

Governors Guard Battalion

FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER



Upcoming Events

'23

December

01 BRANCH RELEASE CEREMONY

16 CHRISTMAS BREAK BEGINS

March

21-24 JOINT SPRING FTX WITH THE
UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

April

18 ROTC AWARD CEREMONY

May

03 SPRING 2024 COMMISSIONING



From the Professor of Military Science

Our MS IV Cadets (Seniors) did outstanding at Cadet Summer Training-23 (CST-23) this last summer at Fort Knox, Kentucky. The following Cadets were recognized as Distinguished Military Graduates (DMG's) from CST-23 (Top 20% of Cadets across the 5,900+ Cadets in the United States Army Cadet Command): Cadets Broxson, Kelly, Stevens, Trost, and Zimmerman. The Fall 2023 semester has been a busy and productive semester for the Austin Peay State University (APSU) Army ROTC program, *Governors Guard*. This summer we welcomed several new Cadre to our team that are teaching this fall: MSG Garcia (Senior Military Science Instructor), SFC Ervin (Military Science Instructor), and CPT Ryan (Assistant Professor of Military Science).

Currently we have 120 Cadets in the program, which includes 20 Combat Veterans with 47 combat deployments. The APSU ROTC Cadre and Staff is made up of 8 Military personnel and 5 Civilian personnel with 28 combined combat deployments and 193 years of combined military service.

On 30 September we conducted the High School Junior ROTC (JROTC) Raider Challenge competition on the APSU campus. We had 14 different Tennessee and Kentucky JROTC programs and over 170 JROTC Cadets that participated in this event. Montgomery Central High School won that competition, with West Creek High School in 2nd place, and Kenwood High School in 3rd place. This event was supported by the APSU Athletics Department, APSU Institute for National Security and Military Studies, and Association of the United States Army (AUSA). #ONEROTC

We completed our Fall Field Training Exercise (FTX) at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, 19-21 October. The training included a Squad Competition, The Sabalauski Air Assault School obstacle course and rappel tower, M4 rifle zero and qualification, classes on small-unit tactics, and Squad Scenario Training Exercise (STX) lanes. One hundred eight Cadets participated in this training event and it reinforced classroom and lab instructions with hands-on training covering movement techniques, patrolling, and battle drills.

On 27 October the APSU Army ROTC Cadre and MS IV Cadets attended the APSU Military Alumni Dinner. This event was hosted by the APSU Military Alumni Chapter and was held at the APSU Morgan University Center Ballroom.

Our Ranger Challenge Team competed at the 7th ROTC Brigade Bold Warrior Competition on 27-29 October at Fort Knox, Kentucky. This event is an athletic competition in which teams complete in a variety of physical and mental tasks in order to promote teamwork, critical thinking, communication and problem solving skills. We competed against 37 other Army ROTC programs from Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana at this event and earned 2nd place. Earning 2nd place will allow us to compete at the Sandhurst 2024 Military Skills Competition at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York in April 2024.

Additional APSU Army ROTC events planned for later this Fall include:

- 🇺🇸 APSU Military Hall of Fame events (10-11 November).
- 🇺🇸 MS IV trip to Gettysburg, the National Museum of the Army, and the Army War College (15-18 November). Trip sponsored by the APSU Institute for National Security and Military Studies.
- 🇺🇸 MS IV Staff Ride to Fort Donelson (21 November).
- 🇺🇸 Branch Announcement Ceremony (1 December).

Our MS IV Cadets will commission next Spring on 3 May 2024.

I'd like to thank the APSU administration for all of their support of Army ROTC events and the use of the amazing facilities on campus. APSU is Tennessee's largest provider of higher education to military-affiliated students, with ~25% of enrolled students having a military connection.

I am extremely proud of the Governors Guard Cadets, Cadre, and Staff as they continue to make this a premier Army ROTC program. The Cadre and Staff continue to recruit, teach, coach, mentor, motivate, guide, inspire, and train Cadets with engaged leadership. The team continues to volunteer with various organizations and agencies, supports APSU and local events with the Color Guard team, and are leaders on campus and in the local community.

Respectfully,

LTC Mark Barton

Governors Guard

<https://www.apsu.edu/rotc/>

@apsu_armyrotc



WHINSEC

CDT Payton Ludiker

FORT MOORE, GA



During the latter part of my summer break, I participated in the Cadet Leadership Development Program at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC). The primary objective of this course was to establish enduring relationships with partner nations by engaging in a curriculum that covered leadership principles, human rights, and fundamental tactics. These sessions took place both in classrooms and in the field. The participants included representatives from Peru, Uruguay, Panama, Colombia, and 11 cadets from the United States Army ROTC program.

Throughout the course, we stayed at barracks in Fort Moore, Georgia. My roommate was a cadet from Colombia who had previously served as an enlisted soldier in the infantry in Colombia before becoming a cadet. Learning from his experiences provided valuable insights into Colombian military tactics and the doctrines taught in their officer-producing programs.

