



Cadets during the Fall Field Training Exercise at Gibbs Ranch (23 Sept. – 25 Sept.)

# Bearkat BATTALION



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## CPT INMAN 5K SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

### 2nd Lieutenant

**\$100**

- Race day recognition
- 1 free individual entry
- invitation to provide promotional items at event

### Major

**\$300**

- Race day recognition
- 3 free individual entries
- Invitation to provide promotional items at event
- Large business logo on race shirt
- Promotional table at event

### Captain

**\$200**

- Race day recognition
- 2 free individual entries
- Invitation to provide promotional items at event
- Business logo on back of race shirt

### Lieutenant Colonel

**\$500**

- Race day recognition
- 5 free individual entries
- Invitation to provide promotional items at event
- Largest business logo on race shirt
- Promotional table at event

Do not forget 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>

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

Welcome to the fall season! We are approximately half way complete with the semester and our Cadets continue to improve daily, with your continued support. Our senior cohort continues to lead from the front with its dedication to produce first-class training events for our underclassmen. Due to untiring efforts, we have already completed our field training exercise, two basic marksmanship ranges, and two land navigation training exercises. In addition, the senior cohort improved last year's freshmen training plan, to ensure our freshmen Cadets remain engaged and build camaraderie among its cohort. We are proud of our senior cohort, and its hard work paid off as 43% of them were recently designated as distinguished military graduates (DMGs). DMGs rank in the top 20%, of approximately 6,000 Army R.O.T.C. Cadets nationwide. Well done!

Our underclassmen respect and strive to emulate the success of our upperclassmen. The leadership of our current senior cohort and previous senior cohorts, contributes to the selfless decision of our underclassmen to raise their right hand and join our profession of selfless service. Six more young men and women contracted (page 3) since our previous newsletter, for a total of 19 new contracted Cadets this semester. Thank you for the support that enables these young leaders to join our profession!

We want to personally thank a few of our R.O.T.C. supporters. Brigadier General (Retired) Richard Mills (SHSU c/o '74) and his son, Colonel Troy Mills (SHSU c/o '99), for mentoring our Cadets during our field training exercise at Gibbs Ranch. Colonel Mills also supported one of our recruiting efforts at our Saturday@SAM event. Thank you to Mr. Fred Silva (SHSU c/o '94) for his support at the La Copa Leadership Training Center, providing our Cadets additional training repetitions in preparation for Cadet Summer Training. These three gentlemen are proud SHSU alumni, who truly live up to the university's motto, "The Measure of a Life is its Service"! Also, thank you to Colonel (Retired) Dan McDaniel, President of the East Texas Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), for inviting myself, my wife, and 10 of our Cadets and spouses/fiancés to the MOAA Fall Dinner (page 6). This was an outstanding event as we were able to visit with some of our scholarship donors, to include Colonel (Retired) John McManners (SHSU c/o '62) and his wife Geanie, who provide a deserving Cadet, each year with the Colonel McManners scholarship. We could not produce second lieutenants without this type of support – Thank you!

In closing, please join me in welcoming our new teammates and their families (pages 10 and 11) to SHSU. They bring a wealth of experience and we look forward to having a "fresh set of eyes" to continue to improve our program. Finally, we will bid farewell to Master Sergeant Joel Mitchell, at the end of this semester. We will conduct a retirement ceremony on November 18th to thank Joel and his family for 21 years of faithful and honorable service to our country. We are finalizing details; however, please let us know if you want to join us during this special day. Have a great weekend and Eat 'Em Up Kats!



CDT BC Brink with his fiancé, Chloe, LTC Contreras with his wife, Anita, and CDT XO Tim Dilworth with his wife, Brittani, attending the Military Officers Association of America Charity.

