



The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual CPT Rowdy Inman 5K race beginning.

# Bearkat BATTALION

March | 2021 | Sam Houston State University

## Continuing the Fight, Strength and Honor!

Throughout March, Cadets have been busy planning and executing various events such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Memorial Rowdy Inman 5K, highlighted on page 3 by CDT Melissa Mize. The MSIII Cadets have been preparing for Cadet Summer Training (CST). This month they had the opportunity to gain valuable training at the Multi-Program Field Training Exercise – highlighted on page 8 by CDT Noah Abramski. We also had two Cadets officially begin their quest to join our profession as they contracted this month (pages 5 & 6).

We look forward to seeing our MSIIIs perform at Advance Camp and the continued development of all Cadets coming in the future!

**Eat'em Up Kats!**

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

“Approximately two years ago, I accepted a responsibility to train and mentor aspiring officers for the United States Army at the Sam Houston State University Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program. Daunted and skeptical, I would learn mentoring and officer development possesses a dissimilar approach in contrast to my enlisted nurture. Not to say, the enlisted service member approach in mentoring and development is superior, rather mentoring the next generation of decision-makers requires a more cerebral and methodical approach. My enlisted upbringing cloaked my understanding of the overwhelming responsibility of pursuing a path towards commissioning. I would learn later the struggles these young ambitious adults face while balancing work, studies, and organizational duties within their respected ROTC programs. All impediments are presented before consideration for accessions eligibility to serve in today's armed services.

Furthermore, over 20 years of military service could not prepare me for this foreign training environment; however, it prepared me to serve these cadets. Throughout my career, I wore my uniform and insignias with pride, never petulant or faltering my integrity while remaining loyal to my Soldiers and superiors; but I would carry this burden of unfulfillment throughout most of my career. As I near the end of my tenure serving in SHSU ROTC, I can genuinely discern that I have experienced fulfillment in observing self-actualization in our cadets while training, mentoring, and developing these future leaders in my program. One example of this was recent during our Spring Multi-Program Field Training Exercise (MPFTX) with the University of Houston, Prairie View A&M, and Stephen F. Austin.

*"Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties, they will not have to accomplish mine"* is a verse identified within the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer that echoes internally while advising cadet leadership during the planning and execution of training within the program. It was difficult to consent, cadets, an opportunity to perform specified duties which are normally lead or supervised by an officer and enlisted pair. I could not be prouder of our 2021 senior cohort during their flawless collaboration while orchestrating training for over 175 personnel during four days of unpredictable Texas weather at SHSU Gibbs Ranch.

Self-actualization resolves while observing cadets' efforts to develop a team of individuals who triumph over the challenges that come with four years of college, a global pandemic, social and political unrest, and organizational culture and climate shift. Not only will SHSU cadets continue to train, influence, and recruit others to become members of the team during my occupancy, but cadets will impeccably endure to support and executed one of the most premiered events (MPFTX) of the year effortlessly. I was mesmerized! Their performance was a clear indication of the immeasurable hard work, comradery, selfless service, and commitment to the program. I am forever grateful and humbled for the opportunity to learn, grow, and develop future leaders of the Army. I look forward to our continued experiences while we mentor and develop the underclassman together. Let us cross the finish line well-balanced and proud!"

### Strength and Honor!

Master Sergeant Joel Mitchell III



LTC Contreras and MSG Mitchell beside the ROTC building (ABIII).



MSG Mitchell providing Cadets, at the MPFTX, with an initial briefing.



## CPT Rowdy Inman 5K Reflection – NCOIC CDT MSII Mize, Melissa

“March 13th marked the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual CPT Rowdy Inman 5k. This event commemorates the first SHSU ROTC graduate to pay the ultimate sacrifice for his country, CPT Rowdy Inman. CPT Inman served with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment during Operation Just Cause, Operation Desert Storm, and finally Operation Iraqi Freedom. Due to his courageous and faithful service, CPT Inman was awarded the Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, and the Purple Heart. The size and impact of the event has grown, thanks to the expanding number of participants and generous donors, which this year include ΔTΔ, AXΩ, Cowboy Contractors, the Sam Houston Alumni Association, The Unquiet Professional, and CPT Akeroyd with a large group of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cavalry Regiment Soldiers. The financial generosity of the donors means more than a good race; the money earned at the 5k supports the Rowdy Inman Memorial Scholarships, yet another way to remind students, cadre, and alumni of CPT Inman’s sacrifice, while providing Cadets with the means to finish their degree, and commission as an Army officer.