A significant aspect of the program for me was the opportunity to learn from a diverse group of individuals trained in various disciplines. For instance, attendees from Panama, who were police academy students due to their country lacking an active army, offered a unique perspective on operational models compared to cadets trained primarily in basic infantry tasks.

In addition to interpersonal interactions, the course itself covered training in human rights, the rule of law, due process, civilian control of the military, and the role of the military in a democratic society. This instructional piece deepened my understanding of decision-making processes and actions that may align with or go against basic human rights on accepted declarations. Additionally, the cadre provided introductory training on air assault operation planning and military operations in urban terrain, enhancing our understanding of these specialized areas and giving us good development prior to our hands-on training and later our simulated missions as well.

Overall, this program was highly beneficial for my personal growth and development. It allowed me to learn from diverse cultures, gain useful instructions, and further my journey towards becoming a future leader.



Bottom: CDT Ludiker (second from the left) with his peers from WHINSEC.

(Pictures provided by CDT Ludiker)

“Overall, this program was highly beneficial for my personal growth and development.”

Basic Mountain Warfare School



CDT Nathan Meyer

Jericho, VT



“It was a great training experience, and I hope to take what I’ve learned and apply it in the future as I continue my army career.”



I’m Nathan Meyer, and I attend the ROTC program at Austin Peay State University. During the summer in between my sophomore and junior year of college, I was blessed to attend the Army's Basic Mountain Warfare School. In contrast to some traditional Army training, the Basic Mountain Warfare School (BMWS) was more of a gentleman’s course. Lasting two weeks in the mountains of Vermont, we learned how to make smarter decisions as leaders in mountainous terrain as well as how to construct rope systems. The cadre there was very professional and experienced in mountain tasks. We began the course with about 64 students, and by the end of it, around 10 people had failed the course. With it being such a small class, we had a lot of time with the cadre to ask questions and pick their brains.

The course was offered in both the summer and winter; I went during the summer. With the exception of some rainy days, we had good weather most of the time. At the end of the course, we all had to complete a two-day culminating exercise. This was when we put into practice everything we had learned over the last two weeks. Even though we had passed all the exams, we weren’t finished until the culminating exercise was over. Although we weren’t tested on this, one day we went out and did some high-angle shooting. This was definitely the most enjoyable day of the class for me. After rucking up a steep hill, we were given rifles and spotter scopes to do some shooting at the targets in the valley below. It was a great training experience, and I hope to take what I’ve learned and apply it in the future as I continue my Army career.

Top: CDT Meyer with other students at BMWS.

Bottom: CDT Meyer after successfully completing BMWS.

(Photos provided by CDT Meyer)

Advanced Camp

CDT Sean Clements

Fort Knox, KY



CDT Clements with his platoon
during CST 2023.

(Photo provided by CDT Clements)



My name is CDT Clements, and I completed Cadet Summer Training (CST) at Fort Knox, Kentucky, this past summer. Out of 10 regiments available over the course of the summer, I was slotted to attend the fourth regiment, which was roughly a month after the spring semester had ended. The time between the school semester ending and the start of training was a welcome breather, but I had to err on the side of caution as to not forget basic soldiering and maintain physical fitness.

Being a prior service Green to Gold Active-Duty Option (ADO), the arrival at Fort Knox was a very familiar feeling, as was the start of the 35-day countdown to graduation. The first couple of days involved administrative tasks and icebreaking with the individuals that you would be conducting the training with. Experiences may vary, but to me, these days were the longest. Once in-processing was complete and training began, there was enough going on during the day that the next thing you knew, it was time to bed down for the day, and the remaining time felt like a blur.

The biggest lesson I learned from my time at Cadet Summer Training is that if intent is accomplished, there are multiple ways to complete a task, and team cohesion is unparalleled for the success of each Cadet. There will be peers from schools all across the nation with different experiences, backgrounds, and leadership styles. Austin Peay's ROTC program will fully prepare you for CST but be open to accepting a different approach to a task. This aligns with achieving team cohesiveness. Working well with your peers creates not only a positive environment but also smooth transitions and decisions when injects and scenario changes are thrown your way. Trust each other, and it will get to the point where any action taken feels automatic.

The most significant advice I can give for those attending CST in the future is to not allow yourself to get complacent. Look inward before you look outward. Every Cadet there is there to develop both personally and professionally, ultimately leading to graduation and a commission. Do not be afraid to both help and ask for help if needed.

“Look inward before you look outward.”





CTLT

CDT Mark Harrington

Fort Liberty, NC

“This opportunity to jump with the 82nd Airborne Division was by far my favorite experience during Cadet Troop Leader Training, an experience that made me feel a part of the airborne community.”

Top: CDT Harrington in front of a UH-60 before his jump with the 82nd.