### Strength and Honor!

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Contreras



## Newly Contracted Cadets



**CDT Bethany Mitchell**  
MSIII/Junior  
Major: Healthcare  
Administration  
Hometown: Woodville, TX  
**Simultaneous Membership  
Program Cadet**



**CDT John Kinney**  
MSII/Sophomore  
Major: Homeland Security  
Hometown: Katy, TX  
**3-Year Scholarship**



**CDT TJ Olatunji**  
MSIII/Graduate  
Masters: Public Health  
Hometown: Richmond,  
TX  
**Simultaneous Membership  
Program Cadet**



**CDT Jacob Ford**  
MSIII/Junior  
Major: Criminal Justice  
Hometown: Lake Jackson,  
Texas  
**Simultaneous Membership  
Program Cadet**



**CDT Lindsay Mitchell**  
MSIII/Junior  
Major: Psychology  
Hometown: Rhome, TX  
**Simultaneous Membership  
Program Cadet**



**CDT Tanner Stone**  
MSI/Freshman  
Major: Ag Business  
Hometown: Navasota, Tx  
**4-Year Minuteman  
Scholarship**



LTC Contreras contracting 13 cadets during halftime of the first football home game of the season on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11.





## Cadet of The Month - Jacob Ford (MSIII)

While growing up, I was certain I wanted to serve in the military. It had always been a dream of mine, and I showed it through everything I did. I was constantly watching movies like Saving Private Ryan, or We Were Soldiers while also playing games based on the military. Somewhere along the way in high school, I strayed from that goal and thought I would be content living standard life out in the chemical plants like most everyone in my town. I started attending my local community college and soon found myself bored with that life, and I wanted to make a worthy change. Suddenly it struck me, I should go back and join the Army. However, there was one big issue, and that was me being nearly 100 lbs overweight. So, I took the next year and a half and dedicated myself to making that dream become a reality. I enlisted in the Army Reserves as a 37F Psychological Operations Specialist.

While in basic training and Advanced Individual Training (A.I.T.), I was given multiple opportunities to test out my leadership by serving as a platoon guide and being nominated for leadership by my drill sergeants. Eventually, I was accepted into Sam Houston State University and decided to push my career to the next level and become an Army Officer. I felt and still feel this is the best way to build a more rewarding future for myself. With the fellow cadets that I have met here and the cadre supporting us, I feel I have become a part of something more than just ROTC. I continue to work hard because of them and their support rather than just for myself.

While I am still new to the program, I feel I have adapted to the environment ROTC provides and I feel welcomed by everyone here. I look forward to all the opportunities ROTC will provide. I have learned so much already from my short time here and will continue to grow and improve myself along with my fellow cadets.



Newly Contracted CDT Jacob Ford with LTC Contreras.



CDT Ford as medic for an attack lane during lab.



# “My Reason for Accepting the National Scholarship” - CDT James Cooke (MSI)

## Legacy, Patriotism & Perseverance

Growing up, I always wanted to serve my country as my father before me, my great grandfathers (WW2), and my great-great-grandfather (WW1). Years later, my sister competed for and earned ROTC national scholarships to her university for both the Army and the Navy. When I started thinking of my college path, I knew I could achieve the same national scholarship my sister earned. I worked hard, dedicated myself to academics and athletics, and eventually earned the national U.S. Army ROTC scholarship. I accepted the scholarship to continue my military family legacy and serve our great nation.

Growing up overseas, I witnessed poverty and oppression and learned our freedom comes from those who served and sacrificed. While growing up, stories of my family’s military service fascinated me. My family served during World War II in two theatres, the Korean War and World War I. They fought for this country and instilled patriotism in their children. That legacy has been carried down to my generation and will continue for generations more. This military legacy helped drive me to compete for and accept my national scholarship in the first place. Many of my great aunts and uncles were commissioned officers, a few Naval Academy graduates inspired me to the officer corps, leading me to the national scholarship. I am genuinely grateful for my family’s military tradition that influenced my decision for military service and inspired me to achieve a national U.S. Army ROTC scholarship. When I was young, my father worked for the U.S. Department of State. We had to move to foreign countries for numerous years, and what I experienced sticks with me to this day. I witnessed impoverished people and corrupt governments run by tyrannical leaders. It opened my eyes to what life is like outside the United States, things few Americans truly understand. When I moved back to the United States, it took me a couple of years to readjust to American culture and experience freedom and safety in everyday life. Having experienced life outside of the U.S., I have perspective and feel grateful for what we have compared to the poor peoples of these foreign countries. I feel a call to duty resounds strongly in me, and the responsibility to help maintain and protect the prosperity and liberties of this country guide my actions. It is my duty to uphold our way of life and avoid conditions that I saw in other countries during my youth. I accepted my national scholarship and took a giant leap in furthering my goal of fulfilling my sense of duty and patriotism.

