

# EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY ARMY ROTC

ROTC Newsletter Spring 2023



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## *Colonels' Pride!* By LTC Vin Thomas

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

What a pleasure it has been to serve with such a talented group of individuals, both Cadets and Cadre members. This was an amazing way to close out such a successful academic year. I look forward to hearing about how successful our 12 most recently commissioned Second Lieutenants are as they begin their Army careers. Truly a blessing to see these young Leaders develop over the years. They are ready....and they will do well.

This past semester was, yet again, another great time for Alumni connections. We hosted GEN Rainey again. He absolutely loves spending time here on campus and with the Cadets. He was here as the guest speaker for the commissioning ceremony and was able to deliver the Oath of Office to the commissioning class. Mr. Brian Brode made another visit to campus to spend time with the Battalion. Mr. Brode over the past year has created and dedicated a scholarship for our Cadets to compete for. Truly amazing. This program excels because of the outstanding Alumni and Veterans of this program and we could not do it without you.

It continues to be an honor and a privilege to be a part of this great organization. There is no better assignment in the Army. Have a great summer break and don't hesitate to let me know where I can help!



**Spring JFTX** by Cadet Daniel Green



EKU Army ROTC combined forces with the University of Kentucky Army ROTC and Morehead State Army ROTC to conduct a Joint Field Training Exercise (JFTX) from March 31<sup>st</sup> through April 2<sup>nd</sup> at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training. Once on ground, MSIII Cadets from each program combined into two platoons and MSI/MSII Cadets from each program combined into two platoons. Friday consisted of Situational Training Exercise (STX) lanes where Cadets were thrust into leadership positions to develop and experience personal leadership abilities under stress. However, due to inclement weather, Cadets were moved into barracks and taught classes on tactics and Soldier tasks. Saturday was range operations, where Cadets got a chance to group, zero, and qualify with the M4 Carbine. After range operations, Cadets conducted more STX lanes and night land navigation. Sunday morning, Cadets woke up, rucked to the obstacle course, and select Cadets from each university got to ride in a UH-60 Blackhawk from the Kentucky National Guard. From this training exercise, all Cadets sharpened their Soldier skills, prepare for the next Military Science (MS) level, and prepare for Cadet Summer Training (CST) at Fort Knox this summer.

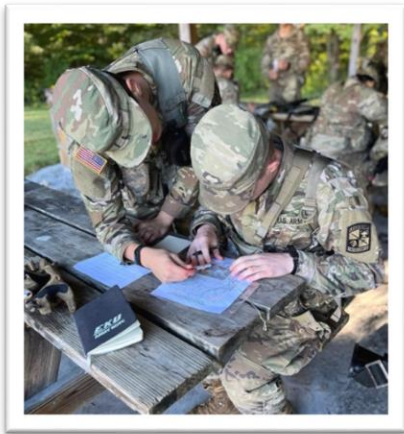


**Support the Colonel's Battalion**  
If you desire to donate to the Military Science and Leadership Cadet Development Fund to help prepare the next generation of U.S. Army Officers, please contact Mrs. Claire Jennings at [Claire.Jennings@eku.edu](mailto:Claire.Jennings@eku.edu) or call 859-622-2105.

**Stay in touch!**  
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[https://www.instagram.com/eku\\_armyrotc/](https://www.instagram.com/eku_armyrotc/)



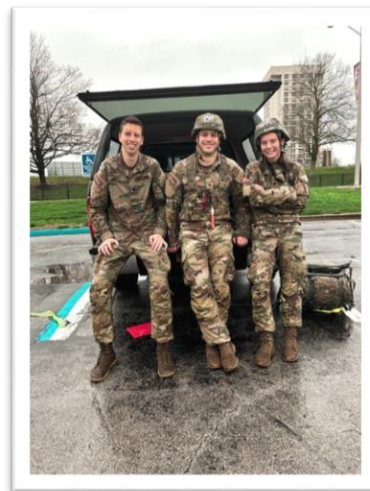
**Land Navigation at Fort Knox** by Cadet Wyatt Davis



At Cadet Summer Training (CST), cadets must perform both day and night land navigation as a graduation requirement. MSIII's were offered an extra training opportunity at Fort Knox (where CST is located) on the land navigation course in preparation for CST this summer. I decided to go and get a feel for the course since it is the exact course we will be tested on this summer. We used compasses, protractors, and maps to plot optimal routes through every type of terrain Fort Knox has to offer. I remember my path leading down a road, seeing trails that I initially thought were drivable roads, dead reckoning through open woods at times, and coming out into an open field at the end. The trip was eerily quiet, as I did not see another Cadet on my route. It gave me a chance to appreciate nature while I honed my terrain association skills. All in all, it was a great experience and I feel as if I will have an easier time at camp because of it.

