

[View this email in your browser](#)**From the President:**

Frank Harman
President@ocsalumni.org



Spring has sprung in Georgia. The weather has been great, however the COVID policies are still creating uncertainties. Unfortunately, for the second year in a row, we have had to cancel the USAOCSAA reunion and the OCS Hall of Fame Ceremony. During the reunion we have an Annual Meeting where we brief the members on our programs and policies, and we conduct elections for the Board of Directors. Also during the reunion we conduct Alumni and Cadre awards ceremonies as well as the Hall of Fame Ceremony.

In this letter I will try to bring members up to speed in these areas as well as other important programs, projects and activities of interest. This will serve as the annual report to the membership normally given at the annual meeting.

OCS Hall of Fame: We are in the process of producing a **Virtual Hall of Fame Ceremony** with a target of 1 May to have it on You Tube for viewing. Additionally, the Battalion developed a plan to do several small Hall of Fame ceremonies within the COVID restrictions. The plan is now with the

Alumni & Cadre Awards: In conjunction with the 5 June USAOCSAA Board Meeting, we intend to do the ANNUAL ALUMNI & CADRE AWARDS CEREMONY. We are catching up from 2019, 2020 and, of course, 2021. Awards include the 2020 and 2021 NETT Awards, the Meritorious Public Service Award, Distinguished Members of the 11th Infantry, Honorary Members of the 11th Infantry, and Order of Saint Maurice. We will film the ceremony and put it out on You Tube.

USAOCSAA Board of Directors Elections: Every year we have elections for our open board seats at the annual meeting. Last year we appointed six directors to fill open board seats due for new elections and the open seats created by resignations. In February we solicited interest in those members who wish to serve on the board.

We are currently vetting and validating candidates and soon will produce a slate and instructions on how to vote. Each candidate had produced a resume, a professional picture and quick summary of why they want to be on the board and how they will apply their skills as a board member to support and improve the USAOCSAA. I ask all members to review these documents and vote for those that are most compelling.

USAOCSAA Board Leadership and Responsibilities: We have come a long way in the last 5 years and I am proud of our board members and proud of their accomplishments. Two years ago at this time, I retired from private business to assume the role of President and CEO and I also fill the void as the Executive Director Pro Bono. Consequently my fingers are in everything and in many areas I am the program director.

When I came on board in 2015, John Ionoff told me board membership was not a resume billet of Pro Forma duty but there is an expectation that Directors will Lead, Manage and roll up their sleeves and work. Subsequently, because of our ambition to do great things, there is an expectation for Directors to financially support our programs and projects and go out and find other people who will help.

All of our directors have made a significant impact on the association but two of them, Tom Evans and Karla Langland have been outstanding leaders as Project Directors and financial supporters and I consider them essential members of the board and each deserves major credit in our Association's success. Karla will be leaving the Board, but Tom will continue to "Soldier On" and I am very happy that he will.

do yeoman's work improving our membership database. For the last two years, I emailed each new annual and lifetime member and I talked to all of our sponsored members. Each member has a membership profile. It is the member's responsibility to ensure their profile is correct.

You can fix and update the profile yourself at My Profile (ocsalumni.org). If you have a problem contact us and we can help you get it the way you want it. Also, you can get your digital membership card At: Membership Card (ocsalumni.org). You can print and laminate or join the 21st Century and save it digitally on your phone.

Support to the OCS Battalion: We

continue to support the OCS Battalion which includes talking to all candidates about the history of OCS and the accomplishments of our graduates, talking to all candidates about the USAOCSAA; MOAA, AUSA, and our corporate sponsor USAA, attending graduations, helping with Hall of Fame issues and project work on the Memorial Walk and Wigle Hall. We provide financial support for class events; blocks and bricks for the Memorial Walk and graduation awards. Our total support is \$1,500 for each class.



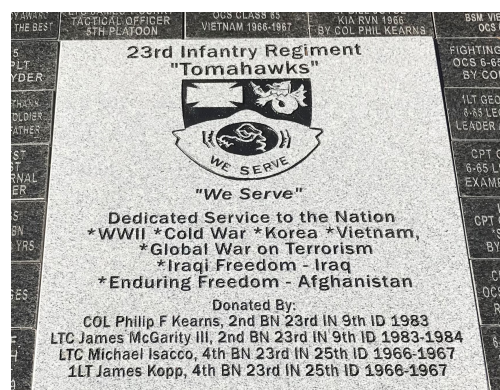
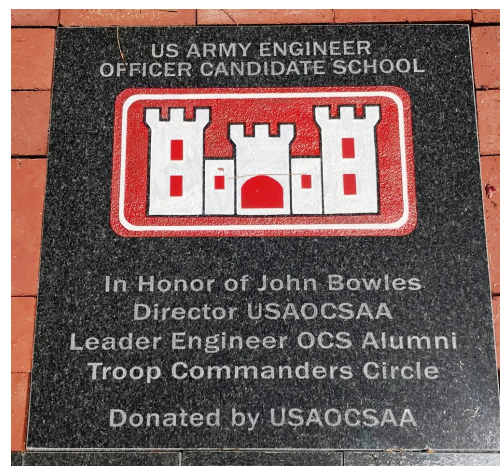
Memorial Walk: New to the Walk this winter are 18 class bricks from the last 3 OCS classes, over 20 personal pavers and class bricks from members, 3 class dedication blocks, 2 unit dedication blocks (US Joint Forces Command in honor of General Buck Kernan and US Northern Command in honor of



