



Bearkat

BATTALION

February/March | 2019 | Sam Houston State University

Full Speed Ahead!

The Bearkat Battalion has been taking the community by storm these past few weeks! We have cadets bringing honor to the battalion legacy all over the United States with some being recognized at award ceremonies, outstanding performances during the multi-program field training exercise (FTX), and with a team of consummate professionals who completed 26 treacherous miles across the high deserts of White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico. These Bearkats are ramping up as the end of the semester grows near, and the energy is charged for dominance during Cadet Summer Training!

Inside This Issue

[Pg. 2 PMS Comments](#)

[Pg. 3 Cadet Battalion Commander Update](#)

[Pg. 4 Multi-Program FTX-MS3 Article](#)

[Pg. 5 George C. Marshall Award-MS4 Article](#)

[Pg. 6 Cadet of the Month-CDT Shelby Teal](#)

[Pg. 7 Bataan Memorial Death March-MS2 Article](#)

[Pg. 8 Blast from the Past](#)

[Pg. 9 The Month in Pictures](#)

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

Greetings! It is difficult to believe the spring semester is half-way complete – time flies when you are having so much fun. This newsletter could easily be 20 pages, showcasing our cadet's accomplishments; however, we chose to keep it under 10 pages. Your continued support continues to impress me and is critical to our cadets in their quest to become commissioned as second lieutenants.

Our cadets highlight two of our major events (the Multi-Program Field Training Exercise (FTX) and the Bataan Memorial Death March) in this newsletter. The R.O.T.C. programs from Stephen F. Austin and Prairie View A&M joined us for the Multi-Program FTX this month at Gibbs Ranch. We are privileged that SHSU provides us with the training venue of Gibbs Ranch for this event and all our field training events, as a majority of R.O.T.C. programs are not as fortunate to train cadets in a first-class training environment – Thank you! I also want to thank some of our local Army units (Alpha Company, 1-143 IN and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 536th Brigade Support Battalion) for providing weapons, logistics, and medical support during this three-day training exercise. I accompanied seven cadets to the Bataan Memorial Death March in White Sands New Mexico last week as they conducted a 26-mile memorial death march. This was a challenging event for our cadets that they will remember for the rest of their careers. Morale was extremely high, due in part to our accommodations. Mrs. Leta Reiner a long-time supporter of the program graciously sponsored the travel, lodging, and food for this event and our cadets are forever grateful – Thank you! I also want to share an email that I received from a former Marine officer, who observed and was impressed with our cadets during the Bataan Memorial Death March.

Our senior cadets have less than two months until they commission as second lieutenants. Recently, Command Sergeant Major (retired) Karl Morgan provided them with a financial class and our cadets raved about the information and class. Thank you for coming all the way to Huntsville and providing them with this critical information. One of the final critical requirements that our senior cadets are conducting this semester for class is to coordinate and conduct a brief to a high school on SHSU, college life, and R.O.T.C. I also want to share an email that I received from a high school instructor emphasizing the impact your cadets are making on a daily basis.

In closing, I want to welcome Master Sergeant Joel Mitchell, the incoming Senior Military Science Instructor to the team. He brings over 18 years of operational experience and is excited to assist our cadets in their quest to become commissioned as second lieutenants. We are looking forward to the last weeks of the semester and invite you to please stop by our program if you are in the area.

To: Contreras, Joe;

Good morning,

Just wanted to let you know that my husband and I (both former Marine officers) really enjoyed being around cadets from your unit yesterday at the Bataan Memorial. We were impressed by how they conducted themselves, communicated with one another, encouraged one another, and stuck together. They seem like a great group of future officers. We hope they made it home safely.

To: Contreras, Joe;

LTC Contreras,

I wanted to take a moment to let you know just how much we appreciate Cadet Caitlin Arrigali's briefing to the JROTC classes at Cleveland HS. She gave up her entire Monday to present an excellent briefing to each of our 7 classes...over 120 cadets. She made a tremendous connection to our cadets with her enthusiasm and approachability. I wouldn't be surprised if a few of our cadets who never considered it before are now targeting ROTC at SHSU!

Thanks for allowing us to borrow her for a day. She really made an impact on our cadets!

Strength and Honor!