In conclusion, many factors contributed to my acceptance of the U.S. Army national ROTC scholarship. Upholding family military legacy and tradition, a sense of duty to protect and serve our country, and gratitude for the freedoms and quality of life we have as Americans. These factors allowed me, without question, to immediately accept the national scholarship, inspiring me to enthusiastically enter a life of military service where I will be challenged to achieve both mentally and physically.



CDT James Cooke with his family.





## Transition to SHSU and MOAA Dinner - CDT Isabelle Lopez (MSI)

Hello! My name is Isabelle Lopez. I am a freshman here at SHSU. I am an MSI in SHSU's Army ROTC program. Since around freshman year in high school, I have known that I wanted to attend SHSU for its psychology and criminal justice programs, which happen to be my major and minor.

I was beyond excited to finally get into the groove of being a college student and furthering my education here at this beautiful campus, so the transition from home to SHSU was not difficult. Growing up, I was an "Army brat," so the Army and the camaraderie that came along it was nothing new to me. Along with that, I was also offered a 3-year scholarship from the ROTC program. However, I had never experienced that fellowship firsthand until being in ROTC. On the first day, the cadets welcomed every MSI with open arms. They are constantly giving influential advice, whether it be on ROTC, school/classes, or just life in general. I decided to try out for Ranger Challenge and being a part of this team allowed me to get to know more people who I now consider great friends of mine. I have talked with our Battalion Commander CDT BC Brink about horses and the country, my mentor CDT Mize about bible study and church, and even found out that CDT Bishop's dad and my dad know each other and were stationed and deployed together! I love being part of ROTC, because of cadets like CDT Cinnamon Wright-Burwinkel, CDT Nicholas Watson, CDT Camille Dang-Fouty, among others.

Another amazing opportunity ROTC has presented to me is being able to attend the MOAA dinner this year. A few of my fellow cadets and myself received the chance to talk to veterans and their families about their pasts and our futures. I think I can speak for the whole program when I say we are thankful for their service to our country and their continuous support to the SHSU Army ROTC program. Within my short time being a part of this program, it has made me excited for my future here at SHSU and as an Army officer.



CDT Isabelle Lopez after finishing a ruck march with fellow cadets.



CDT Isabelle Lopez with CDT Wes Wisnewski at the MOAA dinner.



## “Why I Contracted” - CDT Carson Shell (MSII)

My name is Carson Shell, and I am from Maypearl, TX. My major is Criminal Justice, and I am an avid outdoorsman. My decision to join the Army ROTC program was due to a couple of reasons. I wanted the college experience, and any future jobs that interested me required a bachelor's degree. I also knew I had always wanted to join the military. Although it never was the first thing in my head, it sat in the back of my head for years. I knew I wanted to follow this path for the last couple of months of my senior year when I did not know what college I wanted to go to or my next step. My good friend Dylan, from the Texas Tech Army ROTC provided me information about the Army ROTC program. My top school was Sam Houston for the Criminal Justice program. I looked to see if they had an Army ROTC program and they did! A couple of weeks after that, I visited SHSU, talked to Mr. Derr, and decided to join the program. After learning about how to contract and earn a scholarship with Mr. Derr, I knew I wanted to compete for it.

Beginning my first semester, I was like every MSI who did not know what was going on and was not in the best physical shape. I was welcomed with a very motivating squad. “1st squad best squad”, my first semester, and they helped me increase physical strength and endurance to meet Army standards. The program here is like no other Army ROTC anywhere else; we are one big welcoming family that you do not find anywhere else. The program has benefited me in many ways, making me a better person, physically and mentally. Everything about this program only wanted to make me contract more every day. The mentorship program within this program is one of the best I have seen. My mentor from last year, 2LT Alex Rocha, always reached out to help me physically and tactically and helped immensely with my contracting. My current mentor, CDT Austin Sumner, has pushed me physically and helped me in multiple ways, including tactically.