General Frank Grass), 4 plates for this year's Hall of Fame and, finally, the OCS 80th Anniversary Dedication Block which was to be dedicated at the reunion now at the Alumni Awards Ceremony. Our remaining Memorial

Memorial Walk Campaign

Continues: I challenge each Hall of Fame member to buy a paver for themselves and at least one for a deceased HoF member. I encourage other alumni to participate and purchase a career paver or class brick, one for themselves and one for a "Battle Buddy". Finally, we are standing by for more Group Pavers, Class Dedication Blocks, Division, Brigade and Regiment Dedication Blocks, and Memorial Blocks. I was notified that our engraver contractor intends to retire in November. I will try to convince him to hang on until next year's Hall of Fame but we will see. ***Your purchase of bricks and pavers will never be cheaper than they are now.*** If you were thinking about a Class Block or Unit Block you need to act now!



Wigle Hall: The OCS Heritage Center in Wigle Hall is part of the OCS Program of Instruction. Starting with Class 3-21, each class will tour Wigle Hall and be briefed on the history and traditions of OCS. The candidates are very impressed and one OC told me he thought Wigle Hall is "Smithsonian Quality!" Any member of the USAOCSAA who comes to Fort Benning can arrange a tour of Wigle Hall by contacting me or the Battalion S-3.

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The OCS Alumni Association 2022 Reunion: The reunion will take place from 29 April – 2 May 2022. The reunion will run concurrently with the Hall of Fame Induction activities. Alumni Association members will attend the Hall of Fame Induction and dinner as well as dedication ceremonies at Wigle Hall and the OCS Memorial Walk, where all HoF members are honored. We have reserved a block of rooms at the Downtown Marriott in Columbus for our 2022 reunion members. Registration will start in January 2022.

USAOCSAA Web Site: We continue to improve our website. Tom Evans and Mary Cilia are working hard to perfect our member database. We have loaded all the class books and memorabilia that we have been given, and if we get books or memorabilia in a digitized format we will load it. New 2021 Hall of Fame selectees will be posted soon. We have also posted Distinguished Members and Honorary Members of the 11th Infantry Regiment.

Hall of Fame members, who have issues with their picture or biography, send a digitized version of what you want and we will load it. Bottom line, we have made great strides and if you work with us we will continue to improve the website.

11th Regiment Affiliation and OCS Battalion Liaison: Last year I was honored as the 3rd Honorary Colonel of the 11th Infantry Regiment. For the last 4 years working with the OCS Battalion Commander, we have worked to revive the 11th Infantry Regimental Program. Description of the regiment program, and a list of those honored, is at **DMORs &**

recognize outstanding cadre and alumni who have provided significant support to the 11th Infantry and the OCS program.



Fundraising: We have been working for over two years to come to grips with a clear Sustainment Fundraising Strategy. We need separate strategies to raise money for large projects like Wigle Hall (OCS Heritage Center) and the OCS Memorial Walk expansion. We also need funds to sustain our operations (communications, website, general and administrative costs, support to the OCS battalion, honors, tributes and awards). Four years ago John Ionoff brought in Bud Pigeon to give us a generic fundraising strategy. He had many good ideas but organizationally we were not in a position to apply many of Bud's pearls of wisdom.

John and I also met with Greg Camp, the President and CEO of the National Infantry Foundation and picked his brain; the result being the Wigle Hall Campaign, where we raised over \$300,000 for the concept, design and renovation of an entire building.

Over the past 5 years we have raised over \$700,000 from the USAA, memberships, bricks and paver sales, and donations. We were able to renovate Wigle Hall, execute five Memorial Walk expansions, develop and deploy a new website, support the OCS Battalion run three successful reunions and attend to general administrative and sustainment costs.

We currently have about \$315,000 in our bank account. This is what we have learned:

- 70% of our donations come from a handful of donors giving \$5,000 or more per year.
- Outside of the Wigle Hall campaign it has primarily been five board members and a half-dozen or so generous graduates.
- Graduates or their relatives are the only reliable donors.

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provide one-third of the donations coming in. Last year we raised about \$58,000 in general donations; \$32,500 came from six donors.

- About ten individuals give donations every month via credit card which comes to about \$12,500 for the year.
- USAA has been a good sponsor but their donations are about one-third of what they were three years ago. This year USAA gave \$32,500 for direct support to the OCS Hall of Fame, and the OCS Battalion. MOAA gave us \$3,500 this year to support graduation awards.

