

HOUSTON MSTC
ARMY JROTC



THE BLACK KNIGHTS' SWORD



SEPTEMBER 2023

THE BLACK KNIGHTS MEET MATTRES MACK



Mattres Mack of Gallery Furniture graciously allowed the Black Knights to hold a fundraiser at his famous furniture store. Mattres Mack is a supporter of the military and a big supporter of young people who are hardworking and moving in the right direction. The Black Knights thank him for his support.

"TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS"

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NO DAYS OFF!

During the summer, the battalion commander and staff made a visit to Gallery Furniture to meet with Mattress Mack. They asked could they hold a car wash and a BBQ plate sale in August. C/MAJ Jai Nava, commander, made the presentation to Mattress Mack with her staff, and he agreed to let them use his name and property. Mattress Mack stated "You cadets are the best thing about Sam Houston, and this was an excellent presentation.

The carwash was a big success. The cadets washed many cars, and Mattress Mack encouraged all his employees to get a carwash, and he bought his employees lunch from the barbeque sale. He stated at the conclusion of the carwash, "The Black Knights are okay in my book. Let me know if you want to hold another one real soon." THANK YOU, SIR!



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UPPER LEFT: Cadets proudly posing in front of the Gallery Furniture.

CENTER RIGHT: A cadet demonstrates support by promoting the fundraiser with a handmade sign.

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FROM SAM HOUSTON TO WEST POINT



2023 graduate Cadet Colonel Erik Jimenez shipped to the United States Military Academy on June 25, 2023. He proved himself worthy during their six-week basic training program where he had to pass a battery of tests to include running, road marching, push-ups, pull ups, and land navigation. He graduated in early August and started his four-year journey in college where he will eventually become a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army earning no less than \$75,000 per year.

His scholarship is worth just over \$240,000, and he is the first Sam Houston MSTC alum to accept an appointment to the historic and prestigious academy of higher learning.

Erik served two years as the Black Knights' battalion commander leading his organization to the coveted HISD Superintendent's Cup where he also served as the unarmed drill commander and color guard commander.

Erik is a patriot and a trail blazer. Several underclassmen now have an opportunity to accept an appointment due to his influence.

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HISD AND SCHOOL SUPPORT



Prior to the start of the school year, the Houston ISD held the annual convocation where teachers and administrators across the district come together to kick off the new school season. The Black Knights volunteered to serve as ushers leaving the school at 6am to support the district.

And just days before the start of the school year, the Black Knights were once again serving their school. They moved several hundred boxes of books and supplies to classrooms. They also helped teachers relocate so that the teachers were not overwhelmed. **SUPPORT!**



Left: Cadets packing teacher supplies into bags for teachers

Right: Cadets loading packages on carts to deliver them to classrooms for teacher

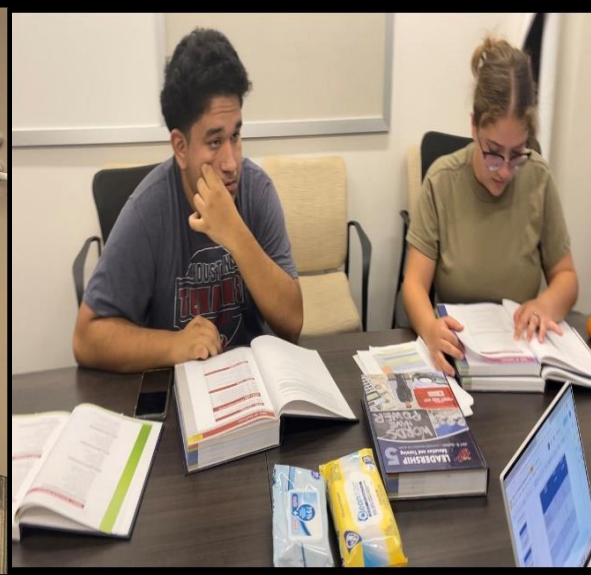


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PLAN TO SUCCEED

C/Major Jai Nava is the 2023-2024 battalion commander. She held the annual training conference with her staff and planned out 40 weeks of training that aligns with U.S. Army Cadet Command requirements and standards. She is senior this year.



