

### Senior

Samuel Brink

### Juniors

Benjamin Dene (Team CPT)

Camille Dang-Fouty

Destiney Mendez

Julian Monroig

Austin Sumner

### Sophomores

Ryan Coker

Avery Sitkowski

### Freshmen

Jacob Clement

William Ratliff

Wes Wisnewski



The Bearkat Battalion Ranger Challenge (RC) during the Task Force Tomahawk RC competition  
(October 22-23).

# Bearkat BATTALION



@shsuarmyrotc



@shsu.rotc



@shsuArmyRotc

**4TH ANNUAL CPT  
INMAN MEMORIAL 5K**

**13 NOV, 0700 @  
SHSU CLOCK TOWER**

**HONOR A VET**

**SUPPORT STUDENTS**

**\$25  
RACE  
ENTRY**

**REGISTER HERE OR EMAIL CDT MIZE @  
MJM113@SHSU.EDU**

It is not too late to secure your spot at the  
4<sup>th</sup> Annual CPT Rowdy Inman Memorial  
5K. <https://fundly.com/4th-annual-cpt-rowdy-inman-memorial-5k>.

### *Inside This Issue*

- Page 2: PMS Comments
- Page 3: Newly Contracted Cadets
- Page 4: Cadet of The Month – CDT Jacob Clement (MSI)
- Page 5: “Why I accepted the 4-year Minuteman scholarship” - CDT Tanner Stone (MSI)
- Page 6: Ranger Challenge Experience - CDT William Ratliff (MSI)
- Page 7: My Transition From Hawaii to SHSU - CDT Faith Calma (MSII)
- Page 8: “Transferring in as an MSIII” - CDT Destiney Mendez (MSIII)
- Pages 9: The Month in Pictures
- Page 10: Alumni Spotlight – COL (R) John A. McManners

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

Greetings on Veterans Day! Thank you to everyone who serves or has served our great country honorably. As important, a special “thank you” to everyone reading this newsletter for your continued support to the veteran, the United States Armed Forces, and future veterans - your Cadets. Our Cadets are fortunate to support the university and community Veteran’s Day events during the next few days. We will highlight some of these events and our veterans in the following paragraphs.

As you read this newsletter, our Cadets are supporting the city of Huntsville at Elkins Lake with our color guard team. This evening our Cadets will support the university during its Presidential Dinner at the Space Center Houston. Our Cadets are looking forward to personally hearing from SHSU President, Dr. Alisa White, and SHSU Chief Strategy Officer, Major General (Retired) David Glaser, and engaging with our SHSU Alumni. You enable us to produce Army officers due to your first-class support – Thank you.

SHSU R.O.T.C. Alumni truly live the university’s motto, “The measure of a Life is its Service.” Colonel (Retired) John A. McManners is this month’s alumni spotlight (page 10). We are grateful for his generous donation to support the 4th Annual CPT Rowdy Inman Memorial 5K (page 1). This donation, along with the support from Dr. White, Dr. Brian Loft, Brigadier General (Retired) Richard Mills, Mr. Frank Holmes, Thelma Mooney, the Military Science Alumni Club (MSAC), 5K supporters, and Emily Elkins, among others, will result in us dedicating one of our classrooms to CPT Inman after the CPT Inman 5K. We invite you to this special ribbon-cutting event to support the Inman family. Thereafter, you can join us at our tailgate as the MSAC will be supporting our Cadets by serving brisket. Finally, you can observe the defending national champion SHSU Football Team. Prior to the game, SHSU R.O.T.C. Alumnus, LTC Jay Johnson, will escort the football team to Bowers Stadium by running out with the American Flag. What a perfect way to end Veteran’s Day Weekend!

