



Bearkat BATTALION

November | 2018 | Sam Houston State University

The Bearkat Battalion put another busy month behind us and we are excited as the end of the semester quickly approaches. This past month, cadets attended Battle of the Piney Woods in Houston, the Ranger Challenge team participated in the regional competition, physical training has increased intensity in preparation for the record Army Physical Fitness Test later in November, and the battalion held its annual Halloween run. This upcoming month is full of many exciting events including a packed weekend of Veteran's Day events starting on November 9, two scholarship boards, and the fall awards ceremony. In this month's newsletter, three cadets (a freshman, sophomore, and junior) provide their personal ROTC stories.

Inside This Issue

Pg. 2 PMS Comments

Pg. 3 CDT Battalion Commander Comments

Pg. 4 Ranger Challenge/Upcoming Events

Pg. 5 Blast from the Past

Pg. 6 Lateral Entry-Gianni Nunez

Pg. 7 Making Dreams Happen-Austin Zirkel

Pg. 8 Importance of Motivation-Nancy Tran

Pg. 9 The Month in Pictures

PMS Comments

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

Greetings! It is astonishing to realize our semester is approximately one month away from being complete. Your cadets have been extremely busy, balancing their academics, R.O.T.C. activities, and supporting the Huntsville community, while most of them work part-time jobs. You would be impressed by their resiliency and “selfless service” attitude as they rarely complain. This is evident by the 93% cadet retention rate, since the start of the semester. An enormous “thank you” to the Military Science Alumni Club (MSAC) for once again cooking the food during the tailgate on October 27th, providing our cadets some much needed assistance.

A huge reason for our success and retention rate is attributed to the leadership of our senior class. Our seniors have led from the front during every R.O.T.C. event, while striving for excellence. This vast improvement of these newsletters is a prime example of this excellence. Among these seniors, Cadets Erick Rodas, Caitlin Arrigali, and Jose Arriaga, were recently designated as Distinguished Military Graduates (DMGs). DMGs are cadets who graduate in the top 20% among cadets in over 270 R.O.T.C. programs across the nation – an admirable feat! Our senior cohort also received their component selections and we are pleased to announce all of them received their top preference. To the right are the results.

In closing, our cadre and cadets are already in the planning process for the Spring Semester as we strive to continue for excellence for all our events. We appreciate your continued support and welcome you to visit our program.

Strength and Honor!

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Contreras



CDT Cheyene Wachtendorf contracted on October 12th, pictured with LTC Contreras. CDT Wachtendorf is a hip pocket Green-to-Gold Scholarship Award Winner, who previously served in Hawaii.

ACTIVE DUTY

Raquel Aparicio
Jose Arriaga
Caitlin Arrigali
Leighanna Bridwell
Mario Canchola
Jazzmine Pender
Erick Rodas

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Aaron Calderon
Symone Powell

ARMY RESERVES

Johnathan Hohn

CDT Battalion Commander Comments

Serving as the Cadet Battalion Commander for the Bearkat Battalion has been a rich learning experience. Our class began preparing for our potential duties as seniors since our final weeks as juniors last school year. We had an idea of what each of us would be assigned, so we began to brainstorm on what we wanted to accomplish. What was a recurring theme amongst all of us was that we wanted to make the ROTC program here one that students were proud to be a part of. We committed ourselves to developing a culture where, above all else, the cadets here would grow together as a family. This would turn out to be a challenge of great proportion, and which would require attention across several domains – we met that challenge head on.

The Fall Field Training Exercise served as a testament to the change in direction the Bearkat Battalion has taken. From the moment cadets set foot on Gibbs Ranch, they were met with the task of navigating from point-to-point well into the night. Exhausted from their attempt to find five points with limited visibility, they arrived back to their rucksacks only to discover that their evening would continue into the early morning hours, immediately moving into patrol base operations involving field craft, and other activities in the priorities of work. Depth and relentlessness in training was the message sent to the cadets of the junior class. This is precisely what they would need to ensure their success at cadet summer training, and the senior class stood ready to deliver.

Another component the Bearkat Battalion sought to improve is the interaction and mentorship between the senior cadets, and cadets in their first two years of ROTC. The Bearkat Battalion Mentorship program was established to develop a network of cadets that provides top-down development, pairing new cadets to others with more experience in the program, and allowing for cadets with similar academic disciplines to share success techniques. The key improvement with the mentorship program this year is the use of a



multi-level mentorship model where mentees at the lowest tier of the mentorship chain have access to mentors at the highest levels – we call this our family tree. This allows for mid-level leaders to exercise their leadership skills, while the more senior cadets provide expert knowledge to the highly impressionable freshman, and sophomore classes. So far, the mentorship families have been a great success.

