



MSIV Cadets before completion of their 12-mile ruck march.

Bearkat BATTALION

Mid-Semester | 2020 | Sam Houston State University

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Pursuing Excellence, Strength and Honor!

The month of October has been busy for the Bearkat Battalion. As you will see in this newsletter, MSIs conducted the High-Ropes Training Course and their first modified Diagnostic Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT). CDT Dilworth (highlighted on page 3) was selected as the “Cadet of the Month” for his outstanding dedication to the program! Additionally, MSIIIs have been hard at work with their Tactical Labs and Weapons Range, in preparation for this month’s Field Training Exercise (FTX). We also had two more Cadets officially contract, taking their first steps to becoming future Army Officers!

Eat'em Up Kats!

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SHSU Faculty, ROTC Alumni, Local Community Supporters, and Families.

Wow – approximately 5 weeks left in this unique semester! Our senior class remains resilient and flexible during these unprecedented times, ensuring our underclassmen Cadets receive the best quality training. The senior cohort's creative and critical thinking has been impressive as it continues to lead our program. An example of this creativity is on page seven of this newsletter, authored by Cadet Eric Webster, the program's Cadet Command Sergeant Major. Also, our seniors recently received their component selections as they are one step closer to serving as commissioned officers. To the bottom right, are the component selections. In addition, 5 of our seniors were selected as distinguished military graduates (top 20% in the nation, to include 2, who are in the top 10%, among cadets in over 270 R.O.T.C. programs across the nation). A huge congratulations to these young leaders as they will shortly embark on their journey in leading our sons and daughters.

The leadership of our seniors permeates to our underclassmen and is one reason we continue to grow as a program. Our underclassmen admire the upperclassmen and mentors as noted by two freshmen cadets on pages four and five. Similarly, we recently contracted two more cadets (Britney Loerwald and Elaine Bishop) and they too, acknowledged the outstanding mentorship they have received from their upperclassmen senior mentors (Lynnsey Steele and Nikki Stone). Britney is from League City, Texas, and is on a 3-year Army R.O.T.C. Scholarship, while Elaine is from Vine Grove, Kentucky, and is on a 4-year Army R.O.T.C. Scholarship. We are elated that Britney and Elaine declared their intent to the Army to commission after graduation. We are looking forward to observing them grow as leaders and excited for them to be leading our Soldiers in the future.

Finally, I will once again close my comments by recognizing the SHSU Military Science Alumni Club (MSAC) and its members. Our Alumni Spotlight on pages 9-11 of this newsletter, highlight the MSAC President, Brigadier General (Retired) Richard Mills and his two sons, Troy and Travis, both of whom served as battalion commanders. These three outstanding selfless leaders continue to provide their time and support to our program. In addition, we want to thank two young SHSU Alumni Captains (Patrick Nguyen and Michael Akeroyd). Patrick provided our program a briefing on Army Officer Career Planning this past month, while Michael volunteered to host our Cadets at Fort Hood, Texas, during the Spring 2021 Semester. As you receive this newsletter, understand your Cadets are training at Gibbs Ranch, during our Fall Field Training Exercise. We appreciate your continued support and hope everyone safely enjoys Halloween tomorrow evening.

Strength and Honor!

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Contreras



Cadets Britney Loerwald (left) and Elaine Bishop (Right) after contracting.

FY 21 Component Results			
Active Duty			
Alex Rocha	Jarrold Massey	Lynnsey Steele	Michael Way
Nicole Stone	Oscar Edo-Terradas	Oscar Gonzales	Gianni Nunez
Reserves			
Dakota Burden	Eric Webster	Nancy Tran	Quinton Chamberlain
National Guard			
Bill Woodburn	Steven Cardenas	Tristian Chudej	



Cadet of The Month – CDT MSIII Dilworth, Timothy



CDT Dilworth giving his brother's (2LT Dilworth) first salute, 2018.



CDT Dilworth during training at Gibbs Ranch

"I come from a long family lineage of military service members, all of which have been in the Army. Of all my family members who have served, all but one began as an enlisted Soldier and ultimately earned their commission. My brother and I are very close, and he was the latest family member to earn his commission. When he was injured overseas, I knew I wanted to enlist to do my part. I enlisted as an aviation power plant technician and successfully applied and assessed to be with Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR). This position provided me great opportunities to progress and learn in a fast paced, dynamic environment.