The only other donations from Corporations came from Lockheed Martin and HQ Nissan for \$2,000. We also received some “In-Kind” contributions from our landscape supplier, engraver and a winery, but we found that the business/industrial market is not a reliable donor unless the decision-maker in that corporation is an OCS graduate.

Other revenue comes from memberships. Sponsored members are for 10 years (new candidates only) at no cost (\$1,000 a class from USAA). Life memberships are \$300, Annual memberships are \$55. Annual members can upgrade to Life Member on the honor system by paying the difference of what they have paid in to-date versus the \$300 for Life. Brick and pavers provide some revenue but for the most part, it allows us to break-even in costs on the Memorial Walk. Expect about \$15,000 from brick and paver and about \$18,000 from new members and renewals.

We have estimated that our annual sustainment costs will be between \$45-50,000 per year sustainment for all USAOCSAA programs, except for the reunion, which pays for itself. The bottom line is we have exceeded our sustainment requirement for FY 2021.

The outliers of future costs will be the Memorial Walk expansion, Wigle Hall, additional exhibits and new projects.

Based on my experience as President of a MOAA Chapter, President & CEO of USAOCSAA, and the Project Director for the Memorial Walk and Wigle Hall, **all new projects must have:**

- “A Value Proposition”
- Keep within our organization scope (Don’t attempt to do things other veterans organizations can do better – i.e. scholarships)
- Board Members should give and/or raise an agreed upon amount. For Wigle Hall that goal was at least \$5,000.

The Executive Committee with our

Board Meeting. My objectives are to come away with a New Project Strategy for our next big project and a Sustainment Fundraising Strategy. The Sustainment Fundraising Program is to ensure everything we have accomplished in the last three years is maintained, incrementally grown and sustained. Sustainment giving is the way to develop small donors into significant donors over time.



National Guard Integration: Just as we have embraced all OCS graduates regardless of branch, component or school location, we have opened up to graduates from the National Guard OCS Programs. I am proud to say that as part of this effort, we are welcoming General Frank Grass into the OCS Hall of Fame this year. Frank is the former Chief of the National Guard Bureau and Deputy Commander of US Northern Command.



Going forward we are offering the same sponsored membership we give to Federal OCS graduates to all 2021 graduates of the State Guard (Regional Training Institutes) which includes free membership to the USAOCSAA for 10 years and free membership to MOAA and free membership to the AUSA. If you know a Guard member being commissioned this year, have him/her go to our website and at the very top is a button, "State Guard" Click on that and it will lead to the registration for free membership. Colonel (Ret) Dave Taylor, VP-Operations, is the Project Director for this important initiative.

Chapter Development: Colonel (Ret) Dave Taylor has worked very hard to increase our chapter growth. This is a great way for all of us to connect and enjoy comradery with one another and pay tribute to OCS graduates, veterans and soldiers. Dave produces a Chapter Newsletter and has provided links on the OCSalumni.org website. For an update of chapters, to go to the website,

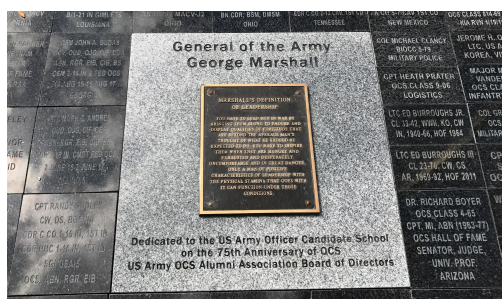
social media.

Veteran Ceremonies and Events: One of the chapter activities that is synchronized with our USAOCSAA Mission, Goals and Objectives is the participation and tributes to veterans during national holidays and special events. The Washington DC Chapter and the Florida Chapter have done a great job in the past and I hope all chapters will follow suit.

USAOCSAA ONLINE Store: Major (Ret) Mike Harris has volunteered to make this a go for alumni product sales and he is now the Project Director. Past efforts have met with marginal success. Running a small niche retail outlet (brick and mortar or on-line) is a spotty undertaking at best. Mike will have quality materials at reasonable prices, so please support him when he opens the “store” We are doing this only for the benefit of the membership but if the members do not support this, it will be time-consuming and costly for us. This will not be a revenue stream for us because we will keep prices reasonable. It will be a service, offered by a volunteer, for YOU.

Support the USAOCSAA:

Our goal is to have every graduate join and actively participate in the association’s activities. If you are not currently a Life Member of the Association, we highly encourage you to convert to Life Membership and purchase a paver or class brick. Please go to our website ocsalumni.org and make it happen. Also consider a “Dedication Block” for your class, your chapter or an Army unit you served with. And finally, please consider making a tax-exempt donation to the Association to help sustain our various projects mentioned above. If you would rather send a check, please mail it to: OCS Alumni Association, P.O. Box 430, Midland, GA 31820-9998



Follow us on Facebook and visit our website: <https://www.ocsalumni.org>

From The OCS Commandant

Since the last newsletter, things here at OCS have begun to change a bit as we attempt to get back to some semblance of “normalcy”. Of course, every action we take is done with extreme precaution and risk mitigation. Our method of “Re-Opening” is to look at each individual event specifically, and then consider risk mitigation factors for resuming the event.