As the semester turns its final corner, the cadet leadership of the battalion begins final preparations for our fall awards ceremony. Here, we will recognize many cadets for their contribution to the program and highlight others for their extraordinary performance. We welcome all family, supporters, and friends of the battalion to attend and hope to see you there!

Strength and Honor!

Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Erick Rodas



RANGER CHALLENGE RECAP

On the weekend of October 12th, Bearkat Battalion's Ranger Challenge Team competed in FT. Hood at the regional competition. While on base, the team was able to meet with two SHSU alumni, CPT Colby Morgan and his wife CPT Hailey Morgan (class of '13 and 14 respectively). The two alumni were able to spend some time providing good mentorship and experiences to the cadets.

At the regional competition, the Ranger Challenge team fought hard and placed 8th in the competition. They toughed it out through a weekend of night land-navigation, a physical fitness test, radio communication, one-rope bridge, weapon assembly/disassembly, IEDs, hand grenade Assault Course (HGAC), Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) and a 10-mile foot march. To emphasize their success they completed the 10-mile ruck in 2 hours and 14 minutes. We did not achieve the results we desired; however, with only one MSIV on the team, we are looking forward to vast improvement next year.



CPTs Colby & Hailey Morgan meet with the Ranger Challenge Team

Upcoming Events

Veterans Day Football Game SHSU vs. Abilene Christian	Bowers Stadium	10 NOV
Fall Ring Ceremony Support	Johnson Coliseum	12 NOV
Veterans Day Weekend Events	Bowers Stadium & The HEARTS Museum	9 NOV-11 NOV
MSAC Scholarship Board	AB3	16 NOV
RECORD APFT	Bowers Stadium	19 NOV
Scholarship Board	AB3	20 NOV
Color Guard Support at Stole Ceremony	Walker Education Center	28 NOV
Fall Awards Ceremony	Olson Auditorium Academic Build IV	29 NOV
Commissioning Ceremony	Olson Auditorium	14 DEC



The Ranger Challenge Team at the end of the competition



Page 4, The Houstonian, April 7, 1983

ROTC reactivates the SHSU rifle drill team

SHSU Lowman Rifles Drill Team, which first began back in 1952 and grew to a nationally recognized drill team that won first place at the National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade in Washington, D.C. in 1967, is now returning to life.

The Military Science Department, as part of the revitalization of the ROTC curriculum, and in response to numerous inquiries from faculty and students, is reactivating the drill team. The Lowman Rifles will once again represent SHSU throughout the country.

Membership in the drill team will be open to all students at SHSU who are willing to work hard to put together a championship team. Another recently activated ROTC organization, the Elliott T. Bowers Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) Company, will be the sponsor for the reorganization of the Lowman

Rifles and provide recruiting, leadership and administrative support the team. The Elliott T. Bowers AUSA Company, a community service-oriented professional organization, comprises students who are interested in and support the U.S. Army and national defense.

The Lowman Rifles will consist in a color guard and a precision drill team that will participate in local, state and national events, parades and drill competitions. In addition to competing in drill events and parades, they will also serve as a personal service organization to the University President. The Lowman Rifles will provide such services as escorts for the Board of Regents, VIP's and other dignitaries visiting SHSU.

The first meeting of the Lowman Rifles will be held Monday, April 11, 7 p.m., at the Randel House.



ROTC cadets Scott Fulghan and Steffon Arrington participate in Wednesday's leadership lab in preparation for a helicopter field training exercise to be conducted April 8-10.

THE ABOVE ARTICLE STATES:

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Gianni Nunez (Junior)

Lateral Entry

I joined ROTC second semester of my sophomore year in a process called lateral entry. This means that I did not have any experience in ROTC or the military, but I started in the program later than those that were in my same academic class. To keep things brief, I essentially learned two years of Army knowledge in one semester to catch up to my classmates. I would be lying if I said I wasn't stressed through most of it, but the ROTC staff took a lot of that stress away. Each person would take the extra time to make sure I knew the material and the Professor of Military Science at the time walked me through the step by step process to get medically cleared and apply for my scholarship.

