



Jayhawk Salute

Summer 2015

Editor: Bill Steele, 785-864-7478 wsteele@ku.edu
Assoc. Editor: Randy Masten, 785-864-7455 RandyMasten@ku.edu

★ KU awards six Wounded Warrior Scholarships for 2015-2016

The following six Wounded Warrior Scholars have been named for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Joshua Blake, recipient of the Keener Family Wounded Warrior Scholarship. Raised in Larned, Kan., Josh enlisted in the Marine Corps days after the 9/11 attacks. He served four years as an infantryman that included two deployments to Iraq. On his second deployment, in 2004, he sustained wounds from an IED while on a dismounted patrol in Ramadi. He is focused on obtaining his bachelor's degree.

Adam Croft, Lawrence, enlisted in the U.S. Army in 2001. While on a reconnaissance mission in September 2005 he survived a white phosphorous IED attack in Iraq and subsequently suffered third-degree burns on his right hand. Adam is an undergraduate in public administration and a co-major in Russian and Eastern European studies. After graduating he intends to pursue a graduate degree.

Mackenzie Istook, recipient of the Heart of America Patriot Foundation Wounded Warrior Scholarship. Born in Fort Worth, Texas, Mackenzie is a self-described "Army Brat" whose stepfather, Sgt. First Class Jonathan Tessar, was killed on Oct. 31, 2005, by an IED along with three other soldiers on their first mission in Iraq. Mackenzie was in the 3rd grade at the time. She is excited about expanding her horizons and studying abroad during her time at KU.

Corey Leach, recipient of the KAMO Adventures Disabled Veteran Scholarship. Corey grew up in Olathe, Kan., and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 2011. While on a foot patrol in Afghanistan, he stepped into an IED blast zone and suffered severe injuries to his neck, left eye, shoulders and

Scholarship Facts

- Awards given to student who suffered injuries while serving in the military; is the primary caregiver of a wounded warrior; or is the surviving spouse/child.
- Scholars receive up to \$10,000 per year and can renew for up to four academic years. Scholarships cover tuition, fees, books & living expenses.
- Donors: Bill & Shanthi Eckert Wounded Disabled Veteran Scholarship; KAMO Adventures Disabled Veteran Scholarship; Heart of America Patriot Foundation Wounded Warrior Scholar; Keener Foundation Wounded Warrior Scholarship
- To donate, go to www.gmplku/wws.

left leg. After medically retiring from the Army in 2014, he entered KU majoring in exercise science. His goal is to become a physical therapist working with veterans and athletes.

Hannah Swift, recipient of the Heart of America Patriot Foundation Wounded Warrior Scholarship. A native of Pekin, Ill., Hannah will be a freshman this fall at KU. As a child of a disabled Vietnam Veteran, Hannah has a deep respect for the sacrifices made by our veterans and their families. She enjoys cooking and eating healthy, and plans to transfer her love of healthy food into a major. Hannah will compete as a pole vaulter on the KU Track and Field team.

Donald Spradling, Lawrence, joined the U.S. Navy in 1996 and was injured while serving as a deck seaman aboard a guided missile cruiser conducting counter drug operations in South and Central America. Upon retiring from the Navy in 2008, Donald shifted his focus to education and earned a B.S. in civil engineering from KU in 2014. He is currently a graduate research assistant in the KU CEAE department and is pursuing a PhD in structural engineering.

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★ New Kansas law gives in-state tuition to all veterans

Gov. Sam Brownback signed a bill in May that gives in-state tuition to all veterans, active duty members of the U.S. military and their families.

The measure enables veterans and servicemembers to receive in-state tuition rates at 32 public colleges in Kansas, effective July 1. The bill corresponds with a federal law extending tuition benefits to spouses and dependent children of veterans and servicemembers.

“This bill reflects our commitment to those who served and continue to serve our nation,” the governor said. “This bill will help veterans and their families more easily make the transition to the private workforce.”

The legislation also would allow employers to show a preference toward qualified veterans when hiring and would protect the jobs of military members that are temporarily called to active duty.

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, who leads the Kansas National Guard, said in a Topeka



Gov. Sam Brownback signs new bill giving military veterans in-state tuition in Kansas May 29.

