



Class of 2020 receive their Active Duty branches.

Bearkat BATTALION

May | 2020 | Sam Houston State University

Follow us!



Twitter: @shsuArmyRotc



Instagram: @shsu.rotc



Facebook: Sam Houston State University Army ROTC

Mission Complete!

This month the Bearkat Battalion wrapped up a challenging and eventful semester, saying farewell to its senior class as they embark on their journey as newly commissioned Second Lieutenants. The ceremony was conducted virtually and streamed live via the Sam Houston State ROTC Facebook page. In this newsletter, we will introduce to you all the newly commissioned Second Lieutenants of the 2020 class.

Goodluck Bearkats!

Inside This Issue

- [Page 2: 2LT Allen](#)
- [Page 3: 2LT Escamilla](#)
- [Page 4: 2LT Hernandez](#)
- [Page 5: 2LT Kennard](#)
- [Page 6: 2LT King](#)
- [Page 7: 2LT Leasure](#)
- [Page 8: 2LT Lewis](#)
- [Page 9: 2LT Melkovitz](#)
- [Page 10: 2LT Oviedo](#)
- [Page 11: 2LT Padron](#)
- [Page 12: 2LT Webb](#)
- [Page 13: MS4 Awards](#)
- [Page 14: Blast From The Past](#)

Introducing Second Lieutenant Kahlil Allen

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois,

Major: Biology

Minor: Chemistry, Forensic Science, and Military Science

Branch: Military Intelligence Corps

Component: Texas Army National Guard

Unit Assignment: Delta Company, 172nd BEB in Houston, TX

I moved to Texas when I was around the age of 11 years old, so I guess you can call me a Texan! My journey at Sam Houston State University began in August of 2014. I originally started off as a Forensic Chemistry major with a five-year degree plan. I knew that when I graduated, I did not desire to worry about repaying loans or finding a job. For that reason, I made the life-changing decision to enlist as a 74 Delta, CBRN into the Texas Army National Guard after my sophomore year in college. I was inspired by my dad to enlist and continue to take the extra step to join ROTC to become an officer. Looking back, from starting college to enlisting in the military and joining ROTC, I learned more about myself and developed into an ambitious woman. I learned how to stay prepared, be independent, and remain successful. I learned to be aware of my emotional intelligence, take responsibility for my own actions, and to be consistent with a high level of professionalism. Additionally, I truly learned that it is important to be cordial with peers in the workplace that may not share the same ideas as I do. Being a full-time student, working from part time to full time, and fulfilling my military duties with my unit and ROTC were not easy tasks to tackle all at once. However, I am a firm believer that everything happens for a reason and all that I have encountered has mentally and physically equipped me to accomplish whatever I may face next.



“Don’t let what you can’t do interfere with what you can do.”

-Coach Wooden at UCLA



Introducing Second Lieutenant Andrew Escamilla

Hometown: Houston, Texas

Major: Criminal Justice B.S.

Minor: Military Science

Branch: Transportation Corps

Component: Active Duty Army

Growing up, I was a benchwarmer. I was on the team but never played. From middle school to high school, I cannot recall very many games where I played much. That feeling of being less than perfect, picked last, and failure are feelings that paved the road to determination and compassion that I possess today. Though I never played, my family would drive miles to the outskirts of town time and time again just to watch me sit. I hated that feeling of embarrassment and knowing that I was talented, just maybe not in sports. I dropped organized sports and decided to work on myself. I had no clue what I really wanted to do after high school, but I knew I was going to college.

With college on my mind, I also had an idea of serving in the military since I was a child. I enrolled into Sam Houston State to honor my father, and joined the ROTC program to honor my desire to serve our country. I became a stronger person, both physically and mentally, because of the things I learned in ROTC. I vowed myself to never have the benchwarmer mentality I had before.

Words cannot describe the memories I have because of the people I met in the program. The physical training, classes, lectures, and special events, made almost 40% of my weekly activities were spent with someone from the program. The same people who pushed me to get better, encouraged good decisions, and always had the honesty to tell me what I needed to hear, even if I didn't want to.