The memories and experiences in this program will always be with me after I graduate. I am incredibly grateful for the experience at Sam Houston within the Army ROTC program and the friends I have made so far. I encourage everyone seeking the military and college experience to join as a Cadet in one of the best leadership programs, to challenge and improve yourself!



CDT Shell enjoying the great outdoors near Buena Vista, Colorado.



CDT Shell With LTC Contreras.





## Fall FTX Experience - CDT Ryan Coker (MSII)

The Fall FTX was an excellent opportunity for me to receive a better perspective on conducting basic battle drills and gain insight of our upcoming graded culminating event, which is Cadet Summer Training (CST). The program did a fantastic job helping the MSII class understand what will be expected of us in our MSIII year. I walked away with a tremendous amount of knowledge in conducting a mission, briefing an OPORD, and our duties in a leadership position. I had the opportunity to be Radio Transmission Operator (RTO) for the first lane, where we conducted an attack. My duty was to call our higher element and be aware of all movements before and after completion. I made the Terrain Model Kit, which displayed the scheme of maneuvers for the entire mission. After completing each mission, we would conduct an After-Action Report, which allowed me to ask questions and hear everyone's perspective and what they saw or felt like sharing. The Cadre provided their input and explained what could be improved, why it is crucial to fix these details, and how it would apply to our grading at basic camp. I also had the opportunity to be a Team Leader multiple times. As Team Leader, I briefed my team on what was happening and how they would be involved in that mission, disseminated the warning order, and then back briefed them, just like we would do as a platoon leader. Moving forward, I know to utilize brief and battle drill shells, which display my basic brief to the squad leaders and a hard copy of my mission on paper. I now understand each leadership position's job and why these positions need to function correctly to provide a steadier mission flow.



CDT Coker showing off his Schuder's Ranger Company Scroll. The Scroll is awarded to SHSU cadets who are deemed tactically proficient.



CDT Coker enjoying the Bearkat Alley tailgate with his family.



CDT Coker receiving a brief from SFC Lichtenberger.





## Transition from MSI -MSIII and Ranger Challenge Update - CDT Ben Dene (MSIII)



CDT Dene assembling a Terrain Model prior to briefing an OPORD.



2LT Edo-Terradas pinning an Air Assault Badge onto CDT Dene.

When I first came in as an MSI, I was pushed physically and mentally, growing a lot overall. I wanted to be involved because I liked the program and the other Cadets and Cadre within it. Throughout MSI and MSII years, I was very involved. From Color Guard to Ranger Challenge, and Ranger Company, I was always looking to be a part of ROTC and better myself. At the end of my MSII year, I was awarded the opportunity to attend Air Assault School at Ft Benning, Georgia. I was well prepared, training hard and graduating on June 4<sup>th</sup> of this year. Now, as an MSIII, I am the Ranger Challenge NCOIC. I oversee the training and planning for Ranger Challenge, and everyone involved within. Though it can be challenging at times, it is very rewarding, and the morale is constantly increasing! We are working hard to get ready for the competition at the end of October! The previous NCOICs and Ranger Competitions have made it very easy to plan the training and preparation for the competition. I can always rely on my leadership for assistance. This year we are shooting to win the competition, and we have a solid team! I'm confident this year will be great, not only for Ranger Challenge, but also for the Battalion!



## Our New Cadre Members (1 of 2)

### MAJ Stephen Punch

Major Stephen Punch was born and raised in Tri-Cities, WA. He is a graduate from Central Washington University, located in Ellensburg, WA and received his Regular Army Commission in June 2009. He commissioned into the Transportation Officer Corps and attended basic course at Fort Benning, GA and Transportation BOLC in Fort Eustis, VA. He spent the first three years of his career serving with the 159<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade out of Fort Campbell, KY. Transitioning from Active Duty in 2013 and back home to Washington State is where he found a new career in the United States Army Reserves. Serving with the 364<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Sustainment Command as an assistant plans and operations officer and staff and general assistant to Brigadier General Black eventually led to Company Command in the Reserves. After command, he began a new full-time career as an Active Guard Reserve officer, being assigned to 108<sup>th</sup> Training Command in Beaver Dam WI. He became a graduate of the Logistics Officer Advanced course and went on to serve as a battalion plans and operations officer within the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command. He is a graduate of Command and General Staff College and holds an Aviation management degree from Central Washington University.