**LTC David
Holstead**

Thus far, we have re-opened the Andersonville staff ride during the History Curriculum, selected volunteer events in the local Columbus community, and we have resumed the class formal, although without guests. Going forward, we have submitted proposals to the Commanding General for approval. We have asked for graduations to be held at the National Infantry Museum, outdoors, allowing up to two guests per graduate, and holding a Hall of Fame induction in May by breaking it down into three separate events over three days, allowing 25 inductees with limited family members, to keep the total number of people together below 100 each day. Of course, anything that we attempt to modify that involves outside personnel requires Commanding General approval during this pandemic, so hopefully we will hear soon whether or not we can hold these events.

Currently, OCS has three classes in session with 435 candidates in training. These three classes from what I have seen thus far are three of the better classes that I have seen come through OCS. Disciplined, driven, and articulate, these candidates truly embody the best the Army has to offer. The future of our officer corps is bright with these men and women assuming the mantle of leadership. The course continues to challenge these candidates spiritually, mentally and physically, as the weather here in southwestern Georgia approaches the summertime conditions that Fort Benning is famous for.

We also have bid farewell to several company commanders this spring, while allowing some top-notch officers their chance to shine in their place. Charlie

Company produced over 250 high quality officers over two classes. He is succeeded by CPT Ashley Oelschlager, who comes to us with a tremendous reputation and remarkable success in her Army career this far. We also bid farewell to CPT Parker White, who commanded Bravo Company since January 2020, and graduated over 500 officers over four classes. He is succeeded by CPT Pete Hughes, who is a seasoned officer with 234 months of command already under his belt, including 12 months on an overseas deployment.

Finally, this is my next to last newsletter as the OCS Commander. Time certainly flies. I will be handing over the battalion command to LTC Ryan Davis, who is currently the Deputy G3 at the United States Army Special Operations Command. I had the chance to meet LTC Davis a few weeks ago and give him a tour of OCS and provide him with an overview of our mission. I can assure all of you that the battalion will be in great hands, and he will take the OCS program to far greater heights than I did.

Again, thank you all for your service to this great nation, for your sacrifices in the call of duty and your continued support for your alma mater. As always, it is truly an honor to serve you.

Thank you again and God Bless! Standards! No Compromise!

LTC David Holstead
OCS Commandant

Chaplains Corner

When Lincoln Prayed

General Daniel Sickles recorded for us an intimate revelation from the heart of President Abraham Lincoln. The General had been severely wounded on July 2, 1863, and after suffering the amputation of a leg, was removed to Washington where the President visited him. I quote from General Sickles: "Mr. Lincoln, we heard at Gettysburg that here at the capital you were all so anxious about the results of the battle that the government officials packed up and got ready to leave at short notice with the official archives"

"Yes" said the President, "Some



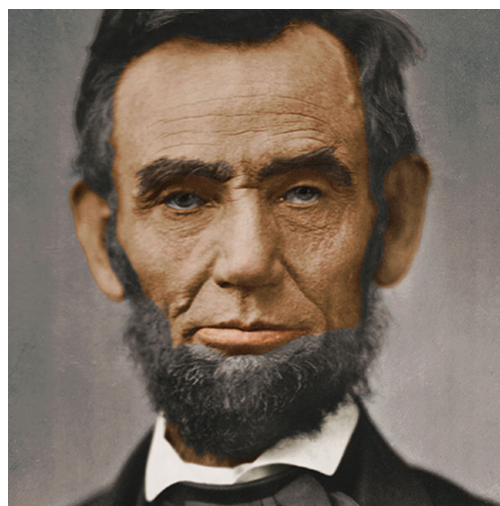
COL (Ret)
Samuel Boone
U.S. Army
Chaplain (Ret)

success at Gettysburg” “Why” asked Sickles, “were you so confident? The Army of the Potomac had suffered many reverses”

There was a pause. Mr. Lincoln seemed in deep meditation. He pale face was lightened by an expression Sickles noted, he had not seen before turning to Sickles the President said: “When Lee crossed the Potomac and entered Pennsylvania followed by our Army, I felt the crises had come. I knew the defeat in a great battle on northern soil involved the loss of Washington, to be followed, perhaps by the intervention of England and/or of France in favor of the Southern Confederacy. I went to my room and got down on my knees in prayer. Never before had I prayed with so much earnestness. I wish I could repeat my prayer.



General Sickles



Abraham Lincoln

“I felt that I must put all my trust in Almighty God. He gave our people the best country ever given to humanity. He alone could save it from destruction. I had tried my best to do my duty and found myself unequal to the task. The burden was more than I could bear. God had been our Protector in other days. I prayed that he would not let the nation perish. I asked Him to help us and give us the victory now. I had no misgivings about the results at Gettysburg” (Dr. Ray Edman, Wheaton College).