Bottom: CDT Harrington at the M4 rifle range.

(Pictures provided by CDT Harrington)

My name is Mark Harrington II; I am an MSIV in the APSU ROTC program. I've been blessed to represent the program this summer by attending Cadet Troop Leader Training (CTLT) with the 82nd Airborne Division. Within this division, I spent the majority of my time with the 3-82 General Support Aviation Battalion (GSAB) and three days with the 2-325 Airborne Infantry Regiment White Falcons. During my time spent there, I participated in all Alpha Company and 3-82 Battalion training exercises, including PT with the Battalion commander, Battalion Show of Force, and Blackhawk Flight. As this aviation unit was preparing for a deployment, I assisted the platoon leader in completing a UH60L property inventory, accounting for 100% of the aircraft parts priced above \$7 million. I gained experience during motor pool meetings and gained an understanding of ground maintenance service schedules. I participated in company-level events, contributing to the Mustang Morale as they prepared for their upcoming deployment to Egypt.

My short time with the 2-325 White Falcons was spent conducting multiple strenuous platoon PT sessions and leading the platoon formation in a 4-mile ruck march. I also assisted junior noncommissioned officers (NCOs) in preparing for Jump Master, increasing the lethality of the 82nd Airborne Division. With 2-325 White Falcons, I observed the duties of the officer in charge and range safety officer during an M-4 rifle range and I qualified on the M4 weapon system. I also went through Basic Airborne Refresher (BAR), participated in a rotary-wing airborne operation as a jumper, and observed the ground duties of the drop zone. I haven't participated in an airborne jump since I attended Airborne School last summer, and this was my first time jumping out of a UH-60 Black Hawk. In comparison to a C-17 or C-130 aircraft, jumping out of a UH-60 Black Hawk is simply sitting on the edge of the aircraft, and on the command "GO," you push yourself out of the helicopter. It's an intense and adrenaline-pumping experience but comes with a great view of the drop zone. During the jump, you experience a rapid descent as the wind rushes past you, and you quickly approach the ground, conducting a parachute landing fall. This opportunity to jump with the 82nd Airborne Division was by far my favorite experience during Cadet Troop Leader Training, an experience that made me feel a part of the airborne community.

CTLT

CDT Lennon Matthews

Grafenwöhr, Germany

My name is Lennon Matthews, and I am a senior cadet studying kinesiology with a concentration in exercise science. I was born in Nashville, Tennessee. Directly following high school, I enlisted in the Tennessee National Guard as an infantryman. I then decided to join ROTC as a Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP) cadet. I chose to go to Austin Peay because of the acclaimed ROTC program. I have spent all three years of my college experience at Austin Peay and as a part of the ROTC program. Because of this, I have been awarded many great opportunities and experiences that not many cadets get to experience.

One of the best experiences I've ever had was getting to complete Cadet Troop Leader Training (CTLT) in Europe. I was awarded the chance to travel to Grafenwöhr, Germany, directly following the completion of Advanced Camp. I was originally assigned to the 12th Aviation Brigade, but as soon as I arrived, they were ordered on mission. I was quickly transferred to the 18th Combat Sustainment Support Brigade, shadowing a transportation officer. While shadowing my lieutenant, I witnessed and helped plan multiple support and supply missions ranging from simple food and ammo missions for a field training exercise to moving tanks and other armored assets for multinational missions. While there, I learned how complicated and vital logistics are for both training and combat scenarios. I also had the opportunity to shadow an artillery officer with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. I got to witness multiple air assault missions with artillery, prepping for airborne operations, and other artillery missions.

While there in Germany, I got to meet and train with multiple countries' armies. I was able to see how the United States and its allies work together in multinational field training exercises. I was also able to explore in my free time. I traveled throughout Germany, Austria, and even the Netherlands. I really enjoyed trying new foods, traveling to new cities, visiting festivals, exploring castles, and hiking in the Alps. I had never traveled outside the United States until CTLT and was very fortunate to have experienced it in Germany. I would love to be stationed in Europe one day.



CDT Matthews during CTLT and places he has traveled through Europe.

(Picture provided by CDT Matthews)

RECONDO

CDT Clayton Stevens

CDT Jonathon McLendon

My name is CDT Clayton Stevens, and I am currently an MSIV in the Governors Guard Battalion. I am also an active-duty soldier attending Austin Peay as a part of the Green to Gold Program. This past summer, I attended Advanced Camp with Alpha Company, 1st Regiment. While completing my training at camp, I met all the requirements to qualify for the RECONDO badge. This accomplishment is awarded to cadets that achieve a first-time “Go” in all the Must Complete requirements, to include scoring an 80% or higher on the land navigation written exam, navigating correctly to 5 out of 6 land navigation points, qualifying sharpshooter or better on the M4 carbine, and finally, completing a 12-mile foot march. Out of the 154 cadets in the company, only 15 were recipients of the RECONDO award.