His time off work is spent with his family enjoying anything outdoors, but his true passion lies in hunting and fishing with his wife and two kids. He enjoys teaching the next generation and passing down skills learned from his deployment in Afghanistan and countless hours of wilderness survival. He looks forward to additional assignments and challenges throughout his career.



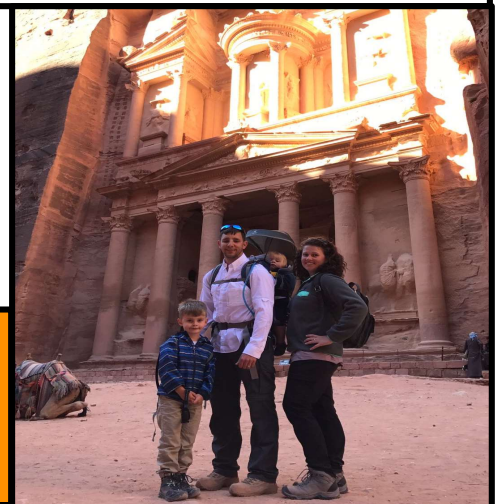
Major Punch with wife and two children after catching some fish.

### MAJ Chris Sherwood

MAJ Chris Sherwood is an alumnus of the Bearkat Battalion class of 2004 and commissioned as an Armor Officer. He served as a Scout Platoon Leader and Executive Officer in 1-9 CAV at Fort Bliss, TX and deployed for 15 months to Mosul, Tal Afar, and Rabia, Iraq. As a branch detailed officer, MAJ Sherwood then took his combat arms experience and joined the Signal Corps where he commanded HHC and C Co, 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion in Schweinfurt, Germany, for 30 months. MAJ Sherwood deployed his tactical signal company to run the strategic communication throughout Regional Command-East headquartered at Bagram, Afghanistan under 25th Signal Battalion. MAJ Sherwood then returned to 44th ESB to work as an Assistant S3 Plans Officer in Mazar-i-Sharif and upon return to Germany he planned and executed the battalion moving to Grafenwöhr. MAJ Sherwood advanced his academic knowledge at Florida State University where he graduated with a Master of Arts in History with a concentration of War and Society. His thesis is titled, Bloodied but Bruised: How the World War II American Army at Kasserine Pass Grew up in North Africa. MAJ Sherwood then joined 1st Army as the Brigade S6, 479th Field Artillery Brigade at Fort Hood, TX, where he managed the communications support of various Army Reserve and National Guard units, prior to their worldwide deployments and acted as the senior signal Observer Controller Trainer. MAJ Sherwood then became a Foreign Area Officer covering the Middle East and North Africa and he went to the Defense Language Institute to learn Modern Standard Arabic before picking up various dialects throughout his time in the Middle East. MAJ Sherwood conducted his one year In Region Training at the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait City. MAJ Sherwood then joined the Military Assistance Program-Jordan conducting Security Cooperation Operations at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan as the Chief, Joint Training Officer.

MAJ Sherwood's hobbies include scuba diving, skiing, biking, baseball, hiking, camping, and generally any outdoor activity. He also enjoys volunteering with the local Cub Scout Pack.

MAJ Sherwood is married to Allyson, and they have two sons, CJ and Elijah.



MAJ Sherwood enjoying family time while on an accompanied assignment to Jordan, in the middle east.