PRAYER CHANGES THINGS! I know this to be true of my own life experiences and the trustworthy accounts given in the Holy Scriptures. You may remember a song by country singer Garth Brooks, who had a hit some years ago, “Unanswered Prayers...” and in it he recounted that he had prayed to God that a certain young lady would be his bride. He thought his prayer had not been

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he envisioned it.

In this time of COVID-19, upheaval in our nation and in our world, if you feel you are struggling with issues in your life...I encourage you to (in the words of an old hymn), "Take it to the Lord in Prayer," The Great Architect of the Universe will listen to you anytime-anyplace-and you should have 'no misgiving about the results!'

OCS Alumni Association

Operations Report

Website Update:

As our President, Frank Harman, has already mentioned, we are working daily to upgrade and make current all our information on the website. It's a large task but we will get it done. If you have any class albums, graduation programs or any other historic memorabilia, send it my way. Any picture changes, misspellings, inaccurate information, send it my way.

Chapter Update:

Currently we have four chapters in operation and one (Kentucky) ready to join us:

- Greater Washington D.C. Chapter
- Colorado Chapter
- Sunshine State of Florida Chapter
- Ohio Buckeye State Chapter
- Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter

Here Are The Chapter

Commanders:

(If you live in these chapter areas, contact them! There are No Fees at the chapter level!)



Dave Taylor

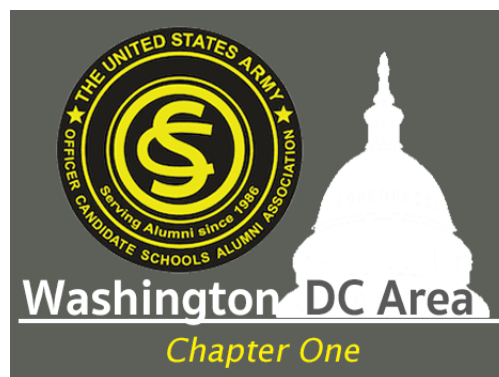
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Ohio Chapter:

Dave Taylor:
 dave.taylor@zoominternet.net
 330-722-7455 (Mobile) 330-326-3370

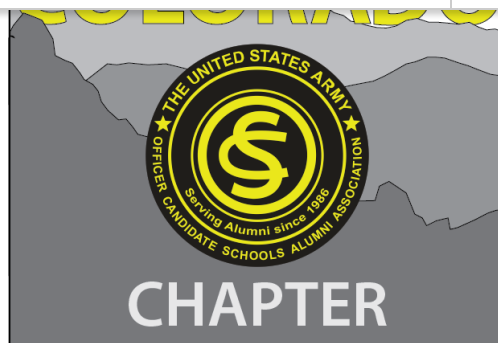
Kentucky Chapter:

Dave Osborne:
 dcosborne@comcast.net
 703-888-6500

Future Chapters Being Developed:

Contact Dave Taylor VP-Operations
 If you live in these areas:

- South Jersey



Sunshine State Chapter



- Columbia, South Carolina
- Greater St. Louis Area (and across the river in Illinois)
- Dallas/Fort Worth Texas area
- San Antonio / Austin Texas area
- Los Angeles / Orange County area

There are certain By-Laws governing our chapters. If you are interested in starting a chapter, contact Dave Taylor and he will help you through the process. It is not complicated.

Some key elements:

- Must have at least 10 founding members who are current members of the OCS Alumni Association
- First year as a chapter is provisional
- Each succeeding year National will provide \$300 to help chapter with expenses

Contact Dave Taylor, VP-Operations to discuss further

Army Officer Candidate School: 80 Years Of Excellence

**Mike Harris, VP-
Administration USAOCSAA**



In 2021 the United States Army Officer Candidate School celebrates 80 years of training and commissioning some of America's finest leaders. Hundreds of thousands of OCS graduates have been instrumental in meeting the Army's leadership requirements during peace and conflict.

Leading up to World War II, Army Chief of Staff, General George Marshall realized that the Army would soon need many newly trained platoon leaders. The Military Academy and Reserve Officer Training Corps required four years to produce trained second lieutenants. The number of annual graduates was inadequate for the impending requirement. So, General Marshall devised a plan to rapidly increase the numbers of qualified leaders in a relatively short time.

In July 1941, (then) LTC Omar N. Bradley established the first United States

training. The course subjected soldiers to extreme mental and physical stress to determine those with the capacity to complete assignments under the strains of combat. Military Science, weapons instruction, tactics, logistics, leadership and much more were all taught with a goal of identifying those who could think, operate and succeed in the most extreme circumstances.

Training was compressed into roughly three months. Hence the nickname, “Ninety Day Wonders” Initially oriented toward infantry topics, new OCS programs emerged for artillery, armor, signal, engineer and other branches. In the mid-1970’s the multiple branch OCS courses were consolidated into the Branch Immaterial Officer Candidate Course at Fort Benning. The course length has changed over the years but the concept remains fixed.