Capitol-Journal article that the changes would be helpful for military families and strengthen the state’s case when discussing potential troop reductions with federal officials.

“It does go a long way in terms of competing with the other bases around the country,” Tafanelli said.

The Army plans to downsize personnel from a war-time high of 570,000 to 450,000 by the end of 2017.



Brig. Gen. Eric Wesley speaks to KU officials during his visit to the Lawrence campus Feb. 27.

KU, Fort Riley discuss future educational partnerships

Leaders from the Army’s “Big Red One” at Ft. Riley visited the University of Kansas in February to discuss ways that KU can help prepare its soldiers to transition into higher education.

Brig. Gen. Eric Wesley, Deputy Commanding General (Support) of the 1st Infantry Division, and his team of officers met with KU faculty and researchers to explore

future educational partnerships. The issue is urgent for the Army, said Gen. Wesley. With the reductions in the Army’s forces, Ft. Riley expects to lose about 3,000 soldiers a year.

Since the February meeting, KU has proposed an “academic boot camp” bridge program and a transition program for soldiers considering business or industry, said Mike Denning, director of KU’s Graduate Military Programs. The latter program is a 6-week course that aims to teach soldiers business fundamentals, business communications and other keys to a successful transition into the corporate world.

“Businesses are seeking the leadership, discipline and dedication that are ingrained in soldiers,” Denning said. “We hope to add some technical skills to individual strengths and help facilitate a seamless transition.”

★ ROTC students gear up to GO

Speaking to a group of nine ROTC cadets about to embark on one of the most challenging missions of their career, Dr. Mahir Ibrahimov, a multicultural and multilingual former Soviet Army soldier, had some parting words of encouragement: “You are at the right spot. This is a great opportunity for you to take advantage and develop your skills.”

Dr. Ibrahimov was referring to Project GO (Global Officers), a DoD program that funds qualified ROTC students to study languages intensively over the summer and for study abroad after their second semester in the language. In a total of eight weeks, students cover what would normally be taught in two semesters.

Dr. Ibrahimov, program manager for the U.S. Army’s Language, Regional Expertise and Culture Management Office at Ft. Leavenworth, spoke to the cadets at the invitation of the University of Kansas, one of 25 schools in the nation participating in Project GO. KU teaches Arabic, Chinese, Korean and Russian in the program.

In his talk, Ibrahimov stressed the importance of the cadet’s study. Without language and cultural understanding, he said, militaries will likely fail to accomplish their missions.

“You can win the battle, but you cannot win the war,” he said.

Dr. Ibrahimov told the students that with languages, like music, consistency is vital. To learn a language, you must study every day like a practiced musician. “Each of you needs to find a way to consistently enhance and maintain your language.”

Ibrahimov said one of the real issues for today’s Army is identifying talent for languages. Project GO is very promising, he said, because it helps identify young talents at an early stage.

“Learning Arabic, learning Russian, learning Korean, learning Chinese is operationally important because they are important players in global geopolitics,” Ibrahimov said.



Pictured clockwise from top left: Spencer Museum of Art director Saralyn Reese Hardy socializes at the KU Veterans Meet and Greet, Feb. 18; Dick LaDuron, Nu'15, displays his blue and white Veterans Honor Cords as he poses with his family on Graduation Day, May 16; Graduate Military Programs visits the Hilltop Elementary School to receive a \$250 gift to the Wounded Warrior Scholarship, January 15; KU Naval ROTC Marines pose at the ROTC Joint Commissioning Ceremony, May 18; 2015-2016 Wounded Warrior Scholarship recipients (l-r) Alex Cataudella, Tim Hornik, Carol Meza and Jennifer Thornton; KU Army ROTC cadets conduct a flag raising ceremony in front of Strong Hall.

★ Student Veterans Center gunning for 2016 opening

Anticipating a continued increase in the number of post-9/11 veterans seeking higher education, KU is establishing the KU-SVC, which will serve as a single point of student contact to coordinate comprehensive support of student veterans.