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Contreras

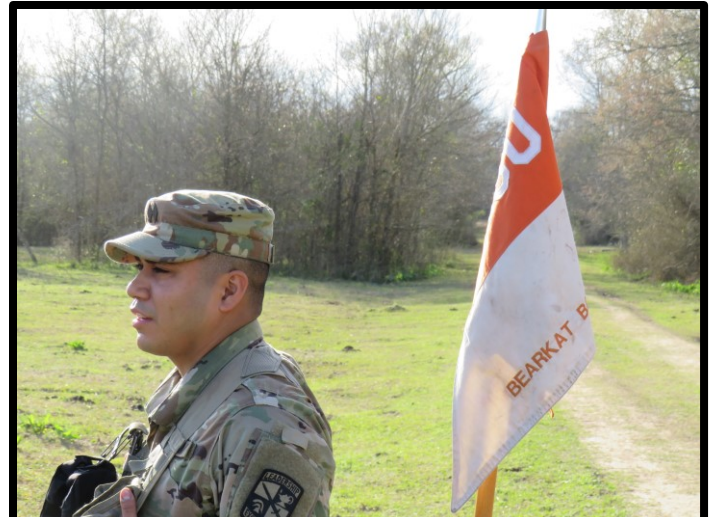


Cadet Battalion Commander CDT Jose Arriaga

This will be my last semester here at Sam Houston State University after four years of development and an enjoyable experience. If someone had told me that ROTC would impact my life the way it does now, I would not have believed them. From my first plane ride and military experience at the Fort Benning Air Assault School, to becoming the Cadet Battalion Commander here at this program, I speak for all the seniors here at the Bearkat Battalion: that this program has given us friends, family, and unforgettable memories. Now it is our time to give back and continue to make this program great by leaving a culture that will motivate the future leaders of the Bearkat Battalion.

We start the day with physical training to help prepare cadets to succeed at being able to overcome any obstacle. Ruck marches are conducted every week for the MS3s and every other week for the rest of the battalion. Then the planning and execution of the tactical lab on Thursday to provide the MS3s opportunities to lead and be prepared for Cadet Summer Training. In addition, the seniors developed additional training and classroom instruction for cadets that require more support. Finally, the Multi-program Field training exercise planned by our very own Mario Canchola, and executed by the help of the senior class. This provided the MS3s and contracted cadets a look into what lies ahead at Cadet Summer Training and future responsibilities.

There has been a lot of hard work here at Sam Houston State University; however, we are not done yet, with more labs, and extra training to come. This is our time as seniors to give back to this program, because it will give us something more than just paid tuition and early mornings – it will give us a chance to lead from the front and become 2nd lieutenants in the United States Army. Finally, thank you to the Bearkat Battalion. We will not stop planning and preparing cadets. We will continue to show what great leaders Sam Houston State University's ROTC program produces.



CDT Arriaga provides closing remarks at the completion of the Leadership LAB.



CDT Arriaga addresses the battalion after completing the Field Leader Reaction Course.

Trust the Process!

Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Jose Arriaga



The Multi-Program Field Training Exercise – CDT Andrew Escamilla (MS3)

The FTX was extremely beneficial to me because it was a testimony of my mental and physical strengths. Waking up early with little to no sleep with my battle buddies to my left and right made the experience just that much easier, the weight of our rucks just that much easier, and the MREs just that much tastier. Not having gone to Basic Training or any cadet summer training, this FTX was my first raw experience in the field. Having learned how to properly take care of my equipment and my body and other field etiquette, I feel confident and ready for Advanced Camp this summer.

I enjoyed collaborating with Prairie View A&M and Stephen F. Austin and seeing how leadership styles differ from school to school. When we ran missions and people or heavy equipment needed to be carried, it was awesome to see Sam Houston State cadets be the first to rush to aid the situation and be so eager to help out. To me, it was visible how weeks of PT, lectures, and labs have prepared me to apply what I learned at the field. It rained often at the FTX and the temperature was low the entire weekend, but I became comfortable being uncomfortable. Being in wet boots and soggy uniforms all day is not exactly my idea of fun, however, I appreciate having the experience of having to push through the tough stuff so I can be prepared at Advanced Camp.