This award was something I was absolutely striving for to set myself apart from my peers and to better myself for the National Order of Merit List (OML). After working hard throughout all of camp, finding out I successfully completed all the tasks on the first try was extremely rewarding, especially seeing how few within the company received the award. For all future cadets whose goal is to achieve this badge, my advice would be to not overthink the standards, just apply everything you’ve learned during your MSIII year, and listen to exactly how the cadre expects the task to be executed. Once you’re there, if you’ve prepared yourself as best you can, you will stand out amongst your peers regardless.

Left: CDT Stevens (on the left) with CDT Harrington during Cadet Summer Training.

Right: CDT Stevens (first person on the left) with CDT Zimmerman and CDT Harrington after graduating from Cadet Summer Training.

(Pictures provided by CDT Stevens)



“This award was something I was absolutely striving for to set myself apart from my peers and to better myself for the National OML.”





CDT McLendon with his platoon at Advanced Camp

“Throughout my experience in the Army, no matter what obstacle is placed before you, you must always put your best foot forward and absolutely give it your all.”

My name is CDT Jonathon McLendon, and I am currently an MSIV in the Governors Guard Battalion. I am also an 11+ year active-duty soldier in the Green to Gold Program. I attended Advanced Camp with Charlie Company in the 6th Regiment this past summer. Along with completing the mandatory training requirement for commissioning as a 2LT, I succeeded in meeting all the requirements to obtain the RECONDO badge. The RECONDO badge is awarded to Cadets who demonstrate initiative in preparing themselves for training and leading in Advanced Camp by displaying individual superior performance. Cadets are eligible to be awarded the RECONDO badge if they successfully meet or surpass the following criteria: scoring 540 on the ACFT, shooting sharpshooter or better on the M4 carbine, obtaining a 90% or higher on the land navigation exam, demonstrating effective navigation skills by successfully locating a minimum of five out of six designated points both during the day and at night on the first attempt, successfully completing all "trained" events without any disciplinary infractions, and complying with the Army Body Composition Program requirements upon arrival at Advanced Camp.

Throughout my experience in the Army, no matter what obstacle is placed before you, you must always put your best foot forward and absolutely give it your all. The heat at Fort Knox sometimes made it miserable; however, as a part of a team, you can't allow that to affect your performance. As a leader, you must continue to provide purpose, motivation, and direction throughout those tough times. As someone trying to achieve the RECONDO badge during Advance Camp, our ROTC program is instrumental to ensuring that you have the tools to succeed; all you must do is apply them. Go there with the right attitude and mindset, and you'll surely succeed. The General of the Army Douglas MacArthur stated, "A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader but becomes one through the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent."

Bold Leadership Award

CDT Benjamin Gessner

Advanced Camp

“Overall, I was happy with my camp experience, but I was surprised when, a few days before graduation, I was told I would be getting an award.”



CDT Gessner receiving the Bold Leadership Award at advanced camp.