The Army constantly deals with the ebb and flow of manpower requirements. OCS is the mechanism it uses to rapidly meet emerging needs. After WWII many programs closed down. However, Korea soon provided the call for more platoon leaders and company grade officers. Then Vietnam created a huge need and required thousands of lieutenants. The high tempo of the Southwest Asian campaigns has required a continuing flow of junior grade officers.

Service in the U.S. Army is a multidimensional career involving 17 military occupational specialties, with travel and personal interactions with people all over the world. OCS graduates are commissioned as second lieutenants throughout every branch. During OCS, relationships, friendships and lifelong bonds are formed. Initially lieutenants are platoon leaders or small unit managers. As they mature and grow professionally, they advance in rank and become staff officers and company commanders. Those who continue to serve receive additional education and serve in battalions, brigade and divisions. Career officers may serve in joint units with other services or internationally with allied nations. Whether serving a few years or for a career, the leadership and skills forged in OCS last forever.

The 3rd Battalion, 11th Infantry (OCS) at Fort Benning’s Maneuver Center of Excellence operates multiple cycles of OCS training each year. Applicants must now have a four-year college degree and complete Basic Combat Training before OCS. The academic standards are high and the physical training remains intense. The training cadre is keenly aware that an OCS graduate could be leading troops in combat in Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere within six months of commissioning.

So, today’s candidates are taught to be critical thinkers and small unit leaders immediately capable of independent action. The motto of OCS remains,

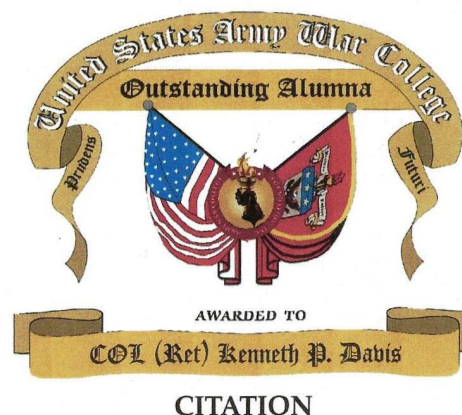
For many years OCS graduates were commissioned and went on to serve, but never had a means to reconnect. In 1986 the U.S. Army OCS Alumni Association was formed to foster fellowship, highlight OCS history, and memorialize OCS graduates lost in service to our nation. It serves as the Alma Mater for all Army OCS programs and provides a means to show pride in OCS as a source of commission.

OCS Alumni Board Member Col (Ret) Ken Davis Honored By Army War College Foundation

OCS Alumni Association Board Member and National Reunion Coordinator Ken Davis was recently awarded the Outstanding Alumni Award from the Army War College Foundation. A graduate of the U.S. Army War College, class of 1993, Ken was recognized for his lasting contributions at the national and regional level of the Boy Scouts of America. Since 2001, his senior-level management of the Philmont and National Jamborees of Boy Scouts, that encompassed all 50 states, has impacted hundreds of thousands of youth. Ken has authored three books with the proceeds donated to the Boy Scouts of America national program.



The number of committees he has served on in leadership positions at the international, national and Washington DC district level are numerous. In addition, Ken has served as Director, Combined Federal Campaign, and the U.S. Savings Bond Campaign for the Defense Logistics Agency's National Stockpile Center. He has also devoted over 900 hours with the USO and has been a reviewer of the

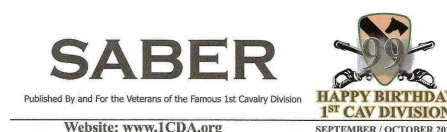


The Outstanding Alum Award of the U.S. Army War College Foundation has been made to only fifty-three individuals since its inception in 1977. Congratulations Ken!



Over the past four months the story of the OCS Legacy has been told to over 10,000 vets in Army veteran magazines. If you belong to a veterans group and want us to tell the OCS story in their publication, contact Dave Taylor, Public Affairs Officer. VP-Opns@ocsalumni.org

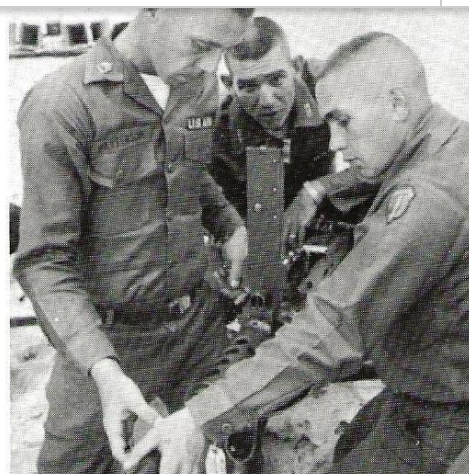
Help Us Tell The Story Of The OCS Legacy!



Classmate Locating Process

Doug Burmester



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If you are interested and determined to locate fellow OCS Classmates, the following process has proven to be very useful and the information found generally accurate. Using this process you will need a listing of those who graduated with your class. A graduation program is usually an accurate listing as are graduation orders; if these are not available,

but knowing your class number and date of graduation check with the post library where you completed OCS training. See if they have copies of the OCS class rosters that were maintained at the company level. Some of the information on the roster may be considered confidential and redacted before it is sent to you. Don't be too concerned about that as the next step in the locating process will help you determine who graduated with your class.