## Our New Cadre Members (2 of 2)

### SSG Clayton Matthys

SSG Clayton A. Matthys enlisted in the Marine Corps on October 18, 2004, and attended Boot Camp at MCRD San Diego. Upon graduation he was assigned to 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Marines aboard Camp Pendleton, CA as an 0311 Infantry Rifleman. He deployed to Iraq 2005-2006 and again in 2007, earning the Marine Corps Combat Action Ribbon. He was then assigned to Weapons and Field Training Battalion as the Chief Primary Marksmanship Instructor and successfully trained thousands of Marines and Marine Corps Recruits in the art of small arms precision shooting. His last tour with the Marines was as a recruiter where he earned the Marine Corps Recruiting Ribbon for successfully representing the Corps for 3 years in Spring, TX. Upon discharge he immediately enlisted with the Texas Army National Guard as a 13F Joint Fire Support Specialist with 1<sup>st</sup> BN 133<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery. He graduated from MOS school and from Advanced Leaders Course as the Distinguished Honor Graduate on both occasions. SSG Matthys has served as a recruiter for the Texas Army National Guard for the past 5 years and is now the Texas Army National Guard Officer Candidate Recruiter (OCR) for SHSU ROTC. He holds a master's degree in Homeland Security and has completed 17 years of total military service.

SSG Matthys says: "I am excited to assist the staff and cadets of the SHSU ROTC program. I have already had the opportunity to help some cadets with administrative issues and I have been able to share my tactical knowledge during classroom presentations. I look forward to meeting cadets to discuss the options available under the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP). The program provides extra funding for school, additional pay, training/experience at National Guard units (1 weekend per month, 2 weeks during the summer), and the opportunity to continue with the active-duty officer accession process at SHSU ROTC. There is a lot to be gained through this program and it could help a lot of cadets. My office is located on the 3rd floor of Academic Building 3. Cell: 832-367-0534 Email: [clayton.a.matthys.mil@mail.mil](mailto:clayton.a.matthys.mil@mail.mil). Feel free to call/text/email/visit my office at any time. I am happy to help in any way that I can."



SSG Matthys, Clayton



## Alumni Spotlight - LTC James Johnson

LTC James “Jay” Johnson was raised in Killeen, Texas. He attended Sam Houston State University where he received a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration. During his time in the program, LTC Johnson served as the Cadet Battalion Commander and participated in Ranger Challenge. He was commissioned as the ranking Lieutenant for Field Artillery in May 2002.

LTC Johnson was first assigned to the 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery, 4th Infantry Division Artillery, where he deployed to Tikrit, Iraq from April 2003-April 2004. Upon redeployment, LTC Johnson served as a Company Fire Support Officer, then as the Assistant Fire Support Officer of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. LTC Johnson served as 41st Fires Brigade Fire Control Officer prior to taking command of Alpha Battery 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery, 41st Fires Brigade. LTC Johnson deployed the unit to Camp Bucca, Iraq from April 2008 to July 2009. Subsequently, he commanded Alpha 26th Target Acquisition Battery. Upon completion of Battery command, LTC Johnson served as the Assistant Professor of Military Science at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina from October 2010 to January 2013. Following duties as APMS, he attended the Naval College of Command and Staff from which he graduated in March 2014. Upon graduation, LTC Johnson was selected as an Advisor to the 1st Field Artillery Battalion, Imam Muhammad Bin Saud Brigade, Saudi Arabian National Guard from April 2014 to March 2015. Upon redeployment, he was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Field Artillery, 428th Field Artillery Brigade as the Battalion Operations Officer and Executive officer from March 2015 to July 2017. From July 2017 to March 2018, LTC Johnson served as the Battalion Executive officer of 1st Battalion, 30th Field Artillery, before being selected to serve as the Executive Officer to the Field Artillery Commandant from April 2018 to May 2019. LTC Johnson served as the Commandant of the Army Joint Support Team-Nellis as the Senior Instructor of the Joint Firepower Course from May 2019 to May 2020. He also possesses a Masters of Business Administration with International emphasis from the University of South Carolina, and a Masters of Arts in Strategic Studies and National Security from the Naval War College.

LTC Johnson’s awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (5 OLC), the Army Commendation Medal (3 OLC), the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal (4OLC), the Valorous Unit Award, the Meritorious Unit Commendation, the Army Superior Unit Award, the National Defense Service Medal (1 Star), the Iraq Campaign Medal (1 Star), the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korea Defense Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon (Numeral 4), the Combat Action Badge, the Parachutist Badge, and the Air Assault Badge.

He is joined in assignments and career by his wife, Mrs. Kelly Johnson.



LTC Johnson briefing LTG Martin and BG Preston on the accomplishments of distinguished 2-2 FAR soldiers.