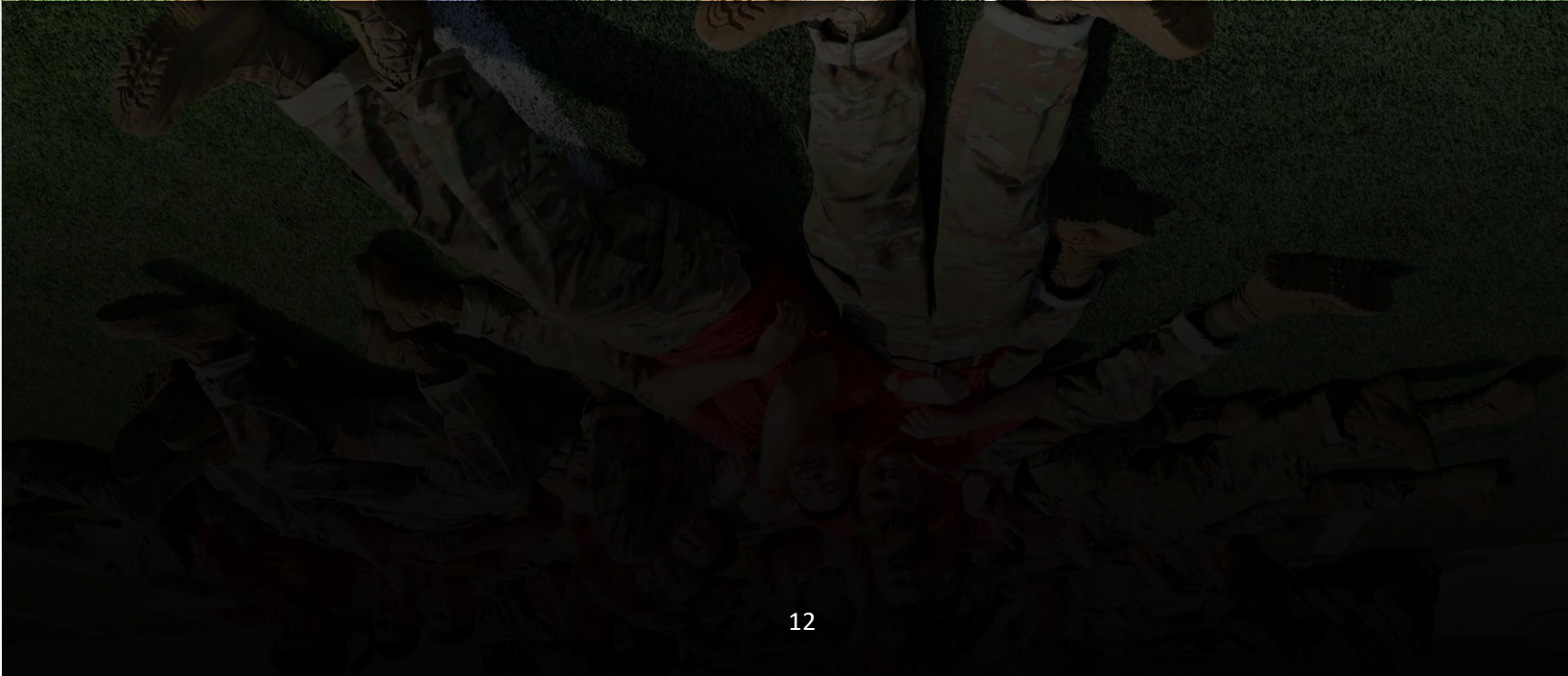
I am CDT Ben Gessner, and I am an MS IV in the Governors Guard Battalion. This summer, I attended Advanced Camp as a member of the 2nd PLT, D Co., 5th Regiment at Fort Knox, KY. My platoon was comprised of 34 cadets, all from different ROTC programs across the country. Over the course of 35 days, we completed a multitude of training requirements ranging from individual events, such as weapon qualification and land navigation, up to platoon-level training missions. Working with people from all different backgrounds and holding a leadership position among my peers gave me a unique opportunity to test and develop my leadership abilities.

At the end of training, I had met the requirements to earn the RECONDO Badge, and I was rated as the top cadet in my platoon. I was excited that I had performed well, and I was proud of my platoon for how we came together to work hard for each other. I felt as though everyone in the platoon grew as soldiers and leaders. Overall, I was happy with my camp experience, but I was surprised when, a few days before graduation, I was told I would be getting an award.

At graduation, thirteen out of approximately 600 cadets in each regiment are recognized for their achievements during Cadet Summer Training. I received the Bold Leader Spirit Award for “demonstrating outstanding performance as an inspirational small unit leader and exemplifying the Warrior Spirit.” I was recognized for going out of my way to help develop my peers and passing on as much knowledge and experience as I could to help my platoon succeed. The best advice I can give anyone preparing for camp is to aim above the minimum standards, and if you work for your platoon, they will work for you.

Raider Challenge

CDT Zimmerman



“The best part, for me, is to see these future leaders take their first steps towards seeing what they can do when the pressure is on. I am honored to be a part of those steps.”



Welcome to Raider Corner. My name is Paul Zimmerman, and I am a senior at APSU and part of the ROTC program. I have been in the active-duty army for the past 11 years as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technician and infantryman. I am majoring in kinesiology and have the honor of planning and guiding this year's APSU Raiders Challenge. The Raiders Challenge is an annual event where we invite JROTC Cadets from all over Tennessee to come to APSU and compete in a physically and mentally challenging event consisting of team building, team challenges, and individual and team physical performance. We rethought this year's challenges and provided the JROTC Cadets with a challenge they haven't seen before.



The best part of this event, for me, is to watch the teams overcome and make a solid effort at each event. It is always a good feeling to see our future leaders rise to the challenge and overcome it. I am proud of the JROTC Cadets for showing drive and determination at every event, as well as our APSU Cadets for working tirelessly to ensure the event was successful.



I am proud to have guided our senior cadets in creating this event and making it the best Raiders Challenge yet. We worked as a team and ensured that we put our best foot forward to provide the JROTC Cadets with the best event possible. Our Cadre enabled us to take full advantage of the campus and helped us acquire all the equipment needed to put on a successful event. I want to thank all our supporters and sponsors, including APSU ROTC, APSU itself, the Institute for Military and National Security Studies, and Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA).

Top: CDT Zimmerman receives a coin from COL Chilton for a successful Raider Challenge event.

Middle: JROTC cadets conducting challenging tasks testing their physical and mental abilities.

Bottom: Montgomery Central High School wins 1st place out of 13 schools and 16 teams.