Based on projections, by 2017 KU will have an estimated 1,000 non-traditional students on campus who are veterans or are using veterans benefits, says Mike Denning, director of Graduate Military Programs.

“Veterans are non-traditional students: they are typically older; they are likely first-generation students; they tend to have responsibilities outside higher education, such as families and jobs; and some carry the invisible wounds of PTSD and TBI. They carry multiple ‘at risk’ attributes and often find themselves not fully prepared academically, culturally or psychologically to successfully navigate a complex university system or to immediately immerse themselves into the traditional campus lifestyle. The

KU-SVC is being developed to effectively communicate to the veterans, meet their unique academic, psychological and social transitional needs, and jump start their career as thriving professionals amongst a network of KU Veteran Alumni.

It’s a holistic approach to student veteran services,” Denning said.



The more immediate challenge for the SVC, however, is fundraising. KU Endowment has created a new fund to raise more than \$300,000 needed to establish the center, but there is still some time to go. In the meantime, the university is in the process of submitting a Department of Education grant proposal that would partially fund the project.

“The success of that is a pretty important factor in how we move forward,” Denning said.

★ KU keys in on 'Veteran Success'

The University of Kansas has signed a letter pledging to support a critical benchmark in the Department of Defense’s recently announced web-based comparison tool designed to help military servicemembers make informed choices on schools and education programs.

Called “TA Decide,” the tool ticks off four benchmarks for selection: DoD Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); Principles of Excellence; Yellow Ribbon Program participation; and ‘8 Keys to Veteran Success.’

KU meets eligibility for the first three benchmarks, but has not received credit for the “8 Keys,” which range from creating a culture of trust and connectedness across the campus community to utilizing a uniform set of data tools to collect and track information on veterans. The University’s letter will make KU eligible for all four.

The TA Decide tool allows veterans to directly compare KU with more than 2,700 other participating institutions in the U.S.

Army cadets grab top spot in Ranger Buddy competition

The Jayhawk Detachment successfully ran the 21st Annual Best Ranger Buddy Competition at Sesquicentennial Point in Lawrence on April 18. One hundred and eighty-eight two-person teams participated in the one-day event. Schools came from as far east as Georgia and as far west as California. The day started before dawn at 0445 hrs. Cadets lined up to start the 15K Ruck March (the qualifying event) and were able to finish just in time for Kansas spring storms to make an appearance. Although training was halted for a couple hours, the Jayhawk Detachment resumed the day's events once the all clear was given. One hundred and fifty-eight qualifying teams continued to the next phase of the competition by competing in situational lanes that focused on technical and tactical skills that challenged cadets' problem-solving skills and mental agility under pressure. The event ended in a 2.5 mile Buddy Run.

Ultimately three teams in each category, Male/Male, Female/Female, and COED placed. First place Male Team went to the University of Kansas, CDT **Nathan Edgar** and CDT **Parker Pezatti**. First place female team went to St. John's University (MN).



Army cadets Josh Miller (l) and John Ray hustle to their next station in the Open Division of the Ranger Buddy Competition in Lawrence April 18. More than 375 cadets from 45 universities competed in the competition.

This elite event is a way to encourage excellence and focus on those skills that will best prepare top-notch cadets for a career as a 2nd Lieutenant. This continues to be an excellent spring event to keep the Ranger Challenge Team technically proficient and continue their high level of training.

Earlier in the spring, the Jayhawk Detachment cadets started their Annual Spring Combined Leadership Training Exercise with a unique training opportunity. KU Cadets caught a lift to Fort Riley on Thursday April 5, 2015, on a formation of UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters. Six of the helicopters flew in formation over

campus at 11:30 a.m. and landed at Shenk Recreational Sports Complex, where cadets — who marched to the fields from the Military Science Building on KU's main campus — boarded and flew to Fort Riley for training. Huey helicopters landed next to Robinson Center for an exercise in the 1980s, but Thursday was the first time Black Hawk helicopters had landed on campus soil.

The exercise benefited our cadets in two ways: It served as transportation to Fort Riley to start the weekend exercise and it allowed cadets exposure to helicopter operations. Approximately half of our 100 participating cadets had never ridden in a helicopter before, which added to the excitement of the weekend's planned activities.