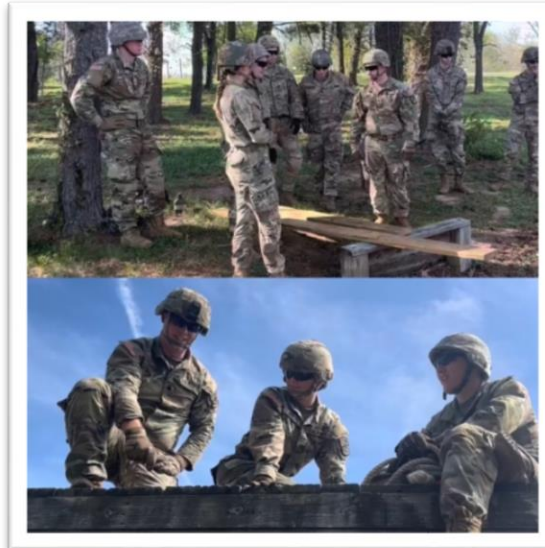
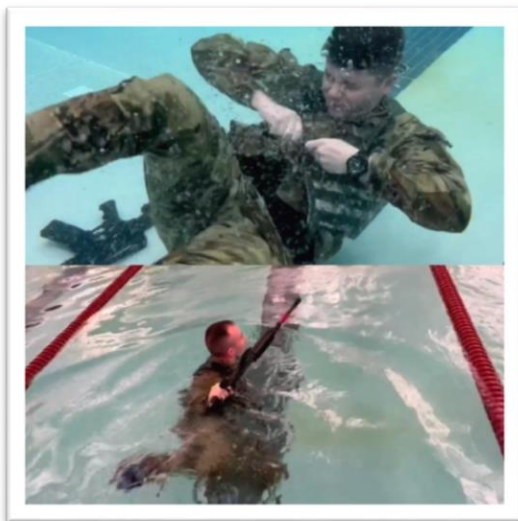
**12-Mile Ruck March** by Cadet Madelyn Ruthsatz

MSIII Cadets and Cadets competing for an Air Assault School slot conducted a 12-mile ruck march throughout EKU's campus and Richmond on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. The 12-mile route began at the Van Hoose parking lot on campus, 6 miles out to the turnaround point at the end of Lancaster Road then 6 miles back to the same starting point at the Van Hoose parking lot. The MSIII Cadets had 4 hours to complete the 12 miles to be in accordance with Cadet Summer Training's (CST) requirement and 3 hours if the Cadet was competing for an Air Assault School slot. The 12-mile ruck march is a requirement for MSIII's going to CST to validate their readiness for graded foot marches as well as tactical patrols. The Cadets competing for an Air Assault school slot must complete the 12-mile ruck in 3 hours, as a timed 12-mile ruck march is the culminating event in order to graduate Air Assault School. The intense rain did not damper this ruck march as Cadets overcame the weather conditions by working together and motivating each other to complete this event to the best of their ability.



**FLRC** by Cadet Chloe Hampson

Colonel's Battalion visited the Blue Grass Army Depot on April 20, 2023, to complete the Field Leadership Reaction Course (FLRC). For each of the events, an MSIII was appointed as the leader for the obstacle and taken aside to be given a quick explanation of the scenario. From there, the MSIII was given five minutes to brief the rest of the Cadets on the objective and devise a plan to complete the event. Once the five minutes were up, the Cadets were given twenty minutes to execute. The FLRC allowed the MSIIIs to think of creative solutions for unique situations. The course prepares MSIIIs for CST in case of an unusual situation occurring, Cadets are prepared to face it head-on.

**CWST** by Cadet Ryan Browning

Cadets of all Military Science (MS) levels conducted combat water survival training (CWST) on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, to learn techniques of survival to better prepare themselves in the event of a water emergency. CWST is also a commissioning requirement for all Cadets to pass prior to commissioning. Cadets pushed themselves to complete every event of the CWST event without failure to determine if they are capable of survival tasks in the water while in uniform. We performed CWST during a Physical Training (PT) session and began at 0600. The two specialized events conducted included the 15-meter swim with a rifle and fighting load carrier (FLC) and an equipment ditch.