In closing, two more teammates (page three) contracted to serve as Army Officers and become veterans in the future. They join the 19 Cadets who have contracted this semester! As a program, 60% of our Cadets are contracted. Most freshmen Cadets are not eligible to contract; thus, if we remove them from this equation, 84% of our Cadets are contracted! Along with our cadre, I feel fortunate every day to be surrounded by these selfless young men and women. We are excited to see them lead our Soldiers and eventually become veterans. We hope to see you in the next few days!

### Strength and Honor!

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Contreras





## Newly Contracted Cadets



CDT Yatta Towouh

MSIII/Junior

Desired Branch: JAG Corps

Bearkat Battalion Tutoring NCOIC

Major: Criminal Justice

Hometown: Killeen, Tx

**2-Year Army Scholarship**



CDT Destiney Mendez

MSIII/Junior

Desired Branch: Aviation

Bearkat Battalion Ranger Challenge Team

Major: Psychology

Hometown: Kilgore, Tx

**Simultaneous Membership Program Cadet**

**National Guard**



## Cadet of The Month – Jacob Clement (MSI)

When I was growing up, my family presented a strong military and law enforcement presence amongst my brothers and me. We grew up in El Paso, Texas, near Fort Bliss. I was able to experience the atmosphere of a military base from a young age and saw how hard my parents worked and the amount of pride they placed in their jobs. My mother is still in the military, serving as an officer in the Army Reserves. My father was a police officer, then served in the Army as an officer, and now works for the Department of Justice. Growing up with this influence, I always felt a strong call to selfless service. I set my mind on becoming an Army officer when my brother was commissioned as a second lieutenant after my senior year in high school. He set the standard and example as my twin brother and created a path for me to follow. However, there was a subtle difference as he attended R.O.T.C. at Texas Tech and I joined the BETTER program here at Sam Houston State University.

I am not a traditional freshman as I am twenty years old. Before deciding I wanted to be an officer in the Army, I took two years to play junior-level ice hockey for the El Paso Rhinos. My goal, before seeing my brother graduate and commission was to play college ice hockey. Along with my twin brother, Jonathan, I spent my final three years of high school playing hockey in New Hampshire for a national-level team. Spending most of my teenage years playing hockey at a competitive level helped my transition into the ROTC program here at Sam. My time playing taught me what it meant to be a part of a team and the level of work and discipline it takes to succeed as an individual and in a group. After my final years of playing in El Paso, I decided I could not delay the process of becoming an officer in the Army any longer and that my heart's true calling was to start my journey in the military.



CDT Jacob Clement attacking the goal during a hockey game.



CDT Jacob Clement (far right) with his two brothers in Monterrey, Mexico.





## “Why I accepted the 4-year Minuteman Scholarship” – CDT Tanner Stone (MSI)

The reason I accepted my Minuteman National scholarship is relatable and understandable to the many people growing up in America right now. In my junior year of high school, I planned to attend Sam Houston State University as a Criminal Justice major, as I wanted to carve out a career in Law Enforcement. When I was accepted into the school I was thrilled, but also got awakened by reality. I had absolutely no way to pay for college.

I decided to pursue something where I could make a difference and protect the people I love. I did some reflecting and ultimately concluded, I wanted to enlist into the National Guard. In addition to joining the guard, I also wanted to join the R.O.T.C. program at SHSU and commission as an Army Officer. I did some research and found the Minuteman Scholarship. I began applying for it before I was sent off to Basic Combat Training (BCT), prior to the fall semester.

Working for the scholarship during BCT was a mess I was not prepared for. I had to beg my drill sergeants to call certain people and do Zoom interviews to receive the scholarship. I found out I received the scholarship my last week at basic; as a drill sergeant came up to me and said, “Stone, you finally received that stupid award you’ve been trying for all summer”. I am ecstatic, incredibly thankful, and feel blessed to have received such a scholarship. I cannot wait to conquer R.O.T.C. challenges and begin my career as an Army Officer.



CDT Tanner Stone with his mother after graduating from Basic Training.



CDT Tanner Stone, dove hunting with his father.