It took the incredible support of our donors, combined with the volunteer support of over 40 Cadets to work the largest turnout the Rowdy Inman 5K has seen thus far. Cadet Webster served as the event’s master of ceremonies, introducing the family of Captain Rowdy Inman, and performing the national anthem. Cadets Edo-Terradas and Zirkel served as route guides, running ahead of the pack. Cadet Rocha worked diligently for months to coordinate the 5K as the event’s OIC. It took the hard work of everyone involved; donors, Cadets, and Cadre, to make this year’s Memorial Rowdy Inman 5k a success. We cannot wait until the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual CPT Rowdy Inman 5K!”



Cowboy Contractors supported 5 runners during the 5K.



LTC Contreras, Dr. Loft, CDT Stone, and CDT Webster with ΔTΔ and AXΩ.



3CR Muleskinners travelled from Fort Hood, Texas, to attend the 5K.





## Cadet of The Month – CDT MSII Pilgrim, Matthew

“From an early age, I was surrounded by people who instilled values that made me who I am today. My family always stressed the importance of being honorable, loyal, and helping those around you. One of my most significant influencers was my grandfather, Jerry Pilgrim. My grandfather served in the Army as a Sergeant in Korea, within the Armor branch. He always had a great attitude towards life and treated everyone with compassion and respect. A significant part of what motivates me is carrying on his legacy and helping those around me become their best.

After getting into Sam Houston State University and joining the ROTC program, I was confident that becoming an Army Officer was the correct path for me. I decided to pursue a commission through the Army to serve those around me and significantly impact the lives of Soldiers I will lead. Through the ROTC program, I found a family that shares the same values as me. Through their dedication to the program, excellence, and physical fitness, my peers have continued to push me further to do my best and strive for excellence. I knew I wanted to contract as soon as possible, and part of that was overcoming some physical struggles.

Over my first couple of semesters, I dedicated myself to working out and losing the weight needed to contract and lost over 40lbs in the first year, enabling me to receive a three-year scholarship and contract. I was able to get advice and mentorship from many of the Cadets in the program through ROTC extracurricular programs such as Ranger Challenge, Intramurals, and Ranger Company. I joined Ranger Company my second semester, and through the program, gained many of the tools necessary to be successful throughout my time in ROTC. I have had a great support system throughout my journey so far; my friends, family, and cadre continually look after and care for my well-being. I am excited to continue my education and earn my commission!”



CDT Pilgrim following his contracting.



CDT Pilgrim and fellow MSII.



CDT Pilgrim and Cadets working out.



## Taking the Next Step – CDT MSII Rochat, Rudy

“My name is Cadet Rudy Rochat, and I am a sophomore (MSII) here at Sam Houston State University (SHSU). I joined the ROTC program Fall of 2020 and contracted on March 4th, 2021.

When I graduated high school, I decided to enlist in the Texas Army National Guard. After being at SHSU for my Fall semester in 2019, I left and went to Basic Combat Training (BCT) and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) spring of 2020. Upon completion of BCT and AIT, Cadet Elaine Bishop and Cadet Austin Sumner both encouraged me to join the program when I returned to Sam. After a few phone calls with LTC Joe Contreras and discussing it over with my parents, I decided that joining the ROTC program was the best decision to not only further my career in the military, but also further develop key leadership skills that an Army officer must have.

While being in ROTC, I have been able to make friendships, learn valuable skills and life lessons, and develop into the leader I know I can be. Within ROTC, you have many opportunities to explore, learn, and develop in ways you never thought you could. We make ourselves better and help those around us become better, which is really rewarding at the end of the day. I am looking forward to achieving my leadership goals and perfecting my skills alongside my fellow Cadets. I want to thank LTC Contreras for believing in me and giving me the opportunity to become part of the Sam Houston State University ROTC program and helping me start the path to furthering my military career. I encourage and challenge everyone to take some time and learn more! ROTC is worth the while and has great rewards!”

*“Have a great summer and EAT’em up Kats!”*



CDT Rochat graduating AIT.



CDTs Rochat and Haramen officially contracting.





## The Next Chapter – CDT MSII Marlon, Hardeman

“I joined the Army Reserves in 2019, as an 88M (Motor Transport Operator). At the time, I did not know anything about the military, except what I had seen in movies. Following my enlistment, I went to Basic Combat Training (BCT) and did well, and realized I was a much better leader than I had anticipated. However, one thing that stuck out to me were the officers. They had earned respect from everyone, and they were always very kind and helpful. They seemed to enjoy their jobs and almost all of them were in great shape. I remember thinking, maybe I could be one someday, but I never knew it would happen this quickly. Cadet Austin Zirkle was extremely helpful as I returned to college after joining the Army, I would check in with him and ask questions about ROTC, as I considered joining the program. Cadet Zirkle gave me his honest opinions and answered all the questions I had. I knew if I was going to join ROTC, I was going to contract, because I was not going to waste time taking it as only an elective.