On May 18, the Jayhawk Detachment had the pleasure of commissioning ten 2nd Lieutenants: **Jeffrey Ahle**, Lawrence; **Selina Bocanegra**, Donna, Tex.; **Ryan Cerutti**, St. Louis, Mo.; **Alex Chartrand**, Overland Park, Kan.; **Nathan Edgar**, Greenleaf, Kan.; **Kendall Gregg**, Sacramento, Calif.; **Ian Griffith**, Short Hills, N.J.; **Garret Hardon**, Hutchinson, Kan.; **Jacob McKnight**, Roeland Park, Kan.; **Christopher Wilson**, Fredericktown, Mo. Congratulations to each of them and we wish them the best!

Air Force cruises as new commander takes controls

We commissioned nine new lieutenants into the Air Force on May 18. It is exciting to see them go forward to accomplish critical missions in all three of the Air Force's domains - air, space and cyber-space. Names and first duty assignments:

Justin Berndt, Vance AFB, Okla.; **Alexander Del Curto**, Travis AFB, Calif.; **Blake Denniston**, Los Angeles AFB, Calif.; **Peter Gordon**, Keesler AFB, Miss.; **Teddy Oteba**, Los Angeles AFB, Calif.; **Franklin Painter**, Vance AFB, Okla.; **Cassandra Post**, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; **Kyla Thrasher**, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.; **John Toner**, Vance AFB, Calif.

Earlier in the semester, as part of our emphasis on Field Leadership training, our cadets completed a field leadership exercise (FLX) in Junction City, Kan. in April. The goal of this exercise was to work with Kansas State University's Air Force ROTC cadets. The FLX gave our cadets an opportunity to practice leading and following cadets they had never met before in time-constrained, problem-solving scenarios.

This semester we also made our first base visit to Offutt AFB in Omaha, Neb. Some of our cadets were raised in military families and going on base is routine for them. Yet for many it was the first time they had seen a commissary, flight line and all the other mainstays of a base. In



Final day of the Mustache March. Participants are judged by their peers for best/worst mustache.

addition to touring the base, the cadets had opportunities to talk to young officers from a variety of career fields. This allows broader familiarization with Air Force missions while hopefully allowing a few cadets to discover what they would love to do in the Air Force.

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On a lighter note, several of our cadets participated in the Air Force-wide Mustache March. This is an annual tradition during which those willing to accept the challenge compete for the best and worst mustache — always good for morale and a laugh or two.

The AFROTC High School Scholarship Program has concluded and Headquarters AFROTC has selected its scholarship winners. We have gone out to 12 of

the local high schools to present these scholarship offers. We are very excited that several of them will be attending KU this fall. We are expecting a very large incoming class with many of the students competing for college scholarships.

As for our cadre, Capt **David Rogers** moved here from Los Angeles AFB, Calif., and is the new Recruiting Flight Commander. He is a Kansas native and is glad to be back. SSgt **Anna Romero** also joined us this spring and has been critical

in helping all of our cadets as they join the program, go to Field Training and prepare to commission. This summer Lt Col **Brian Salmans** will be retiring from the Air Force and his position as the detachment commander. His replacement is inbound from Germany and will take command in early August.

“Aim High...Fly, Fight, Win!”

—Lt Col Brian Salmans, USAF

Navy Battalion bids farewell to departing commander

The start of the spring semester marked a very busy and bittersweet period for the NROTC Battalion. We had to say goodbye to the Commanding Officer, CAPT **David Schweizer** and Surface Warfare Officer LT **Joel Wheatley**, who both retired from the Navy. We also added a new member to our Jayhawk family with the arrival of LT **Matt Ziomkowski**.

At the end of March, the First and Second-class midshipmen hosted our annual Dining-In at the Oread Hotel in Lawrence. The Dining-In was an enjoyable and highly anticipated evening full of Navy tradition.



NROTC Commanding Officer Chris Higginbotham (I) presents MIDN Joshua Shope with the Military Order of World Wars award, April 15, 2015.