One thing that shocked me the most when talking to cadets from other schools was that very few had experience doing land navigation or running missions in an area like the Gibbs Ranch. To paint a picture, Gibbs Ranch has a diverse terrain of mud, dirt, sand, hilltops, tree islands, creeks, and many other features that are similar to those of Fort Knox where Cadet Training is

held. A few cadets told me they practiced missions in parking lots or on campus and were surprised when I told them how we came out to roll in the dirt at Gibbs Ranch every week. Again, another testimony of being comfortable being uncomfortable.



CDT Escamilla assists in a casualty evacuation exercise during the Spring FTX.



CDT Escamilla (second from right) poses with the rest of the MS3 class upon completion of the Spring FTX.



George C. Marshall Award CDT Caitlin Arrigali

Find your Fox. This statement was one of the many pieces of advice that resonated with me from Ft. Leavenworth. Cadet Command Commanding General, MG Evans used this catchy slogan as a way to relate the achievements of MG Fox Connor to the mentorship we should all be seeking in our lives. Fox Connor's name goes hand in hand with mentorship. He is best known for shaping the careers of George Patton, George Marshall and even President Eisenhower. Although his name is linked to many of the nation's best leaders, little is known about MG Conner himself. As a leader, he chose to not weigh his success in terms of his own achievements and recognition, but instead, in those of his mentees. Fox Conner embodied the ideal humble leader, one focused solely on developing those around him. The message behind find your fox is to go out and find that person that will invest in you and your future just like Fox Conner did for so many before us. This along with many other words of wisdom is what I have been able to leave Kansas with.

Being selected for the George C. Marshall award is an amazing honor. However, it is the opportunity that came along with the award that is beyond humbling and has impacted my future career for the best. In addition to hearing wise words from MG Evans, I was provided with the opportunity to hear candidly from many levels of Army leadership. From junior officers and NCOs to General Townsend, the current TRADOC commander, all this face-to-face time with successful leaders has impacted me greatly. Yes, we spent a good portion of our week in classrooms discussing Multi-Domain Operations in the Operational Environment, the Army's Strategic Approach and how to build readiness

for Multi-Domain Dominance. And although these discussions opened my thought process to the bigger picture of the operational Army, the advice from those with much more experience is what I will take with me through this journey.

As cadets, we are constantly told here is your path and just get to each stepping stone along the way and at the end, you will somehow come out a 2nd LT. However the reality is a lot of the time the small details and questions go unaddressed. For me, this conference provided me with those answers. It gave me the answer to the long asked question of what it means to be a leader and why are you doing this in the first place.



CDT Arrigali poses with the commanding officer of U.S. Army Cadet Command, MG Evans.



CDT Arrigali poses in front of the Command and General Staff College in Ft. Leavenworth, KS.





Why Did You Join ROTC & How Has It Impacted You?

“I joined ROTC because I wanted to be something that no one ever expected me to be. I joined because I want to lose weight, build/work on my mental and physical strength, and be the best leader I can possibly imagine. All my life I was doubted, for who I was and what I was capable of. I’ve always been overweight and am still struggling with it, but I am not a quitter and

will keep on fighting until I reach my goals. ROTC is my key to becoming the best version of myself. I saw that this program was very beneficial for those who went through it and I wanted in.

The major thing I’ve learned throughout my time here in ROTC is true friendship. I know it sounds cheesy, but hear me out. Throughout my life I have had many friends, and maybe one or two best friends, but none compare to the friendships I’ve built since coming here to SHSU and joining the ROTC program.

Here I felt welcomed from the start. I made friends fast with many, if not all the cadets within this program. I even met my true best friend here CDT Steele, and my hypothetical ROTC mom CDT Arrigali. I know everyone has my back and supports me, and I’ve never been in the position up until now where I was able to confidently say that. When I was injured, I believe everyone in the battalion at one point in time or another asked if I was ok and most of the cadets asked if there was anything they could do to help. Whenever I had questions about anything, whether it be about ROTC or any of the classes I’m taking, there was and will always be someone there willing and able to help. ROTC has an amazing family atmosphere that you can’t find anywhere else and I truly believe I will be friends with a majority of the cadets here for the rest of my life.”



CDT Shelby Teal

MS Class Year: MS1

Hometown: Humble, TX

University:

Sam Houston State University

Major:

Human Resources Management

Minor: Military Science

Desired Branch: Adjutant General

Teams you’ve participated in:

- ✓ Color Guard
- ✓ Cannon Crew
- ✓ Push-up Crew
- ✓ Ranger Challenge
- ✓ Recruiting Team

What organizations are you involved in?