“Don’t aspire to make a living, aspire to make a difference.”

-Denzel Washington



Introducing Second Lieutenant Amri Hernandez

Hometown: Eagle Pass, Texas

Major: Criminal Justice B.S.

Minor: Military Science

Branch: Chemical Corps

Component: Active Duty

Unit Assignment: Fort Riley, Kansas/1st Infantry Division 1st
Brigade Combat Team 2nd Battalion 34th Armor Regiment.

I joined ROTC with the intention of making a better version of myself physically and mentally. I struggled with physical fitness, tactics, and making friends due to being an introvert. I remember telling my parents of my initial struggles and I wondered that if this was even for me. However, the very thought of not going through with ROTC, would make me see myself as a failure and disappointment to my parents. This was a mindset that haunted me for a while, but I turned it around to work harder on myself.

I learned to feel more comfortable in whatever environment ROTC had put me in and I am forever thankful to our cadre for developing us. I am also very thankful for my classmates. When I struggled, I learned that I was not the only one struggling as I personally felt I was lagging behind my fellow cadets. We would use our individual strengths to help each other get through whatever situation we were in whether it be in or outside of ROTC.

Being a part of ROTC was all about the developmental experience and proving to myself that it was something I could succeed in. It has without a doubt changed my life, for the better. I now see myself in best physical shape of my life. I would never trade the experiences being an ROTC cadet has given me and will take all that I have learned to be the best officer I can be. I look forward to whatever is in store for me, and I will hold my memories being with the Bearkat Battalion close to my heart.



“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you...”



Introducing Second Lieutenant Ty Kennard

Hometown: Killeen, Texas

Major: Criminal Justice
Minor: Military Science

Branch: Adjutant General with a branch detail in Infantry

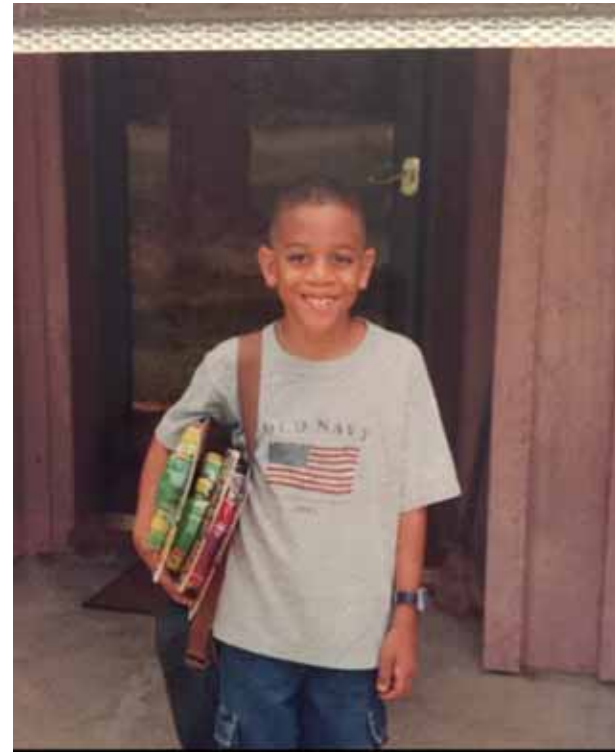
Component: Active Duty

Growing up as an Army brat I knew that I wanted to serve and follow in my father's footsteps. In ROTC, I learned not only about myself, but about other cultures and backgrounds as well. ROTC has not only taught me how to be a great leader, but also how to follow. I've become a better individual mentally and physically.