## Ranger Challenge Experience – CDT William Ratliff (MSI)

Ranger Challenge was a constant roller coaster of emotions. It started with the overwhelming amount of information we had to learn and the continuous mindset of competing against other cadets. As an MSI, I knew it would be difficult to earn a spot on the team, so I had to give it my all, and that is what I did. After tryouts, I thought the pressure would be relieved, but that was not the case. The competition was approaching fast, and all we did was kick it into a higher gear to elevate our preparations. Leading up to the competition, it was all that was on my mind. Everything that ran through my mind was centered on the competition.

For the most part, I was not that nervous when the competition day finally came. I created a great relationship with everyone on the team, and everything we did was together. I never had to worry about one of my teammates not being there to support me. We motivated each other through all the events. When it was over, we came to better understand our strengths and limitations. We always tried our hardest and finished the competition in 4<sup>th</sup> place; better than we had hoped for.

Finally, Noah Abramski was the one who recommended Ranger Challenge to me and told me how it would positively affect me. Ranger Challenge gave me knowledge and tactics that helped me get ahead in the program. It pushed me to physical and mental limits that I never knew I could reach. Lastly, it connected me with amazing people that I have learned from and will continue to learn from. I would recommend Ranger Challenge to any cadet from any year group in R.O.T.C.



CDT William Ratliff (left) with CDT Ryan Coker (center) and Julian Monroig (right) during the Ranger Challenge Competition.



CDT William Ratliff (left) with CDT Jacob Clement (right) at the range during the La Copa Field Training Exercise.





## My Transition from Hawaii to SHSU – CDT Faith Calma (MSII)

My name is Cadet Faith Calma, and I recently transferred to Sam Houston State University during the fall semester of 2021. I am currently part of the Simultaneous Membership Program attached to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 536th Brigade Support Battalion, in the Texas Army National Guard. It is an incredible opportunity to receive a 4-year Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty (GRFD) Minuteman Scholarship. I am a sophomore and am currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Biology.

Joining R.O.T.C. my freshman year of college at the University of Hawaii (UH) at Manoa was by far one of the most impactful decisions I made in my life. I was often pushed to the brink of exhaustion and frequently found myself sacrificing my mental and physical health to accommodate the demands of UH's R.O.T.C. and a heavy academic course load.

With personal circumstances also coming to rise, it became apparent that living on my own as a college student during Hawaii's current economic climate would heavily restrain me and negatively impact my grades. With my goals being to pursue medical school in Texas and the benefit of a low cost of living, I transferred to SHSU. SHSU's competitive R.O.T.C. program provided me the opportunity to use my experience as a steppingstone to a future as a leader and a physician.

I was pleasantly surprised to see how involved, and patient SHSU's cadre were during my tiresome transfer of R.O.T.C. programs, units, and scholarship. I've formed valuable relationships amongst the cadets within this program that made my transition here worthwhile in my short time. I feel understood on the many occasions where I am either forced to prioritize my academics or personal circumstances over R.O.T.C. obligations because they value academics and know many of their cadet's juggle work, a heavy academic course load, and a family while still trying their best to fulfill Cadet obligations.



CDT Faith Calma (right) receiving an award for her outstanding job as a medic, while deployed for COVID missions during the pandemic.



CDT Faith Calma (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) with her former Cadets and Cadre in Hawaii.



## Transferring in as an MSIII – CDT Destiny Mendez

My name is CDT Destiny Mendez, and I am currently a junior, majoring in Psychology at Sam Houston State University. I am from the small town of Kilgore, Texas, located in Eastern Texas. Coming in as an MSIII has been a crazy experience. On the first day, I remember being nervous until I stepped inside the room. I was not sure what to expect and I went all in. Everyone was so friendly, and I instantly felt as if I was walking into a family. I have also seen many opportunities unfurl by being in R.O.T.C., all due to the hard work, determination, and selfless service required from the program.