I have been fortunate to attend many courses, both military and civilian, preparing me for a future in the military.

Initially, I was not sure if the Army would be a career.

However, upon reaching my first duty station, I was blown away by the opportunities available within the Army. The Army has seemingly endless programs that will prepare you for and provide financial assistance to go through medical school, law school, civilian education, and much more. Furthermore, they provide continuity, stability, and a pension unmatched by those in the civilian sector, in my humble opinion. After learning how the Army invested in its Soldiers, I knew at some point I wanted to commission.

Being a leader in the Army is an incredibly challenging, yet rewarding path. As strange as it may sound, I enjoy seeking out challenges that push me out of my comfort zone. This provides me the opportunity to become better-rounded as

I work on those less developed attributes. When the time seemed to be right, I began looking for schools and programs to compete to be a part of. I toured and met with many programs, but I knew after my brief encounter with the cadre and cadet leadership at SHSU, that this was the institution I wanted to be a part of. Not only is it close to my immediate family, but it also quickly provided an extended family, which seamlessly integrated my family into the program. I am excited to learn with each of you and will assist in any way I can. With that said, please reach out if you have any questions, I am happy to help us learn and grow to be better leaders together."



The Next Step – CDT MSI McNaughton, Samuel

“To provide you some backstory, I lived in a religious military household for most of my life. As a result, mental, physical, and spiritual discipline went hand-in-hand most of the time. My parents would encourage me to do my best in my academics, fostered my determination to compete in sports, and always developed my ability to uphold integrity. My father is, and continues to be, an excellent role model. Showing me the difference between right and wrong, when it comes to leading or helping people towards their goals. My family has always been there to support me in my endeavors. When I first visited Sam Houston State University and met the Cadets, I saw they treated each other like a family. That was when I knew it was the right place for me.

One of the things I am looking forward to in the program is learning more about how the bigger Army works. It is one thing to know that you want to be an officer, but another to know what career path. Another thing I look forward to, in upcoming semesters, is working with squad and platoon sized elements. I have already had so much fun learning with them and am excited to keep doing so. As I continue throughout the next few years, I am excited for any new challenges that come my way.

I would also like to recognize those who have helped me in my transition into college and the ROTC program. My mentor Ben Dene, was always available to provide all the information that I needed to transition. He even helped me to move my things into my dorm room. Also, I would like to mention that in the classroom, MSG Mitchell is an awesome Military Science Instructor. MSG ensures you know your stuff and are as prepared as possible. Overall, I can say that I am happy and grateful to be in the Bearkat Battalion.”

“Eat’em up Kats!!”



CDT McNaughton at Sam Houston State University's main campus.



CDT McNaughton and fellow MSIs during High-Ropes Training



Moving Forward – CDT MSI Sitkowski, Avery

I am Cadet Avery Sitkowski, a MSI in the Bearkat Battalion. My MOS is 31 Bravo, Military Police, and this next semester I will be majoring in Homeland Security Studies. In my opinion, the ROTC program here at Sam Houston State University is one of the best, because of the amount of care, time, and effort everyone puts into the organization and its members. I joined the program because of a desire to lead and influence those around me, as well as being able to provide for my future family. Transitioning into the program has been easy, so far. The Cadre and upper-class level cadets are always around and ready to help. Within my class, I have found individuals who share the same strong drive and desire to challenge themselves to continuously get better. Prior to even becoming a student, and long before I was a cadet, Cadet Tristin Chudej was assigned to be my mentor and is a consistent and reliable guide for me. Chudej provided me with firsthand experiences of how the program can benefit me, how things are set-up and run, and any other questions I may have. I am excited for these next upcoming years and look forward to the day when I am the leader, others will look up to and aspire to be. This journey I am about to embark on to become a respected United States Army Officer is going to be a truly humbling and plentiful experience, and I am confident for any new challenge that comes my way.



CDT Sitkowski and friend after graduating Advance Individual Training (AIT).