On April 15, the Jayhawk Battalion held its annual awards ceremony in Woodruff Auditorium of the Kansas Union. We recognized the midshipmen and

officer candidates that have stood out as exemplary leaders within the Battalion and, more importantly, in the classroom. I would like to extend a sincere thank you to all the organizations who continue to support our midshipmen in multiple ways, but particularly that night through a presentation of 28 awards. It was also great to see the families of midshipmen in attendance. Without their support we would not have such a successful set of future officers.

The upcoming year’s Battalion staff was chosen amongst a tough group of individuals. We have high expectations for our new 2015-2016 Battalion Commanding Officer and Battalion Executive Officer, MIDN **Marley Fisher** and MIDN **Stephen Walker**. Both individuals are eager to begin their new roles, and we are excited to see the benchmark they set for success during their tenure.

On May 18, we were happy to announce the newest commissioned Ensigns and Second Lieutenants. The event was held at the Union Auditorium in the Kansas Union with guest speaker Brig. Gen. **Scott A. Dold**, the Chief of Staff for the Kansas Adjutant General’s Department. Gen. Dold shared his best advice on items he wished he would have known as a newly commissioned officer in order to be successful.

I would like to introduce the newest Ensigns: **Jesi James** and **Mellissa Ryan** are nurses and are headed to Camp Lejeune and Naval Hospital Yokosuka, respectfully. **Jeremiah Karczewski**



MIDN 3/C Dalton Prins and MIDN 4/C Charles Richmond compete in a push up contest to break a tie during the Captain’s Cup competition, in which each platoon earns points through grades, physical fitness, and other competitions.

and **Colleen Wilmington** have chosen to be Surface Warfare Officers. ENS Karczewski is a nuclear option and will be reporting to the Wayne E. Meyer (DDG-108). ENS Wilmington has an oceanographer specialty and will report to the USS Nimitz (CVN-68). ENS **Andrew Stueckemann** is the lone aviator and will be reporting to Naval Station Pensacola. The newest Second Lieutenants to the Marine Corps are **Benjamin Allman**, **Corey Bredeson**, and **Austin Cataudella**. All three will be attending USMC Basic School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

As we wrapped up the semester the unit can start to look forward to the summer months. Our midshipmen have already started summer cruises where they will put their knowledge and leadership skills into practical use. Cruises range from Officer Candidate School for the Marine-options to underway cruises on Navy ships throughout the world.

★ Interview with KU grad Youngjun Kim, ROK Army officer

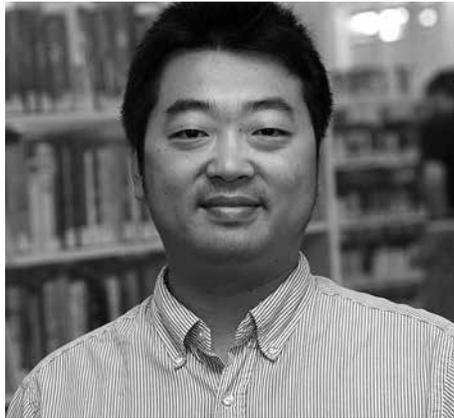
Growing up the only son of a wealthy construction company owner based in Seoul, South Korea, Youngjun Kim's path to a privileged position in the country's private sector seemed almost assured. But when the Asian financial crisis hit in the late 1990s, nearly devastating his father's business, Kim decided to leave his private boarding school and attend the prestigious Korea Military Academy in Seoul. After his service obligations for the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army were completed, he planned to go back to school and become a lawyer, but his experience at the Academy changed his mind. "I fell in love with international relations," Kim said. Commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in 2003, Kim was serving as a field artillery officer along the DMZ with North Korea when one day a visiting general singled him out as a rising star and made him his aide-de-camp on the spot. A decade later, Maj. Kim is the youngest tenured faculty member in history at the Korean National Defense University. He is a newly minted KU PhD in History and a soon-to-be published author. We caught up with Dr. Kim just before he left for Korea after five years at KU.

How did you end up choosing KU for your PhD?