As an MSIII, I knew I wanted to be a part of something bigger than myself. Although I was already a specialist in the Texas Army National Guard, I wanted to make myself a better leader and person, and serve a higher purpose. I knew the Bearkat Battalion was the right place to make this happen when I was instantly welcomed as family. Being new to the program, the road has been bumpy, and I still feel behind my peers sometimes. Although I have previous experience in the National Guard, R.O.T.C. as an MSIII is rigorous, and the challenges of leadership are taxing. I have had to sacrifice extra time outside of scheduled class, change my sleeping schedule for physical training sessions, and be willing to completely dedicate myself to the program. While this sounds like a lot, I wouldn't change anything, or any decision I have made to get where I am today. The support within the program is what keeps me going.

My overall experience as a new MSIII has been a bit of a rollercoaster, but it's the life I chose. We are all in this together; everyone puts forward effort into making me feel like I have always been a part of the family. With the Bearkat Battalion being my second family, I learned that anything is possible with hard work, determination, and giving 100%.



CDT Destiny Mendez showing her American pride.



CDT Destiny Mendez with her baby brother and little sister.





## The Month in Pictures



CDT Nicholas Watson and CDT Hunter Milburn firing the cannon during a football game.



Cadets celebrating the Bearkats win against SFA with SHSU President Dr. Alisa White.



(Left to Right) Cadets Sumner, Pilgrim, Coker, and Sitkowski at La Copa during an Obstacle Course.



5<sup>th</sup> Brigade Command Team inspiring SHSU Cadets during PT.



Cadets in a 6-person Color Guard, ready to go on the field.



CDT Nathan Frye's Family Tree and their winning pumpkin from this year's pumpkin carving contest.





## Alumni Spotlight – COL (R) John A. McManners

A 1962 SHSU graduate, Col. John McManners led a distinguished career in the military. Born in Weldon, Texas, McManners spent his formative years in Huntsville, where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in history from SHSU in 1962. He also is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College, the United States Army War College, the United States Air War College, and earned a master's degree from Webster University.

At SHSU, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in Field Artillery through R.O.T.C. and spent his initial tour as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division.

McManners retired in 1992 after a 30-year military career, which carried him to many parts of the world including Europe, Vietnam, Bosnia, and Laos, where he worked with the famed Hmong Mountain Tribe in guerrilla warfare against the Pathet Lao and the North Vietnamese. He was personally decorated by the King of Laos as a “Knight of a Million Elephants” in 1969.

Among the many other military recognitions he received are: Legion of Merit (2); Bronze Star; Defense Meritorious Service Medal; Meritorious Service Medal (3); Air Medal (2), Army Commendations Medal (2); National Defense Service Medal; Vietnam Service Medal; Army Service Ribbon; Overseas Service Ribbon; and Vietnam Campaign Medal. After retirement from the military, he worked for a law firm in San Antonio and Austin specializing in social security disability.

Since returning to Huntsville in 2005, McManners has been an active university and community leader, with such organizations and committees as the SHSU Alumni Association, the Lowman Student Center Advisory Board, Friends of the Museum Board, and Military Memorial Committee; the Rotary Club and The Huntsville Item Reader's Advisory Board; and the East Texas Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America. He currently serves on the advisory board for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the City of Huntsville board, and Veterans Affairs Advisory Board.

McManners and his wife, Geanie, reside at Elkins Lake. They have two daughters, Shannon McManners Hurst, who lives in Arlington, Va., with her husband Tres, and Kathleen McManners Seleny, who lives in The Woodlands with her husband Alex; two grandsons, Noah Daniel and John Alexander Seleny; and one granddaughter, Annelise Marie Seleny.

“Work hard and do your best to improve everything you do. Take care of the people that work for you, and they will take care of you”

– COL (R) John A. McManners

**On behalf of the Bearkat Battalion,  
thank you for exemplary service  
and support!**



1957 in Fort Chaffee, Arkansas  
at a Rifle Range when COL  
(R) McManners was a Private.