To all the cadre members, thank you for all of the support you have given me these past 2 years. To the past MSIV's who are now 2nd Lieutenants, thank you for always being there for me no matter what and all you did for the program. To the upcoming MSIV's this is now your program. Take care of the cadets and they will take care of you. Be there for one another and have each other's back. To all of the cadets, you guys were a blast! Thank you for all the memories and times we spent together. To my fellow Lieutenants we did it!. Thank you for always lifting me up when I needed it, and being there for me at all times. I wish you all the best in your journey's that we are about to embark on, and I will always remember you. To my friends, thank you for supporting me and being there for me when I needed you most. And last, but not least to my biggest fans, my family. Mom, dad, and big brother I did it. I can't thank you enough, for all your love and support. You had my back through this whole ride, and this is only the beginning. This isn't goodbye, it's see you later Bearkat Battalion. I love all of you! – Kennard's Regards.

“Winners are not those who never fail, but those who never quit.”

-Edwin Luis Cole



Introducing Second Lieutenant Prescott King

Hometown: Dallas, Texas

Major: Criminal Justice B.A.

Minor: Military Science

Branch: Infantry Corps

Component: Active Duty Army

We have all achieved something today. Today we all feel successful, but the hardest part of being successful is staying successful. And that takes humility. Its humbling to know that we couldn't have done this by ourselves. Its humbling to know someone could have come through our program and done it better than us. But that's not success is it? "Success is the active pursuit of a worthy ideal" - Earl Nightingale. By that logic on this long path, we were successful every step of the way. This means it started long before we stepped foot in Academic Building 3. That means we have our families, teachers and mentors to thank for helping us make this possible for ourselves.

Becoming officers to serve this nation's finest is what were here for, this is our worthy ideal. My peers are eager to serve earnestly and they will do their best and learn from their mistakes. They will be the most successful people I know. Thank you for being here with us today, thank you for being there for us in the past, thank you for joining us in service as we move into the future.



“People are just what we would be under similar circumstances.”

-Abraham Lincoln



Introducing Second Lieutenant Brett Leasure

Hometown: Killeen, Texas

Major: Criminal Justice B.S.

Minor: Military Science

Branch: Military Police Corps

Component: Active Duty Army

Unit Assignment: 188th Military Police Company in Daegu, South Korea



Growing up in a military family, I was exposed to the Army and military lifestyle and always accepted it. It allowed me insight into the amazing benefits, opportunities, and experiences so kindly offered by the Army. Although the military was my family, I had also always been passionate about law enforcement and protecting others.

I ultimately chose Sam Houston State because of their Criminal Justice ROTC program. I learned how to be a leader, how to support others and most of all, how to be a friend. I learned that it's not about me, and all about me. I learned that being a leader isn't always about doing what is easy, and that if I want to achieve something, I need to be working harder than everyone else. Most of all, I learned that hard work pays off.



Through my effort to commission, I have met the best friends a person could ever ask for, and I have created life long memories with fellow cadets, and met the love of my life. Although these are my achievements, none of this would be possible without my support group to fall back on. My dad helped me and pushed me my entire life to do something great, and I know that my work ethic is a reflection of him. My mom has always been there to help me, even if she disagreed with my decisions. My sisters were always a comedic relief when needed, and my wife was all and in between. They deserve as much of this as me.

“Don't work harder, work smarter.”



Introducing Second Lieutenant Hunter Lewis

Hometown: Fort Worth, Texas

Major: Criminal Justice B.S.

Minor: Military Science

Branch: Military Intelligence with a branch detail of Field Artillery

Component: Active Duty Army

The military life has always fascinated me. My stepfather gave me the original idea of joining JROTC in high school by talking highly of his experience in the program. My father, being a police officer, supported the growth of my interest in Criminal Justice. I wanted to share his interests, so I decided to enroll in the best Criminal Justice program at Sam Houston State University. I was approached by the ROTC recruiter which caused my interest in the program. I met a great friends right away in the BearKat Battalion. These friends pushed me to excel, helped me through dark situations, and to start an organization on campus which led me to meet the girl of my dreams. Going through the challenging scenarios that ROTC put forth forced me out of the shell I was stuck in, and I wouldn't be near the man I am today if I walked any other path.