- ✓ Alpha Lambda Delta (Honor Society for First-Year Students)

“It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop” – Confucius

“This quote symbolizes that no matter what, as long as I keep pushing and striving to become my best self in some way, shape, or form every day that I live my life, I will one day reach my goals.”



Oscar Edo-Terradas (MS2) The Bataan Memorial Death March

The Bataan Memorial Death March is a challenging march through the high desert terrain of White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. It is conducted annually to honor the lives lost during the treacherous 65-mile march across the southern end of the Bataan peninsula in the Philippines. Due to the brutality of their captors, it is estimated that thousands of Phillipine and American prisoners died during the march – exact figures remain unknown. In the 26-mile memorial death march, there are two main categories: light (no weight), and heavy (carrying a 35 lbs pack). As Cadets of the Bearkat Battalion, we never back down from a challenge, which is why we decided to compete in the heavy category.

Our team started training since the start of this semester, rucking almost every week before the sun rose. However, in spite of all the training we put in, it still ended up being one of the hardest things any of us had ever done. It ended up taking us 7 hours and 30 minutes, placing us sixth out of twenty-two teams in the team military heavy category. Mile after mile, hour after hour, the march only seemed to be getting harder and harder. Pain, cramps, fatigue, and hunger all started to kick in, but even though everyone was struggling, the team still had one of the most positive attitudes I have ever seen in a group of people.

The camaraderie displayed by the battle buddies I went to the Bataan with taught me the importance of teamwork, persevering through adversity, and “embracing the suck”. However, the biggest takeaway I took from this grueling marathon was the fact that the human body is capable of extraordinary things, but a strong body will never achieve its maximum potential if it is attached to a weak mind. On the other hand, a weaker body attached to a powerful mind will

continue to grow stronger and stronger and will destroy any obstacle or barrier in its way. The fact that this march was able to bring 9,500 service members and civilians together in order to remember such an important historical event says a lot about this country and what we stand for, which is why I’m proud to say that thanks to the opportunity provided to me by the Bearkat Battalion, I have now joined the amazing community of Bataan Memorial Death March finishers.



CDT Edo-Terradas (far right) crosses finish line with his fellow Bearkats.



The 2019 Bearkat Battalion Bataan Memorial Death March Participants (left to right): Jose Arriaga, Andrew McEnroe, LTC Joe Contreras, Prescott King, David Weinbel, Oscar Edo-Terradas, Bill Woodburn, Samuel Brink.



Blast from the Past

CG's Accepting Recruits – January 26, 1978



The featured article states the following

If you're looking for something constructive to do with a promising future, it might be wise to check out the Counter Guerrillas (CG's).

Being in ROTC is no longer a requirement to join this group, which specializes in rigorous military training.

The counter guerrillas program is designed to enhance the ability of the recruits in the fields of infantry training and tactics. Most of the training is modeled after the Army's Ranger program, which is one of the most intensive training programs known.

The training includes such military aspects as patrolling river and amphibious operations, helicopter support exercises, escape and evasion, and many other areas.

A new recruit class will be trained this semester with applications being accepted until Feb. 2.

Anyone interested in joining may call the Military Science Dept. at ext. 2236 and/or by attending the next two meetings, Jan. 30 and Fe. 2, 6:30 p.m. behind the Agriculture Building.

Photo Caption: It's Swell to Rappel? – Two SHSU Counter Guerrillas are shown here practicing rappelling on some steep, rocky terrain located on the Trinity River.



The Month in Pictures



Morgan Luttrell, former Navy Seal, visits cadets at the rifle range



The Opposing Forces (OPFOR) led by CDT Hohn.



The Color Guard during March to the Grave.



Mentorship breakfast with CDT (Old Man) Rodas and the MS3s at IHOP.



Team dinner prior to the Bataan Memorial Death March.



CDT Navejas pulling double-duty during CASEVAC exercise.



CDT Samanta Lopez addresses the battalion after contracting.



The Bearkat Battalion family supporting their BC on his big day! Congratulations to the Arriaga Family!



Cadets Burden and Steele raise their right hand for contracting!