I wanted to become an expert on international affairs inside the ROK Army, so I applied for the National Defense University professorship position with the opportunity to study abroad for a PhD in the U.S. I narrowed down my choice to three schools: University of Chicago, Naval Postgraduate School and KU. I wanted



Capt. Alessandro Vivarelli, Italian Army (l), Randy Masten, LTC USA (ret.), and then-Capt. Youngjun Kim, ROK Army, gather at the Truman Luncheon honoring former President Bill Clinton, Apr. 2013.



Dr. Youngjun Kim

a more academic perspective, so it came down to a choice between Korean history at Chicago or military history at KU, close to the CGSC. At that time I contacted William Steele at KU. He was very nice to me, and I got a very good feeling, impression. So that's why I came here.

Overall, how was your experience?

I can say I am very lucky. I've had a wonderful five years. I got to study with Adrian Lewis, Jake Kipp, Ted Wilson, Eve Levin—all excellent people. I became a Senior Research Fellow at the Foreign Military Studies Office, where monthly I wrote a column on Korean security issues. Finally, thanks to my supervisor Adrian Lewis's great help, I got a contract with Routledge Press for my book on North Korea.

Why did you decide to research North Korea?

A lot of it was my family background. My mother always talks about the Korean War. Her parents took care of North Korean refugees. My mother-in-law's family escaped from North Korea. They were wealthy there, but the Communists grabbed everything. I also walked at the DMZ every day, wondering, 'Who is the North Korean soldier? Who is my enemy? Why is my enemy the same nation, not China, not Japan, and why do we have to fight?'

So you try to understand the North Korean soldier in your book?

Yes, because no one has really studied this topic. A Chicago professor advised me

that I could get some significant primary sources in Washington, D.C., so I went there seeking to find answers about the North Korean People's Army and how this totalitarian, garrison state began.

What did you find?

I found that everyone in North Korea collaborated to create this garrison state, it wasn't just top-down, it wasn't just Kim Il-sung's dictatorship. It was ordinary people. The Korean People's Army was a very iconic symbol of modernization to North Korea, a crucial part of their national identity.

Is it the most militarized country in the world?

Yes, and for a reason. The North Korean people still remember the terrible casualties from the U.S. strategic bombing campaigns, it was just 60 years ago. So there is still community spirit among people. The leadership skillfully uses this feeling of victimization, they always blame everything bad on the U.S. They never admit they first invaded South Korea. They also remember humiliation by their partners—the Soviet Union and China. So they use fear and insecurity for their survival.

What is the next step for you in Korea?

After my Army service, I would like to be a Korean diplomat, a politician or a national security adviser. Condoleezza Rice, Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski—that kind of model. If I can find an opportunity in American academia, a research university, I'd like to engage in American government, perhaps as a policy adviser on U.S. military strategy.

Will you come back to KU?

I would love to. Over the past five years, KU has been the best place for not only my study and career development but also for the quality of my family's life. My family loved and will love to live in Lawrence. We are proud of becoming Jayhawk family. So who knows? Dreaming is free.

★ Leadership course seeks to broaden military minds

At a recent leadership development class for Army soldiers, Eileen Hawley, Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback's communications director and press secretary, shared a story about crisis communications.

In January 2009, when US Airways Flight 1549 struck a flock of geese, lost engine power and ditched on the Hudson River, the airline's CEO briefed the media within a matter of minutes. Getting the facts out quickly stopped rumors before they started and saved passengers' families from worrying, Hawley said. The airline came across as organized and in control. The lesson?

"Have a plan in place ahead of time," Hawley said. "They [U.S. Airways] did and were able to turn a nearly disastrous situation into an advantage." The airline's image is now strongly associated with safety and caring.

Speaking to a group of about 25 military personnel as well as civilians in private industry, Hawley was one of a dozen instructors hired to teach KU's Strategic Broadening Seminar held at the Lawrence campus June 1-13. The program is led by



A participant in the KU School of Business-led Strategic Broadening Seminar poses a question.

the School of Business's new Center for Business, Industry and National Security with program support from the School of Journalism and the Office of Graduate Military Programs.

The School of Business was selected earlier this year as one of only four universities in the nation to deliver the seminar for U.S. Army officers, senior noncommissioned officers and civilians. A unique attribute of the seminar is that Army leaders learn alongside their counterparts from business and industry, thus enriching the dialogue, says program director Tom Jindra.