Rappel Master



CDT Jerry Jacquez
Fort Campbell, KY



My name is Cadet Jerry Jacquez. I am an MS4 Cadet at the ASPU ROTC program, and after completing Advanced Camp this year, I got the opportunity to attend the Rappel Master Course at Fort Campbell. The Rappel Master Course is a five-day-long course available to Air Assault-qualified Soldiers, where I was taught all of the rappelling procedures from both towers and helicopters. We learned everything from Rappel Master Personnel Inspection (RMPI), command and control of rappellers, and how to rescue a hung rappeler. My favorite part of the course was the first day where we were taught the Aussie Rappel, which is where you jump headfirst off of the tower. It was a scary and exhilarating experience, which really set the tone for what I was to expect from the course. Each day was filled with rigorous testing and rappelling. The skills and qualifications I learned during the course will allow me to prepare other Cadets for their Advanced Camp experiences and also run rappel towers for my future Soldiers.

“It was a scary and exhilarating experience, which really set the tone for what I was to expect from the course.”

Top: CDT Jacquez with CDT Clements after successfully completing the Rappel Master Course.

Bottom: CDT Jacquez (on the left) rappelling.

(Pictures provided by CDT Jacquez)



Airborne School

CDT Zamauri Nichols

Fort Moore, GA

“Before anyone gets to call themselves a ‘super-duper paratrooper,’ they must go through a mentally and physically demanding three weeks.”



CDT Nichols after successfully completing Airborne school.

(Photos provided by CDT Nichols)

My name is Zamauri Nichols, and I’m coming into my MSIII at the APSU ROTC program. This past summer, I was blessed to attend the Basic Airborne Course (BAC) at Ft. Moore, Georgia, to represent the program. The main purpose of this course is to qualify individuals for the use of the T-11 parachute as a means of combat deployment and to develop leadership, self-confidence, and an aggressive spirit through mental and physical conditioning. Before anyone gets to call themselves a “super-duper paratrooper,” they must go through a mentally and physically demanding three weeks.

The first week is called Ground Week, which involves how to properly land once you jump out of the airplane. During this week, soldiers repeatedly fall over and over on the ground until they do a satisfactory landing known as the Parachute Landing Fall, or PLFs. To achieve a satisfactory landing, one must hit all five points of contact on the body: the balls of your feet, calf, thigh muscle, buttocks, and the pull-up muscle. Once the soldiers have done so, they will then be introduced to the dreaded 34-foot tower in the first week as well.

Tower Week is the second week of the course, which includes jumping out of a tower to mimic jumping out of an airplane. The soldier will do a combat jump, which includes a weapon and a rucksack, and a Hollywood jump, which consists of the soldier and their parachute. Once you get a satisfactory exit out of the tower, you then move onto the Individual Swing Landing Trainer (ISLT) down the street from the tower. The ISLT is a mimic of the soldier when they are at least 200 feet up in the air, preparing to land on the ground. They will then do what’s called a slit pull in whichever direction they wish to land and conduct a proper PLF.

Last is the final week that gives everyone jitters: Jump Week. In Jump Week, a soldier will conduct five jumps total, with both Hollywood and combat jumps out of a real plane at 1,250 feet in the air. Now you will put all of what you have learned the first two weeks to use in the real event of jumping out of an airplane, such as your PLFs. After you successfully complete your five jumps, you get your airborne wings and are now a parachutist!

Air Assault

CDT Janine Trost

Fort Campbell, KY

“**T**o the mock-up” is one of those sayings that you only understand once you go through The Sabaluaski Air Assault School. After that, it is forever ingrained in your memory. I am Janine Trost, an MSIV cadet at APSU ROTC, and I had no idea what the mock-up was before but am now well acquainted with it. Previously, when others mentioned it in their stories, I would just nod and smile, pretending that it was just another one of those Army sayings that just sometimes go over your head.

I had the great opportunity of attending Air Assault School while also being in ROTC, an opportunity that is often only given to soldiers stationed at Fort Campbell. Our proximity to Fort Campbell enables our Cadets to take advantage of schools that are otherwise not available until you are at your assigned unit further on in your career.

The toughest ten days of the Army came and went like a breeze. Starting early in the morning, completing a two-mile run, the obstacle course, and an equipment layout closed out the Air Assault journey for many. But thankfully, it only closed out day one for me, and once you make it past the Jacobs ladder, it is smooth sailing, or so one would think. But the next couple of days are not for the faint; they are filled with rigorous testing on aircraft knowledge, rigging procedures, and many more equipment layouts. All this testing weeds out several more of your initial classmates, and your class becomes a little smaller each day. Sprinkled in with this are many runs to the mock-up is a row of cubicles that mimic the inside of a UH-60 helicopter, about a quarter mile away. You run to these with whatever gear you are wearing at that point in time, many times a day. During Phase III, you will go on to rappelling operations and face fears that you might not have thought existed. Throughout this phase, you will rappel from a 34-foot tower numerous times, leading up to rappelling out of a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter while in a hover. This is one of the experiences I will hold and cherish for the rest of my life, and it makes me thankful to be an APSU Cadet and US Army Soldier and to have opportunities like this in my life. And finally, one last round to the mock-up to bid it farewell, and one last walk under the Air Assault arches with my own set of Air Assault wings and stories to tell to close out my journey at Fort Campbell’s The Sabalauaski Air Assault School.