What really helped me decide to join was envisioning how it would fit into my future. I knew I wanted to do at least 20 years in the military, and being an officer pays much better than being on the enlisted side. Officers are required to be mentally strong, which I felt like I am more suited to. The benefits outweighed the cons and that is when I decided to pull the trigger and reach out to LTC Contreras and Mr. Derr. Both greeted me and I got a feeling they were good guys and that made me more confident in my decision. Since joining ROTC, my mentor and ROTC family group have been a great help. Cadet Courtney Paulson is my mentor, and she has been super helpful. She is always in a positive mood and provides great advice and guidance. So far, I have enjoyed ROTC and I’m excited to continue on my journey.”



CDT Hardemen and his mentor, CDT Paulson, after completion of their Spartan Race.



CDTs Hardemen and Rochat being contracted.



## The First Few Months – CDT MSI Hammond, Rashaad

“My decision to not accept the Army ROTC National Scholarship was partially due to COVID-19. The virus outbreak delayed the board's decision, so I thought that I had not earned it. Not knowing that I was going to get the scholarship, I turned my focus toward football and received a scholarship offer from Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU). About four weeks after I committed, I received an email saying that I received the National Scholarship. I thought about decommitting but had my heart set on football.

My first semester at SAGU was ok. I was playing college football and enjoying it, but I still desired to be an Army officer, so part of me regretted my decision. I love the discipline of the Army and the way things are structured. Playing on a team where others had different goals bothered me. No one was ever on the same page, and that made me think. Every time that I had met someone from the Army we clicked. We did not necessarily always become friends, but we understood each other and had the same goals in life.

Even though I was regretting my decision, nothing changed my mind until I thought back to Cadet Michael Way coming to one of my track meets while I was still in high school. That meant a lot to me because he went out of his way to come and support. That is the moment I decided that I wanted to be a part of a different team... the Army.

I have only been a part of the Bearkat Battalion for a couple of months now and have already learned so much. It feels different than being on a football team because it is never a competition. Everyone tries to help each other and there is a sense of family here. A lot of my fellow Cadets learned my name and help me out anytime I do not know something. I truly believe that transferring was one of the best decisions I have ever made.”



CDT Hammond (back right) during the Cadet Intermural League (CIL).



CDT Hammond (center) with CDT BC Stone and CDT CSM Webster during sports day.





## MPFTX Reflection – CDT MSIII Abramski, Noah

The Multi-Program Field Training Exercise (MPFTX), hosted by Sam Houston State University (SHSU) ROTC, Bearkat Battalion, was an unbelievable experience that trained us mentally, physically, and tactically for our upcoming visit to Fort Knox, KY, for Cadet Summer Training (CST). It taught me the importance of emotional intelligence, mental agility, and the innovation needed to succeed as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army.

The MPFTX was comprised of three (3) Platoons with Cadets from our university and sister universities, Stephen F. Austin, University of Houston, and Prairie View A&M University. Once Cadets arrived, immediately my platoon started going over Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), to get on the same page both mentally and tactically and began preparing for the upcoming missions we would be conducting. We quickly found a middle ground and before we knew it, we were thrown into our first mission. Having never seen or talked to the other Cadets before the MPFTX, made emotional intelligence a key factor into the success of our operations. I would find myself and other SHSU Cadets in our downtime making jokes and connecting with our various platoon members. A platoon could have all the assets in the world, but if it does not have confidence, communication, and trust, I have found that typically things do not go well. It was imperative to me and my fellow Cadets that we build those basic building blocks to propel ourselves to be successful.

As the missions went on and the days got hotter, I found our platoon getting more cohesive. In the beginning, it was troubling to remember the names of the people even in our squad. As time went on, we found ourselves selflessly helping each other out, whether it was giving the Platoon Leader advice and guidance on certain battle drills, making the Platoon Sergeant's job easier by squaring away our squads, or even the little things such as giving our MRE candy away, and pouring out water for our fellow platoon members. These little things add up over time, and I can say without a doubt that our platoon was the most compassionate, caring, and tactically proficient as a result of our cohesiveness.

These little differences impacted my training and prepared me for CST, by showing me the differences in SOPs and how other Cadets think. Our platoon was a melting pot of innovation as each leader was equally unique and different than the rest. I would see something that I have never observed before and I would make notes of it in my spiral, and I would see other Cadets doing the same. At the end of the MPFTX, I had pages worth of notes that I could utilize to improve myself in preparation for CST. The MPFTX was a huge success, and I made some awesome new friends. I would like to offer a big "Thank You" to all the MS4s for the overall success of this training!"



1<sup>st</sup> Platoon pulling security during their missions.



MSIV Lane Walker Eric Webster leading his platoon to its Assemble Area.





## March in Photos



Bearkat, UH, PVU, and SFA Cadet executing the 4-day Multi-Program FTX.



The MSIV Class traveled to Ft. Hood for a Leadership Professional Development (LPD) session.