I cannot thank my friends and family enough for their support throughout these past 4 years. My hometown friends, who constantly build me up on how honorable the position is. My ROTC friends, who helped me reach the goals put for us. My father and stepfather, who placed themselves as my role models, making me want to reach further and further. My girlfriend, who helped me get up in the early mornings and stay up on those late nights. My brothers, who made sure to let me know how proud they were. And finally, my mother, who has supported me 100%. I will never forget your help and support to put me where I am. This is because of you.



“Staying positive, even in the worst of times, will make a world of difference.” -Hunter Lewis



Introducing Second Lieutenant Alec Melkovitz

Hometown: Dallas, Texas

Major: Criminal Justice B.S.

Minor: Military Science

Branch: Military Police Corps

Component: Active Duty Army

Unit Assignment: Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington

My dad was my inspiration to join ROTC. He informed me of what ROTC had to offer and the benefits of being an officer in the United States Army. I'd point to ROTC as one of the things that has developed me a great deal as a person. I have learned how to be more organized, disciplined, and the qualities I should have to be an effective leader. I've been able to meet students from around the world and cadets from across the country. In addition, I have also made many new friends. This is one of the very few classes I would talk about outside of school, because I was very proud to be a cadet in such an amazing battalion. ROTC allowed me to open myself up and realize what my dreams are and how to pursue them. It has given me a more meaningful life since I was able to find out what my goals are, what my strengths and weaknesses are, as well as the kind of person I want to be. The past 2 and a half years I have spent in ROTC were not easy, and it was very complicated to stay focused. But with the support of my family and peers, I was able to be successful. This has been one of the most amazing experiences of my life, and if I could do it all over again, I would. If you're doing the best you can, driving with purpose, you can be strong and survive, and perhaps thrive, in any situation. All you need is to remind yourself; you know who you are. Lastly, I want to thank all of the cadre and my classmates for developing me into the leader and person I am today.



“Only you can control you.” – Kenneth Melkovitz

Introducing Second Lieutenant Shyanne Oviedo

Hometown: McAllen, TX

Major: Criminal Justice B.S.

Minor: Military Science

Branch: Air Defense Artillery

Component: Active Duty Army

Duty station/Unit Assignment: Camp Carroll, South Korea/2nd Battalion, 1st ADA Regiment

I think back to the days before I joined ROTC and I am reminded of the very few times I thought about the military—now it's my entire life. Through ROTC, I have grown more as a person in these last three years of my life. I have learned the meaning of leadership is to put others before myself without hesitation, to be a mentor and a friend, and to empower others. ROTC has given me the most memorable years of my life thus far as well as my wonderful husband, Brett Leasure. In all the sleepless nights, early mornings, and countless meetings there is not a single thing I would change along this journey. The friendships and lessons I have learned in ROTC will stay with me for the rest of my life.

To the younger cadets in the program, my advice to you is to cherish the friendships you make in ROTC, and take advantage of the lessons that cadre have to offer through their experience. Wanting to become an Army officer is something you should be passionate and sure about because if not, not only will it be unfair to your future soldiers, but to yourself. Pursue your dreams, have compassion, put your best efforts in all that you do, and be proud that you will soon be a part of the world's greatest Army.



**“In the future there will be no female leaders. There will just be leaders.”
-Sheryl Sandberg**



Introducing Second Lieutenant Abraham Padron

Hometown: Houston, Texas

Major: Criminal Justice B.S.

Minor: Military Science

Branch: Military Intelligence

Component: Texas Army National Guard

Unit Assignment: 71ST Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade in San Antonio, Texas

Throughout my 4-year span of being a student and cadet at Sam Houston State, I have had the opportunity be involved. Being a brother of Kappa Sigma gave me insight on how to build a bond and support others. I became acquainted with some of the humblest hearted people by joining KATS for CASA. We volunteer in the community and sought to become mentors for those in the foster care system. While I was grateful for what each of those established groups brought to my life, there was none like ROTC. The organization which is less than 0.4% of the student's population at our school is what challenged me and absolutely changed my life. The network in this program is like none other because everyone is constantly encouraging one another to create modest leaders. I could not be more appreciative of our cadre who have spent countless hours mentoring the cadets. The time with my peers has been immaculate and I am certain that our bonds will last our lifetime.