Cadet Intramural League – CDT MSIV Webster, Eric

In the wake of COVID-19 and following the transition from remote schooling during the Spring Semester, SHSU Army ROTC (along with other school programs) were faced with a number of new challenges and obstacles. Returning to campus in the Fall, required school programs to rethink their approaches and create innovative ways to promote a fun and lively campus experience, all while maintaining proper safety measures. I believed there needed to be a creative new way to maintain morale within the program, especially with so many campus events postponed or being held virtually. It started with an idea to establish a battalion centralized intramural program, now known as the Cadet Intramural League (CIL). By keeping this league within the program, it would allow for manageable membership and attendance. This would ensure gatherings would not exceed what was permitted by Sam Houston State University and U.S. Army guidelines. The idea was well received amongst the cadets in the program. Multiple plans were created and presented to Cadre, each included several safety protocols to protect the participants.

As a result of these efforts, sand volleyball was approved by the leadership, and participation in (CIL) became extremely popular with the Cadets program wide. Randomized teams allowed Cadets of each class level to interact with one another, outside of military training, while also ensuring no Cadets were left out. Each team found themselves now bonding in fun and healthy ways. Celebrations of comeback victories, grieving together after a hard-fought loss, or hilarious plays made by competitors became normal discussions amongst the program. Although not all teams made it to playoffs, the league now finds itself where there can only be one champion team! Talks have already begun about next semester's CIL sport of choice. Perhaps the legacy of the league will set a precedence for years to come.



Team "The Girls" and "The Extras" pose with their opponents.



Team "Dirty Sets" prepare a spike against the "Notorious DIGs".



Team "Dark Side" wins vs. Team "2 Legit 2 Hit".



October In Pictures



Cadet MSI Eric Weingart performing weapons maintenance.



Cadet MSIV Steele and her squad during the High-Ropes



MSI Cadets during execution of High-Ropes Course Training.



MSI Cadets executing the Hand Grenade Course (HGAC).



Cadet Amiry tactical training at Gibbs Ranch.



October In Pictures Cont...



MSIV Nikki Stone assisting her mentees during Land Navigation.



MAJ Holmes providing guidance to MSIII Cadets during tactics lab.



MSIII Cadets getting hands-on training at our first range of the semester.



Bearkat Battalion conduct a PT Halloween Costume Contest, followed by a relay-race.



MSI Cadets during their first modified Diagnostic Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT).



Alumni Spotlight – The Mills Family Legacy

The Mills Family

The Mills family has established a long-standing legacy as alumni of the Bearkat Battalion. Continually they provide guidance to our future leaders and Officers.

On behalf of the Bearkat Battalion and our community, thank you for all the support you have provided to our cadets!



BG (RET.) Richard Mills

BG (R) Richard Mills

BG (R) Richard W. Mills is married with two sons, LTC Troy Mills and LTC Travis Mills, who are both currently Active Duty Officers in the United States Army. Additionally,

BG (R) Richard Mills and his sons are all alumni of Sam Houston State University and the Bearkat Battalion. BG (R) Mills commissioned in the US Army as an Infantry Officer in December 1974.

While attending Sam Houston State University, BG (R) Mills earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Police Science.

Following his graduation, he went on to earn a Master of Science Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the United States Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He is also a graduate of the Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, Special Forces School, Foreign Area Officer Course, and the Armed Forces Staff College.

After commissioning, BG (R) Mills' first assignment was as a Platoon Leader within A-Company, 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry, 2nd Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas, where he also served as a Detachment Commander, Company Commander, and Civil Affairs Officer / Assistant S-3 in the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Bragg, North Carolina. BG (R) Mills then served as an Executive Officer, Detachment Commander, and Company Commander in 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), Okinawa, Japan. He then served as a J-3 Staff Officer at United States Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. Following that, he served as the S-3 and Executive Officer of 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Lewis, Washington. Then he commanded 3rd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In September of 1994, he was assigned as the Chief, Special Operations Training Detachment, Fort Polk, Louisiana, and later as Director, Special Operations, United States Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Following that, he commanded 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Carson, Colorado. BG (R) Mills' next assignments were as Chief of Staff, Special Assistant to the Commanding General, and Director of Army Special Operations Forces

Transformation, United States Army, Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina and Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan. He retired in January 2007 after serving as Commanding General, Special Operations Command, Korea.



Alumni Spotlight – The Mills Family Legacy

LTC (P) Travis Mills

LTC (P) Travis W. Mills is married to the former Lisa Caluwe of Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, and they have two sons, Taylor and Austin. He is a Distinguished Military Graduate of Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. LTC (P) Travis Mills commissioned as an Infantry Officer in 1999 and later transitioned into Special Forces in 2004. While attending SHSU, he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. Following this, he obtained a Master's degree in Global and International Studies from the University of Kansas.