“The toughest ten days of the Army came and went like a breeze.”



Top: CDT Trost (in the middle) with CDT Nichols and CDT Meyer after graduating Air Assault School.

Bottom: CDT Trost with CDT Broxson at Sabaluaski Air Assault School.

(Pictures provided by CDT Trost)

FALL 2023 FTX

CDT Michael Kelly



Austin Peay's fall 2023 Field Training Exercise (FTX) was conducted at Fort Campbell, KY, and like any good training exercise, it started with planning. Planning began at the beginning of the fall semester and was continuously refined until execution to ensure the best possible training was provided to the APSU Cadets. The goal of the FTX is to introduce squad-level tactics to Cadets and allow them an opportunity to test out this new information in a field environment. This training is only one of the many events that lead APSU Cadets to complete Advance Camp successfully.

On October 19th, Cadets arrived at Austin Peay's campus to receive the equipment necessary to complete the training exercise. Then, the FTX officially began with cadets being bused out to Camp Hinsch, where they received special teams and night movement training before they bedded down for the night. The following day, cadets were transported to the The Sabalauski Air Assault School (TSAAS) and an M4 zero and qualification range. Cadets at TSAAS tested themselves both physically and mentally by conducting the obstacle course and rappelling from the 35-foot rappel tower. The Cadets at the zero and qualification range were given extensive basic rifle marksmanship training and given the opportunity to practice their skills as marksmen before they were graded on them during their Advance Camp training. Once these training events were complete, the Cadets gathered as a school and conducted a 5-mile tactical foot march from the qualification range back to Camp Hinsch. Once at Camp Hinsch, Cadets conducted both day and night land navigation courses at Training Area 2. After land navigation, the second day of the FTX concluded. The third and final day of the FTX began with training on basic squad-level tactics. During this training, cadets learned how to tactically move and react as members of an infantry squad. Once the training was completed, their knowledge was put to the test in the form of a squad competition and squad lanes. The squad competition consisted of various challenges that forced the cadets to work as a squad in order to overcome them. This allowed the cadets to understand how they handled stress as individuals and as members of a team. The squad lanes were tactical in nature and tested the cadets' knowledge of military tactics. The lanes had them react to tactical situations like receiving direct and indirect fire and then dealing with a friendly casualty because of them. Following the squad lanes, the FTX concluded. However, the cadets' training does not. The Cadets will continue to be trained and assessed until they finally go to Advanced Camp and represent APSU.





Ranger Challenge

CDT Lucas Broxson

Last year, our team of eleven competitors at the 2022 Bold Warrior Challenge saw success as we took 2nd place at the annual 7th Brigade Ranger Challenge competition. This placement meant we would venture off to the United States Military Academy West Point the following spring in an attempt to compete against the Black and Gold teams, a plethora of international teams, and the 1st and 2nd place winners from all ROTC Brigades across the nation. This competition, known as Sandhurst, had been unknown to me prior to being accepted as a contender. With much frustration but not a lack of trying, our team of eleven would not see the same success as we had at the Brigade competition. I couldn't tell you about our placement in comparison to the other competitors, but honestly, it doesn't matter. Although the experience of competing at a prestigious school like West Point was unforgettable, regret and a poor performance are the lasting memories of Sandhurst 2023.

With the new year and new faces on the Ranger Challenge team, we have attempted to cleanse our memory of the failures in our past and start anew. As the Ranger Challenge captain, I'm fortunate to welcome back many of last year's cadets and some new ones. We are currently less than a month away from competing at the 2023 Bold Warrior Challenge and are truly optimistic. We have plenty of experience on the team and a wealth of knowledge from our ROTC coach, Mr. Colman. Our goals for the year are to take first place at the Bold Warrior Challenge and finish within the top ten at Sandhurst. Along the way, raising our ACFT scores, sharing hardship, and growing as a team are fundamental to being successful ROTC cadets.

In my last year at Austin Peay, the Ranger Challenge team was a means of preparation for my return to the Army. Beyond the competitions, it allows me to focus on my physical fitness beyond the scope of the minimum requirements of ROTC. Working alongside the traditional cadets not yet exposed to the Army, I am able to share my eleven years of experience with those willing to listen. The Ranger Challenge, as an accessory to my ROTC experience, has offered unexpected fulfillment. My teammates push me every day, and our success depends on each individual performing at their best. The fundamentals of leadership and team-first mentality taught in the classroom of ROTC are implemented on a daily basis among the members of the Ranger Challenge team.