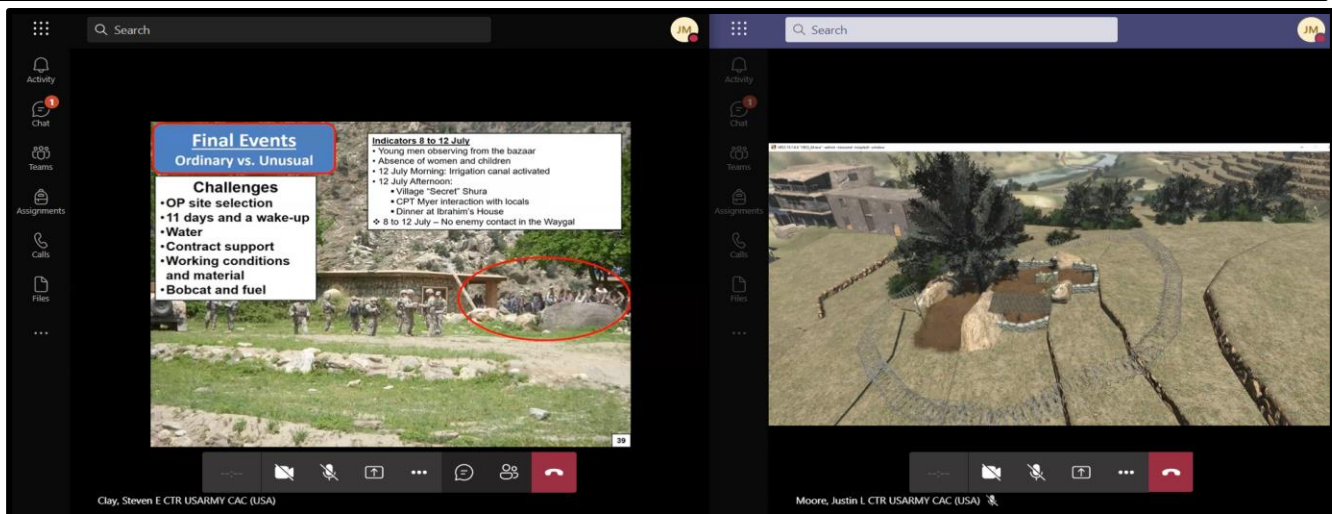
## March in Photos



Bearkat Cadets performing a 21-Gun Salute at the Huntsville March to the Grave Ceremony.



Cadets participating in the Pre-MPFTX COVID Testing.



MSIV Cadets conducting a Staff Ride, of the Battle of Wanat with the SFA Senior Cadets.





## Alumni Spotlight – Mr. August Ciriello

“Mr. Augut Ciriello graduated from Sam Houston State University (SHSU) in 1969. While in the program, he was a member of the Counter Guerrilla Company for three-years. Upon graduation, Mr. Ciriello commissioned as an Infantry Officer and severed for a combined 30 years of service; 3-years Active Duty and 27-years in the Army Reserve.

He graduated with honors from the Army Command and General Staff College and served as Commander of Army Reserve Center in Huntsville, TX (1975-1977). Other assignments included the National Training Center (NTC), Ft. Irwin, the Multi-National Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai Peninsula between Egypt and Israel. Additionally, Mr. Ciriello served two with the Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve (OCAR) at the Pentagon.

Then began his 38-year career with the Veterans Affairs (VA) in 1974, where he served as the Veterans Representative at SHSU. During the last 10-years with the VA he provided oversight for disabled veterans receiving treatment/therapy at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. For his dedicated work, Mr. Ciriello was named VA National Employment Coordinator of the year in 2008. He then retired from the Army Reserve in 1999 and the VA in 2012.

*“One of the things I am most grateful for is being able to provide support to the Military Science Department at SHSU. Each year I make a donation to honor the life, service, and memory of my three best friends from my days as a cadet: Jeff Baggett, Stormey Jones, and Lewis Walker. In the past couple of years, its been my privilege to have contact with several SHSU cadets. I know that Jeff, Stormey and Lewis would be just as proud of these fine young people as I am.” – Mr. August Ciriello*



(Mr. Ciriello on the Left) June 1979, 4<sup>th</sup> Division.



Mr. Ciriello and LTC Contreras during the Spring 2019 Alumni Dinner, San Antonio.

Mr. August Ciriello embodies every aspect of leadership we instill in our Cadets. He continually exemplifies selfless service and dedication to growing and mentoring future leaders. This program and our Cadets are thankful for his continued support.

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



## Alumni Spotlight – Mr. August Ciriello



Mr. Ciriello standing east of Austin College building remembering his three close friends from SHSU ROTC. Who stood there with him 50-years ago.



Mr. Ciriello (on the right) and fellow former Counter Guerrilla and graduate of 1969, Ken Rice.