If there is one thing that is characteristic of lateral entry cadets, it is the work ethic. When you know you are coming into something already behind the eight ball, it motivates you to work harder. Every time we ran, I would run faster than the previous time. Every ounce of pain I felt served as a means of physical progress. With every push up and sit up comes with it a token of pride. However, I believe the best part of it all was the team itself. I joined a program known as Ranger Company that I originally was using to supplement my workouts to physically catch up. However, once I was involved with the team, I got more than that. Every teammate I had in Ranger Company wanted nothing but the best for each other, the upperclassmen were constantly working with me and teaching me new tricks of the trade. The instructors of Ranger, known as Scrolls, were amazing. I can only describe each one as model cadets, none of them perfect, but each carrying with them strengths beyond what seemed obtainable. I can go down the line and personally say to each of those scrolls that they are part of the reason I am as disciplined and conditioned as I am now, but more importantly I can say to each of them that they have made this program proud. I believe every lateral entry cadet should have a team like this, whether it is Color Guard, Ranger Challenge, or Ranger Company, a lateral entry cadet will find open arms and mentorship in ROTC.



CDT Nunez on SHSU campus



CDT Nunez during a training exercise at Gibbs Ranch



Austin Zirkel (Freshman) Making Dreams Happen

At the beginning of the year, I was unsure of what to expect when I joined ROTC. I knew there would be challenges that I would face, but I wasn't sure how I would overcome them. A major challenge for me is the fact that I am on the Sam Houston State Cross Country/Track and Field team. This means that I am unable to participate in morning PT due to practice conflicts, and sometimes having to miss team meetings for lab at Gibbs Ranch. My running personal best times include 9:31 for 3200Ms (2 miles), 4:24 for 1600Ms (1 mile) and 15:34 for 5K (3.1 miles). I was recruited to run at many schools, in and out of state. I was excited at the idea of running at the college level, but I was even more excited when I found out that I had won the Army National 4-Year ROTC scholarship. My search was largely narrowed by the fact that I wanted to be in an Army ROTC program, which quickly cut my school options to only a few. My options after this included Sam Houston State, Texas State, and The University of Texas. Within these select schools, the only program that would be flexible between my two schedules and willing to work together was Sam Houston State. I could not be more grateful for both the track coaching staff and the ROTC Cadre for making this possible. I decided to contract in October, and I look forward to learning more from the cadre and my Cadet mentors here at Sam Houston.



CDT Zirkel splits his time between the SHSU Track & Field Team and training as an ROTC Cadet.



CDT Zirkel (far right) contracted on October 4th, along with his mentor CDT Oscar Edo-Terradas, pictured with LTC Contreras (far left)



Nancy Tran (Sophomore)

Importance of Motivation

Having a short, tiny body makes it more challenging to keep up with the Army standard for physical fitness compared to the individuals who are tall and muscular. There have been many times I have fell behind in the regular physical training, but there has always been at least one fellow cadet that motivates me and tells me to not give up and keep trying. With the motivation that all the cadets give me, some I don't even interact with regularly, I have been able to mentally push myself and improve on my physical strength. The ruck marches are the harshest and most physically challenging for myself. As everyone else walks together at a constant pace, I begin to fall back because I cannot keep up between my size and the 35-pound ruck sack on my back. Almost always, the voice of a cadet from behind me urges me on with advice and motivation, making me catch up to the group and finish with my classmates. It is because of other's motivation, sometimes from other cadets I barely know, that I can complete challenging events such as the ruck marches. My purpose in telling this story is to convey the message that motivation and support from others are the biggest help in personal improvement. Without the support from other cadets, I probably would not have improved; thus, not able to contract in the United States Army.

Having been motivated myself many times in ROTC, I would like to pass a message of motivation to everyone who is reading this. "Lenient to yourself now means cruel to yourself later." In other words, if you do not try hard and push yourself to your limit now, then you will suffer when the harsh things come and hit you in the face later. This quote can be used specifically for getting workouts in and knock off the APFT of ROTC, or it can be generally used for the harsh nature of life in which every individual will eventually have to undergo.



CDT Tran and LTC Contreras at her contracting ceremony



CDT Tran and CDT Ty Kennard at a SHSU football tailgate



THE MONTH IN PICTURES



CDTs playing ultimate football



CDT Shyanne Oviedo during the APFT at regional competition for Ranger Challenge



CDT Abraham Padron briefing an OPORD



CDT Andrew McEnroe at the range



CDT Amri Hernandez dressed as Master Chief



CDT Bill Woodburn at a practice range day



CDTs Jose Arriaga and Jacob Gerlach leading the annual Halloween run



Pushup crew in action at the Battle of the Piney Woods in Houston