Right: Ranger Challenge team poses for a photo at Sandhurst 2023 competition.

Left: Ranger Challenge team practicing with the zodiacs before the competition.

(Pictures provided by Mr. Colman)



UNITED STATES ARMY CADET COMMAND Austin Peay State University (APSU)



Summary

Austin Peay State University (APSU) Army ROTC hosted a Welcome Back Event to welcome new and returning Cadets and their families to the program and the APSU campus.

Who

APSU Cadre/Staff, Cadets, and Family Members

What

APSU ROTC Welcome Back Event

Where

APSU Campus, Memorial Health Building

When

31 August 2023

Why

Provide APSU Army ROTC Cadets, their families, and friends with the opportunity to meet with APSU Army ROTC Cadre/Staff and other Cadets. To continue to build and foster a strong family environment.



#letsgopeay



UNITED STATES ARMY CADET COMMAND Austin Peay State University (APSU)



Summary

APSU Army ROTC 'Governors Guard' hosted their 2023 Raider Challenge competition for JROTC Cadets to compete in physically and mentally demanding challenges that promoted teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills. Parents, family members, and friends supported their schools throughout the competition.

Who

JROTC Cadets from 14 different Tennessee and Kentucky High Schools, 7th BDE ROTC Commander and CSM, APSU ROTC Cadets, and APSU ROTC Cadre

What

JROTC Cadets competed in different stations around the APSU campus. These stations included physical and mental tasks and emphasized teamwork to get tasks accomplished.

Where

APSU, Clarksville, Tennessee

When

30 September 2023

Why

To empower young leaders in an adaptive environment, promote teamwork, instill a warrior mentality, encourage communication and problem solving, and showcase the appeal of the APSU ROTC program. To link training events directly to the USACC Commanding General's Focus Area of ONE ROTC.



#ONEROTC

#1ROTC



UNITED STATES ARMY CADET COMMAND Austin Peay State University (APSU)



Summary

APSU Army ROTC *Governors Guard* Cadets participated in a Field Training Exercise (FTX) to assess task proficiency and potential, develop Cadets' leadership skills, and promote teamwork at the Team and Squad level.

Who

APSU Army ROTC Cadets and Cadre/Staff

What

APSU ROTC's FTX consisted of a Squad Competition, Tactical Foot March, M4 Range Qualification, STX Lanes, Obstacle Course, and Rappelling.

Where

Fort Campbell, KY

When

19-21 October 2023

Why

Develop APSU Army ROTC Cadets understanding of the orders process, Troops Leading Procedures, introduce MS I and MS II Cadets to the field environment, assess individual task proficiency, and evaluate leadership potential across the unit.



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UNITED STATES ARMY CADET COMMAND Austin Peay State University (APSU)



Summary

APSU Army ROTC *Governors Guard* conducted Cadet For A Day (CFAD) with high school students interested in Army ROTC. This Fall, we had 60 High School students attend this event to learn more about Army ROTC, APSU, scholarship opportunities, college activities and to meet some of the APSU ROTC Cadets, Cadre/Staff and APSU Admissions reps.

Who

JROTC High School Students, APSU ROTC Cadets, APSU ROTC Cadres/Staff, and APSU Staff

What

Cadet For A Day

Where

Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tennessee

When

25 October 2023

Why

To provide JROTC students with an opportunity to experience what it is like to be an APSU ROTC Cadet and familiarize them with the campus and its resources. To support USACC ONEROTC efforts.



#letsgopeay
#onerotc

Fall 2023 Honor to the Nation. MSIII Cadets Gabriel Rodriguez (right) and Thomas Whenham fold the U.S. flag after taking it down from the Army ROTC flagpole at the end of a school day during the Fall 2023 semester.





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Fall 2023 Ranger Challenge Success Again! The Fall 2023 Ranger Challenge team with their second place trophy from the October 27-28, 2023 7th Brigade Ranger competition at Fort Knox, KY. The team finished second among 38 teams competing from schools in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The team members are from left to right: Cadets Darden, Jacquez, Harrington, Ludiker, Broxson (team captain), Meyer, Hernandez-Sanders, Trost, Ramirez, Willis, and Stevens.



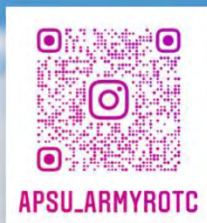
For more information about our program,
contact Mr. Kelley (APSU ROTC Recruiting Operations Officer)
at kelleyj@apsu.edu/julius.r.kelley.civ@army.mil or (931) 575-1954



**If you would like to make a donation to the
APSU ROTC Governor's Guard Battalion, please contact:**

Mr. Greg Lane
Cadet Success Coordinator
Department of Military Science
Austin Peay State University
931-221-6156 (office)
laneg@apsu.edu

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