Behind every person there is a backbone of support, which is my family. My mother is the strongest woman I know, and I wouldn't where I am at if it wasn't for her. The lessons learned at Sam Houston State are priceless and will carry on in my life as the foundation of the best leader I will constantly strive to be.



“Grow through what you go through by dissecting failure and you can better achieve your success.” -Abraham Padron



Introducing Second Lieutenant Morgan Webb

Hometown: Jackson, Mississippi

Major: Communication Studies

Minor(s): Military Science and Legal Studies

Branch: Adjutant General Corps

Component: Texas Army National Guard

Unit Assignment: Head Quarters of the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team in Houston, Texas

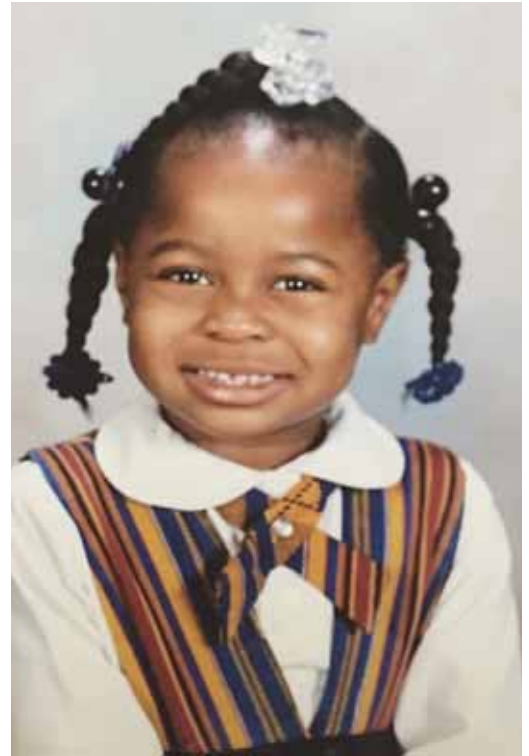
I decided to enlist into the Army when I was 17 years-old mainly to learn how to be more independent. I decided that I wanted to become an Army officer soon after I completed training, because I realized that if I want to create any type of change that I need to become an officer. Joining the ROTC program has immensely assisted in my growth as a person, but more importantly as a leader.

I can honestly say that I would not have made it this far without my support system. First and foremost, thank you to my mother who has always been my backbone in every situation I have encountered. Thank you to my friends and family members for always being there to talk if I needed to. Thank you to all of the members of the 136th MEB who have mentored me and have invested in my success. Thank you to the cadre members for always motivating me to do better, and to have higher standards for myself. Thank you to all of my peers. I've learned valuable lessons from each of you and I wish you all nothing but success in your future.

The next chapter of my life will also consist of me being a law student in the Fall of 2020 at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law to pursue a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree.

“If there’s one thing I’ve learned in life, it’s the power of using your voice.”

-Michelle Obama



The MS4 Awards:



2LT Oviedo received the Bearkat Battalion Saber award.



2LT King received the Bearkat Battalion Saber award.



2LT Leasure received the Daughters of the American Revolution award.



2LT Lewis received a plaque of dedication.



Blast from the Past



The above article reads: “ROTC Cadets Receive: Seven ROTC cadets received commissions into the regular or reserve divisions of the U.S. Army recently. Among those being commissioned in the Loman Student Center Ballroom ceremony were Gerald W. Dunklin of Port Arthur, Jeffrey Moore of Houston, Harold Harris of Fort Worth, Henry Hollis of Huntsville, Henry Jackson of Mexia, Paul E. Pierce of Huntsville, and Robert Smith of Jasper.”

Congratulations to the Bearkat Battalion’s 11 newly commissioned officers of Spring 2020!