Next you will need the dates of birth of your classmates. The best source for this is the U.S. Army Register. The different volumes of the Register list the names of Army officers on active duty at year end of the prior year. For example, the 1 January 1968 volume lists those officers on active duty at year end 1967. Other information includes the service number, branch, rank, and additional information pertinent to each individual.

The most convenient source for the volumes is the Hathi Trust Digital Library where full-view access to volumes for forty-nine different years is available:

cross-check each name to see if it is listed in the Register that covers the end of the year that you graduated. For the OCS classes graduating during the Vietnam War Era, generally Volume 1 of each years register refers to Regular Army officers and Volume 2 refers to NGUS and USAR officers. An exception is the 1 January 1967 Volume 1 Register. Using the appropriate Register, record the dates of birth of those in your class and then determine their current age, which you will use in the next step of the locating process.

Purchase a subscription to the public records search engine “Instant Checkmate” Go to: <https://www.instantcheckmate.com> and purchase a standard membership plan. The plan will cost you \$35 for thirty days. Once a member enters first name, middle initial and last name of your classmate and their current age, the search engine will return a screen of all the individuals with that name and of that general age. Their mailing address, telephone, date of birth and, in some cases a spouse’s name, will be shown. Look for the individual with the date of birth or date close to the date of birth that you recorded and jot down the information. Try the phone number first that is listed. There is a trend for individuals to cancel their landlines and use cell phones exclusively so the phone number list may not be a good number. If the phone number isn’t any good, go to www.zabasearch.com or www.whitepages.com to see if there is a different phone number listed. If there isn’t a good phone number to use, you still have a mailing address to send a letter to.

Reaching For The Stars

An OCS General Officer Profile

After Susie Kuilan graduated from Henderson State University in 1988 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Mass Communications, she went on active duty under the College-Op program to enter the Army at Fort Benning for her Basic Training. As she recalls, “At Basic Training I experienced homesickness, but the 16 weeks of OCS was very hard, especially the mental harassment in the first 9 weeks and the physical training.



Brigadier General Susie S. Kuilan

her OCS class, primarily E-6 and E-7 classmates who, she remembers, “knew what was going on” and they helped her complete OCS in good order. Now a Brigadier General, Susie Kuilan never forgot the support she received in OCS from those prior service classmates who understood the Army at the grass roots level. For that reason she appreciates the concept of the Army OCS Program and that it gives the opportunity for sharp NCO’s to enter into the officer ranks.

After receiving her commission from OCS in January 1989, she completed the Quartermaster Officer Basic Course and Airborne School and then was stationed at Fort Polk, Louisiana in various positions in the Fifth Support Battalion (Forward), 5th Infantry Division. When appointed a platoon leader, her platoon sergeant greeted her and said, “Mam, I’m going to tuck you under my wings and let you know when it’s time to come out” Kuilan looks back and reflects, “I credit that platoon sergeant to this day for getting my career off to a solid start” Throughout her career she has always relied on her NCO’s, from junior to senior enlisted ranks, even in her most recent assignment as Deputy Commanding General for Operations for the 200th Military Police Command at Fort Meade, Maryland.

Upon completion of active duty, Brigadier General Kuilan spent a little over a year in the Inactive Ready Reserve and shortly after joined the Army Reserve in December 1992. She served in various positions, primarily with the 360th Regiment, 5th Brigade, 91st Division from 1992 thru 1999 at Salt Lake City, UT. She also served in various assignments in Institutional Training Commands ranging from S-1 Adjutant, Officer in Charge of Site Support Team, S-3 Operations Officer, Executive Officer, Battalion Commander, Brigade Deputy Commander and Brigade Commander.

After brigade command, she went on active duty as a Military Fellow with the Chief of Staff of the Army – Strategic Studies Group and then was selected by LTG Jeff Talley to be the inaugural holder of the John Parker Chief of Reserve Component Studies at the Army War College where she was a faculty member and researcher within the Department of Command-Leadership and Management. After that position she went on to be the Chief of Staff of the 80th Training Command (TASS) and the Assistant Division Commander of the 102nd Training Division (MS), prior to her position with the 200th Military Police Command. On 9 January, 2021, Kuilan was appointed as Commanding General, 95th Training Division, Fort Sill, OK.

Back in 2005, Brigadier General Kuilan deployed to Iraq in support of “Operation Iraqi freedom” as the LOGCAP Support Officer for Task Force

General Kuilan's civilian education included a Master's Degree in English from Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA and a PhD in English from Louisiana State University. Her military schooling includes the Quartermaster Officer Basic Course and Advance Course, Combined Arms and Services Staff School, Reserve Component Multifunctional Combat Service Support Course, Associate Logistics Executive Development Course, Advanced Joint Professional Military Education, U.S. Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College where she received a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies.

Awards and commendations include the Meritorious Service Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Achievement Medal and the Parachutist Badge.

