Training (PT) session whether that was run or calisthenics. The first week is called Ground week. In Ground week, we started off with the flex arm hang, which we pulled ourselves up chin over the pull up bar, & held that position for 10 seconds. We then moved to the mock aircraft to ensure we could hook our static lines to the cable inside of the aircraft. After completing those two events, we moved onto the next series which consisted of learning how to rig/buddy rig a parachute, exit mock doors of an aircraft, properly pack a parachute, and perform a parachute land fall (PLF). Successfully completing Ground week, you then move to Tower week. In Tower week, we did a single/mass exit out from a 34ft tower, worked on pulling slips, practiced what happens when malfunctions occur, and performed 12 jumps from the cable apparatus. Lastly Jump week, we performed five jumps from a C130 or C17. The jumps we performed will be three Hollywood jumps (you and the parachute), one combat jump (ruck and a rifle), and a night Hollywood jump. Successfully completing all five jumps, I am now an Airborne Paratrooper. Airborne All The Way!



Veterans Day by Cadet David Griffith



EKU's Colonels Battalion attended a plethora of events for Veterans Day weekend. One of the many events that EKU ROTC attended was the unveiling of the new Veterans Memorial which was held on November 4th, 2023. The wall is located at the end of the Carloftis Garden, just off Lancaster Avenue. This memorial is a standing tribute to the men and women from EKU who have served in the military and have given their life for their country. The memorial has the names of these men and women etched into the stone and also includes benches dedicated to their honorary service. In addition to this, the memorial also includes a large American flag and the Fallen Soldier sculpture. Another event that Colonels Battalion took part in was the Veteran dedicated football game against Austin Peay University. Our Color Guard team presented the American and Kentucky flag before kickoff, as well as presented each flag of the US Military to commemorate veterans and their families. Our Cadets also manned during the game was the cannon. We fired the cannon at kickoff and every time a touchdown occurs. The last event that EKU ROTC was a part of was the Model Laboratory School's Veterans Day commemorative service hosted on November 10th. Our Cadets provided a four-man Color Guard team that presented the American and Kentucky flag and stayed to watch the service put on by the school staff.



Fall Field Training Exercise by Cadet Sean Nicoletti

All Military Science (MS) levels, consisting of Cadets from EKU and UC, prepared and conducted their FTX from November 17, 2023, to November 19, 2023. The FTX began with the transportation of Cadets from their affiliated schools to the Disney Training Center in Artemus, KY. Over the course of three days, Cadets applied everything they have learned in classroom settings to real-world operations. Cadets conducted day-time land navigation where they had to find four out of five points to earn a passing grade, and subsequently conducted night-time land navigation where three out of five points were needed to pass. MS3s were also placed in leadership positions and coordinated offensive or defensive operations in the forms of movement to contact, area defense, raid, ambush, and attack, in order to achieve certain mission goals in preparation for CST. Although the weather was not in our favor due to rainfall and low temperatures, Cadets prevailed over the adverse conditions. Cadets did an amazing job keeping the overall morale high by motivating one another and working together to accomplish all tasks at hand.



Alumni Spotlight *by Cadet Madelyn Ruthsatz*

The alumni spotlight article emphasizes standout recent graduates of the EKU ROTC program and their exceptional military career thus far. EKU ROTC alumni spotlights are 1LT Caleb Winebrenner (2020) and 1LT Clayton Rein (2022). During their ROTC tenure, 1LT Winebrenner and 1LT Rein worked alongside each other in various leadership positions in Colonels Battalion, both went to Air Assault school as Cadets, and completed the 26.2-mile Mountain Man Memorial ruck march together. Both 1LT Winebrenner and 1LT Rein graduated with a Bachelors in Homeland Security and branched Infantry. 1LT Winebrenner graduated from the Infantry Basic Officer Leadership Course (IBOLC) at Fort Moore, GA in 2021 and got stationed at Fort Campbell, KY in 2021. Later, 1LT Winebrenner went to Ranger School and graduated in the summer of 2022. 1LT Rein graduated from IBOLC in November of 2022 and graduated Ranger School in March 2023. 1LT Rein knew his first duty station was Fort Campbell, but little did he know he would end up being in the same Company as 1LT Winebrenner and that they would be deployed together. 1LT Winebrenner and 1LT Rein served as Platoon Leaders (PL) in Demon Company, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) for around six months overseas. A piece of advice 1LT Rein left for our Cadets to take into their future career is as follows, "Listen to your senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and platoon sergeants. It's okay to not know everything after BOLC. Trust in your NCOs, learn from them, lead from the front, and be the example you want your Soldiers to see". A piece of advice from 1LT Winebrenner is as follows, "Also, learn how to have a home life/work balance. You'll get burnt out if you're staying in the office until 2000 every night. You'll learn that most things in Garrison can wait until tomorrow. Lastly, have fun being a PL. A lot of people forget that Officers won't really be around Soldiers past Captain, so make the most of it while you can!". Thank you to 1LT Winebrenner and Rein for their great pieces of advice. They continue to be great examples of the caliber of Lieutenants the Colonels Battalion produces. Colonels Pride!



Air Assault School *by Cadet Matthew Davis*



This summer I had the opportunity to complete the US Army Air Assault course at the United States Military Academy West Point, led by Instructors from the Sabalauski Air Assault School at Fort Campbell, Kentucky (Ky). The intent behind this training was to further develop myself as a leader and a qualified soldier. I learned to push myself and those around me, all while completing both challenging and fun training. I learned about the capabilities of the different rotary wing aircraft that the US Army utilizes, sling load operations, Air Assault operations, and extensive operations. Our concluding event was the 12-Mile Ruck, which was followed by graduation where I became Air Assault qualified. I am grateful for this opportunity and the experiences I had during this school that I can bring forward with me in my future career as an Army Officer. Air Assault!

The 2023 Fall Commissioning Ceremony



Newly pinned 2LT Powell receives her first salute from SFC Lawson.



2LT Morrow is being pinned by his stepfather at the commissioning ceremony.



2LT Davis presenting his father, retired SSG, with a Silver Dollar as appreciation for being his first salute.



2LT Webb is being pinned by his mother & wife at the commissioning ceremony.



The Cadets commissioning as Officers took their Oath of Office from our Professor of Military Science, LTC Plutt.



Newly pinned 2LT Osborne receives her first salute from uncle, retired Air Force Master Sergeant.

The Army's Newest Second Lieutenants!

Congratulations to the former Cadets below for their commission!

- 2LT Davis, Active Duty, Armor
- 2LT Morrow, Active Duty, Chemical
- 2LT Osborne, KY Army National Guard, Chemical
- 2LT Powell, Active Duty, Transportation
- 2LT Webb, KY Army National Guard, Artillery

Spring 2024 Army ROTC Events

- March 1st, 2024- ECU ROTC Military Ball.
- April 12th-14th Apr- Joint Field Training Exercise.
- April 20th, 2024- Mountain Man Memorial March.
- April 26th, 2024- Colonel's Crucible.
- May 3rd, 2024- ECU ROTC Awards Ceremony.
- May 9th, 2024- Spring Commissioning Ceremony ECU, Richmond.

*For more event information contact Claire.jennings@eku.edu