"It's a broadening program that brings together leaders from both our national security institutions and corporations to explore the common threads of leadership," Jindra said.

A takeoff from the School of Business' previously taught Army Brigade Executive Education Leadership program, the curriculum focuses on leader development through personal style and skills, negotiation, and organizational communications.

The seminar is part of an overall Army initiative to give its leaders alternative educational experiences at top academic institutions in the nation. Besides the civilian universities, KU was selected alongside the Defense Academy of the U.K., the University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies at Ft. Leavenworth, the Counter-Terrorism Studies Interdisciplinary Center in Israel, and the Institute of World Politics in Washington, D.C.

Jindra said KU is working on an MOU that would carry KU participation in the program annually through 2021. "It's a significant long-term relationship with the Army," he said.

★ On campus: Collegiate Veterans Association

Letter from newly elected President Derek Kandt

Greetings, Veteran Alumni Network members! I am a proud veteran in the Navy Reserve and a proud servant of our veteran community here at the University of Kansas. I am currently attending the University of Kansas School of Law and expect to graduate with the class of 2017. I have a long history of family members going to Lawrence: My grandfather attended KU before he joined the Navy in WWII, my mother ran track at KU and my older sister completed her undergraduate work at KU. So I am very excited to be a Jayhawk.

Part of what attracted me to KU is that its students and alumni share a sense of family. We are all Jayhawks and that means something. The military is the same way, even more so in fact. I see the

CVA as an amazing opportunity to merge these two support structures and to help Jayhawk veterans find the support they need and deserve in Lawrence.

We are focused on increasing our value to student veterans. We are going to continue organizing student and alumni veteran social events, allowing our student veterans to build the professional networks that will help them continue to succeed once they have graduated KU.

We are also deep into planning some fun events for veterans and their families, including the Salute-to-Service football game and the Veteran's Day Run. Our big push this upcoming year is to expand our efforts in supporting the law school's effort to establish a veteran's legal aid clinic. Kansas has a huge veteran populace, many of whom sacrificed greatly in the recent



CVA President Derek Kandt

wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Now that they are home, many are facing unique legal complications that come from a life of frequent deployments, but they lack the funds to retain counsel for themselves. We hope to recruit the community's support and the funds necessary to get the program off the ground and start helping veterans.

It's just one of the many things we have planned for 2015-2016. Rock Chalk!





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★ Air Force ROTC cadet receives distinguished military graduate award



U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt Blake Dennison displays his 2015 Chancellor John Fraser Distinguished Military Graduate Award plaque and Civil War-era sword once used by KU Chancellor John Fraser.

Blake Dennison, a U.S. Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps graduate, is the 2015 recipient of the Chancellor John Fraser Distinguished Military Graduate Award in recognition of outstanding achievement as an ROTC cadet. This marks the second year in a row that the award has been given to an Air Force cadet.

Provost Jeff Vitter presented the award, given by the KU Veterans Alumni Network, at KU's joint ROTC commissioning ceremony held in the Kansas Union Ballroom on May 18.

A native of Walnut Creek, Calif., Dennison was selected for the Fraser Award from a pool of about 225 cadets and midshipmen in KU's Army, Navy and Air Force ROTC programs. He is the third recipient of the award.

As a cadet, Dennison was chosen for several critical leadership positions in his

detachment, including Mission Support Group Commander and Initial Military Training Commander. He received numerous awards: American Legion Award for Scholastic Excellence, the AFROTC Meritorious Service and Commendation Awards, the Academic Honors Award, and the physical fitness award, among many other accolades. He was the USAF Cadet of the Year in 2014.

"Second Lieutenant Blake Dennison exemplifies the qualities reflected in the Fraser Award this year," said Lt Col Brian Salmans, commander of KU's Air Force ROTC detachment. "Lieutenant Dennison has been an outstanding scholar and cadet throughout his tenure at KU. He always excelled in the leadership positions he held as a cadet, demonstrating an outstanding focus on the mission while showing compassion for the cadets he led. I am proud of his accomplishments as a cadet, and I know he will be an outstanding officer in the United States Air Force."