In her civilian capacity General Kuilan is an Associate Dean of Strategic Security and Protection Management and Terrorism/Counterterrorism at the Henley-Putnam School of Strategic Security of the National American University.

Kuilan resides in Gravette, Arkansas, with her husband Joe Bryant. Together they have three adult children who live nearby and 5 four-legged "children" that rule their household.

General Kuilan is a member of the U.S. Army OCS Hall of Fame, Class of 2021.



The "West Point" of European Operations
Army OCS in England During WWII
David W. Taylor

In September 1942 the first U.S. Army OCS School in Europe was begun in the British Isles. Fifty-one enlisted men, hand-selected, were chosen to undergo 90 days of intensive training to become commissioned officers. Other overseas OCS schools had been established earlier in the Southwest Pacific Area of Operations; First in the French protectorate of New Caledonia and then in Australia.

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Army offensive operations of the war began against the Japanese. Operations in North Africa in 1942 and a year later, operations in Italy would receive its primary feed of new lieutenants from OCS out of Fort Benning. But the Pacific War still needed help from OCS graduates out of Benning as well, as the OCS schools in Australia and New Caledonia were smaller in scope.

The men who entered the Army's OCS School in Britain were stripped of their rank and all wore a horizontal patch on their left shoulder with the letters "OCS". Each candidate continued to draw his pay at whatever rank he held prior to being accepted into OCS.

The Army's OCS School in Great Britain soon became known as "The West Point of the European Theatre of Operations" By early December 1942, the first class of 43 had graduated and by early January, 1943, the second class numbering 52 began training. It was noted that "...13 in the second class are negroes, first of their race to enter into OCS"

September 26, 1942 THE STARS AND STRIPES

New School Will Develop Leaders



Planet Photo

Col. Walter G. Layman, commandant of the first U.S. Officers Candidate School in the British Isles, gives his attentive students instruction on the important infantryman's weapon, the rifle. (Note insignia on the left shoulders of the candidates, OCS. They don't wear their stripes any more, they wear these instead.)

U.S. Officer Candidate School Opens in Britain

Greyhound Catches Rabbit and Refuses to Run Next Day

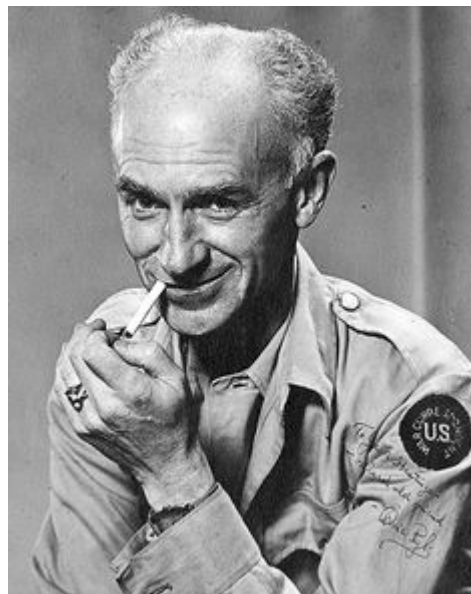
Colonel Walter Layman in Washington D.C. was the overall OCS Commandant and his credo was to "Turn them out 'better than best' as fast as we can". Candidates for his OCS training had to be recommended by their base commander. The philosophy of Britain's US Army OCS School was explained by

branches, every one of them could qualify as a first rate officer in the infantry”

The training program was divided into four sessions: weapons, tactics, general subjects and specialized subjects.

The legendary U.S. War Correspondent, Ernie Pyle, visited the OCS School “somewhere in England” (According to the Stars and Stripes newspaper during the war. The location was secret so it would not be targeted by German bombers). Colonel Layman had established his headquarters at the OCS site.

Pyle was not permitted to visit the candidates in their barracks but Layman allowed him to pick three men at random to be allowed to come to Layman’s residence in the evening during the black-out period to be interviewed by Pyle. Layman excused himself so they could be interviewed without his presence.



Ernie Pyle

The three candidates were initially confused at where to go during the mandatory black-out period.

One of them told Pyle, “You don’t dare be late or make mistakes here, you know”

One candidate was 23 and he had been in the Army for five years; he had lost 42 pounds since starting OCS and “was down from smoking two packs a day to one, simply because there isn’t the time during the day to smoke more than one pack” Another candidate, aged 28, came from the western states with a deeply tanned face and he also had been in the Army for five years. He re-enlisted because, as he told Pyle, “Well, we just had a tough winter, so I went into the Army” He was a jeep driver for a Major General who recommended him. As Ernie Pyle noted in his article, “If he doesn’t make the grade in OCS they’ll be one mad general in England, but he’ll make it alright”

Another candidate was from Indiana, a Hoosier of French extraction, age 27, who had only been in the Army for seven months. He told Pyle, “I have never worked so hard as in the past month” He too had lost weight. “But you know,”

Ernie Pyle concluded, “And they do love it.” These three and all the members of the first OCS class in Britain. They love it because they’ve got a chance in a million, a chance none of them ever dreamed of getting.”



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