Upon commissioning, LTC (P) Travis Mills was assigned as a Rifle Platoon Leader and Executive Officer, with the 1-506th Infantry, Camp Greaves, ROK. Then as a Rifle Platoon Leader and Reconnaissance Platoon Leader, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry, Fort Polk, LA. Following this, he served as Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha (SFODA) Commander, Assistant Operational Officer, and HSC Commander, 2nd BN, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Lewis, WA. Then as the Group Plans Officer, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Lewis, WA. LTC (P) Mills then served as the Company Commander and Battalion Executive Officer, 4th BN, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Lewis, WA. Following his time in the 1st Special Forces Group, he served in the J-53 as a Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Plans and Policy Officer at the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), MacDill Air Force Base, FL. LTC (P) Mills commanded the 2-60th Battalion, 193rd Infantry Regiment (Basic Combat Training) at Fort Jackson, SC. LTC (P) Mills is currently assigned to Special Operations Command – Korea at Camp Humphreys, Republic of Korea, and conducts duties within the J-3 Operations Directorate. His operational deployments include one tour to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and two tours to the Southern Philippines in support of Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines. Additionally, he has conducted multiple joint training exchanges throughout Asia during his time in 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne).



LTC (P) Travis Mills and family.



2-60th Trainees completing BN 4-mile run at the end of Basic Training.



LTC (P) Travis Mills as a Cadet, approx. 1996.



LTC (P) Travis Mills deployed to Afghanistan, 2004.



Alumni Spotlight – The Mills Family Legacy

LTC (P) Troy Mills

LTC (P) Troy A. Mills is married to the former Chelsea Meador from Needville, Texas. They have three sons, Cohen, Cord, and Chase. LTC (P) Mills was commissioned as an Infantry Officer in 1999, following graduation from SHSU.

LTC (P) Mills was first assigned with 3rd US Infantry “The Old Guard”, Military District of Washington, from 2000 to 2003.

There he served as a Platoon Leader in Charlie Company and Echo “Honor Guard” Company, HHC Support Platoon Leader, and HHC Executive Officer. While assigned to The Old Guard he conducted operations to support the Pentagon following the 9-11 attacks. Following graduation from the Infantry Advanced

Course, LTC (P) Mills served as a Battle Captain for G-33, I

Corps from 2003-2005. He then served as an Assistant Operations Officer and F-Company (Anti-Tank) Commander in 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division in Fort Lewis, WA from 2005-2008. During this tour he deployed to Iraq for the Surge from 2007-2008. He was then a Company Observer Controller in Task

Force Live Fire at Operations Group, Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Polk, LA, from 2008 to 2010. After completing the Intermediate Level Education, Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, LTC (P)

Mills served as a Brigade Assistant Operations Officer and Battalion S-3 for the Brigade Special Troops Battalion in 3rd Brigade, 1 Cavalry Division while deployed to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn in 2011. He then served as the Battalion S-3 for 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment and as the Brigade S-3 from 2012 to 2014. From 2014 to 2015, LTC (P) Mills served as

the Aide-de-Camp to the Operation of Security Cooperation General Officer in Baghdad, Iraq during Operation Inherent Resolve. He assumed command of 1-12IN, 2IBCT, 4ID on 28 February 2017 and executed a collective training cycle which culminated at JRTC in November 2018. He then deployed to Afghanistan in February 2018 and commanded the Combined Task Force responsible for Kandahar Airfield security, enabled the Train, Advise, Assist Teams, and the Ground Defense Area.

After battalion command, LTC (P) Mills served as the Task Force 2 Senior Brigade Command and Control Task Force Senior Observer, Controller and Trainer while assigned to Operations Group, JRTC. LTC(P) Mills’ military training and education

includes the Basic Airborne Course, Basic Military Mountain Warfare Course, Ranger School, Infantry Officer Basic and Advance Course, Combine Arms and Services Staff School, and the Army Command and General Staff College.



LTC (P) Troy Mills in Afghanistan, 2018.



LTC (P) Troy Mills in Iraq, 2007.



LTC (P) Troy Mills as a Cadet at SHSU.