**Mountain Man** by Cadet Zachary Creekmore



Mountain Man Memorial March is a 26.2-mile ruck march conducted every year in Gatlinburg, Tennessee in honor of our Fallen service members and to support our Gold Star Families. I attended a lot of the practice ruck marches that Cadet Green led and was prepared for our required 12-mile ruck as a MSIII. When the weekend came for the actual event, I invited my family and was able to incorporate them into a military event as well as having their support. There was competitiveness at the event, but everyone helped each other to finish and keep spirits high. When I reached the halfway point, mile 12, I realized I had accomplished two things. I had gone the farthest I ever have, and I did so with no pain. The ruck out and back was so beautiful, and I got many pictures. While it was very physically challenging event, I enjoyed it and feel like I proved to myself more than ever before and that the military is my home. I plan to attend Mountain Man next year hopefully getting under 7 hours this time. Events like this build camaraderie among future leaders, which has helped our program immensely.

**Support the Colonel's Battalion**

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***Military Ball*** by Cadet Chamira Cooper

The ROTC 2023 Military Ball's intent is to bring the Battalion together to build camaraderie and to celebrate MSIV's for their hard work and completion of the program. All MS levels, including Cadre and special guests met on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at the Stratton building on EKU's Campus. This was a night to remember and almost felt like an ROTC prom. As an MSIV, I loved spending time with my brothers and sisters from both programs to recognize the achievements of this school year. We enjoy a casual and fancy dinner together surrounded by the ones that have helped lead us to success.

***End of Year Award Ceremony*** by Cadet Madelyn Ruthsatz

The end of the year award ceremony takes place on the very last day of the year in order to recognize Cadets who went above and beyond in their performance throughout the year. Each award has a different intent behind it and a Cadet is carefully chosen to fit that description. Some examples of these awards include the Sergeant Jerry Dean Olds award (pictured), USAA spirit award, top Cadet from each Military Science (MS) level, Cadet of the Year, along with many other notable awards. We had the privilege of having some special guests being present to reward some of the Cadets with their certificate. We appreciate all those who came out to support our Cadets and Battalion. The Change of Command Ceremony also took place welcoming in the new leadership that will be taking over and leading the Battalion this upcoming fall.



*University of the Cumberland* by Cadet Rylan Reed

This semester the University of the Cumberland's ROTC program executed a variety of exercises to prepare their MSIIIs for Cadet Summer Training (CST). Cadets start as MSIs and work their way up to be MSIVs. Through the years in the program, they learn how to develop their skills to be the best future Officers they can be through hours of education and learning. This year, the University of the Cumberland decided to have a "Super Lab" for the cadets to develop their skills and knowledge in the field aspect to better prepare themselves for Joint Field Training Exercise (JFTX) this spring. This "Super Lab" allowed Cadets to better their skills at day and night land navigation, along with setting up a patrol base for camp. Although it was only a two-day event, Cadets got the opportunity to learn what CST will be like. This also allowed for some physical exercise with a 6-mile ruck back to the University where Cadets were released with more knowledge and confidence in their skills moving forward.



**The 2023 Spring Commissioning Ceremony**



Newly pinned 2LT Jarrett receives her first salute from her father, retired petty officer first class.



MSIV's presented LTC Thomas with a commemorative paddle as appreciation for his service and mentorship.



2LT Burger is being pinned by his mother and father at the commissioning ceremony.



The Cadets commissioning as Officers took their Oath of Office from EKU Alumni 4-Star General James Rainey.

**The Army's Newest Second Lieutenants!**

Congratulations to the former Cadets below for their Commission!

- 2LT Browning, KY Army National Guard, Adjutant General
- 2LT Burger, Active Duty, Infantry
- 2LT Hagan, KY Army National Guard, Medical Service
- 2LT Harp, KY Army National Guard, Military Police
- 2LT Jarrett, KY Army National Guard, Adjutant General
- 2LT Jessee, Active Duty, Engineer
- 2LT Justice, KY Army National Guard, Medical Service
- 2LT Kinman, KY Army National Guard, Military Intelligence
- 2LT Lemmon, Active Duty, Air Defense Artillery
- 2LT Rodgers, Active Duty, Engineer
- 2LT Williams, KY Army National Guard, Signal
- 2LT Wynn, Active Duty, Quartermaster

**Fall 2023 Army ROTC Events**

**August 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>-** Colonel's Challenge  
EKU, Richmond

**September 9<sup>th</sup>-** Cadet Stakes  
EKU, Richmond

**October 13/14-** Homecoming weekend  
EKU, Richmond

**November 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>-** Military Appreciation Weekend  
EKU, Richmond

**December 1<sup>st</sup>-** Winter Commissioning Ceremony  
EKU, Richmond

\*For more event information contact [Claire.jennings@eku.edu](mailto:Claire.jennings@eku.edu)