ARMY JUNIOR ROTC IS A STUDENT LED PROGRAM

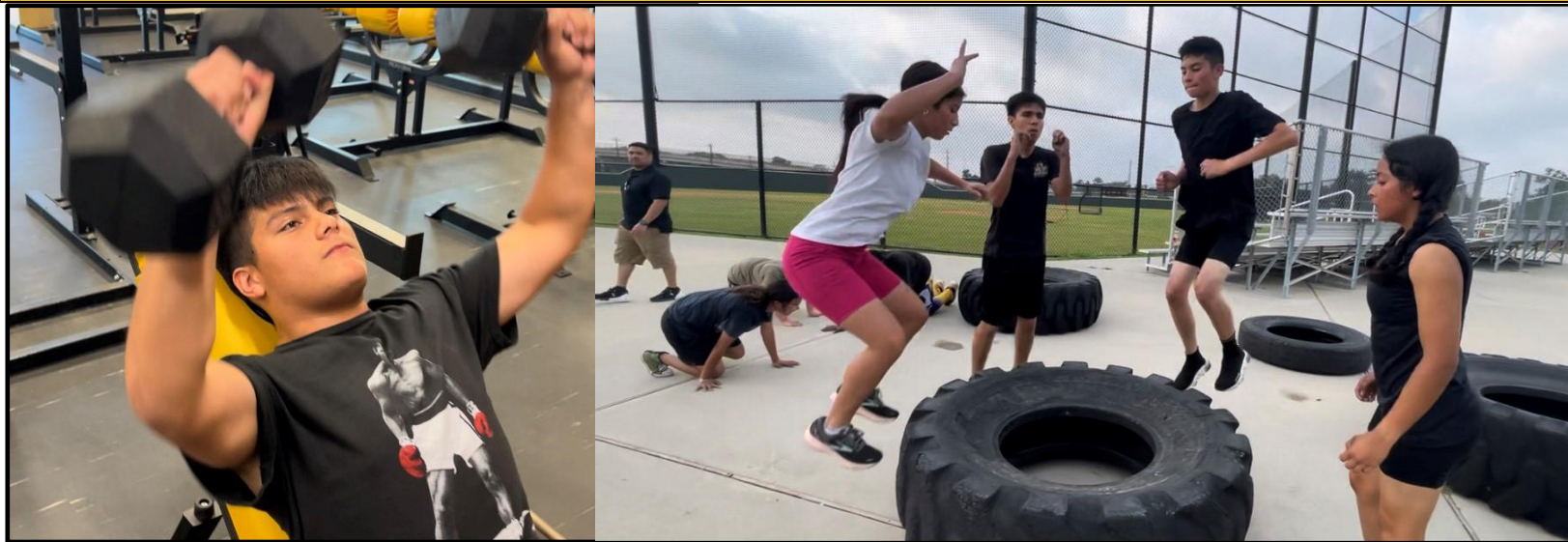
JROTC has a set curriculum for freshmen through senior classes. Juniors and seniors are drivers of the program with a command and staff leading the way. In August, the commander, Command Sergeant Major Frank Barajas, Executive Officer Elizabeth Rigney, and Training/Operations Officer Michael Espinosa held a two-day conference where they scripted every single week of training for the 2023-2024 school year.

The **Director of Army Instruction**, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Cornell McGhee, published the annual training guidance which highlights inspections, competitions, and other requirements and this team used that map out what the battalion needs to train and when. They used all four textbooks along with the Texas Education Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) crosswalk to arrive at a solid plan.

Senior Army Instructor, Major (Retired) Micah Ray was the approving authority of their training schedules for the year. Staff work happens in the background, and trained cadets are up to the task to lead.

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SUMMER FITNESS TRAINING



During the summer months, the Black Knights engaged in daily physical fitness starting at 7am. Running, weightlifting, pushups, and everything in between, the Black Knights were up for the challenge. During the 2023-2024 school year, every cadet will be assessed in their physical fitness with the Cadet Challenge. The summer is the perfect time to start meeting goals so they can set new ones for the year. **WORK IN PROGRESS!**

The Black Knights, both male and female teams placed 1st in the district physical fitness competition. This year, U.S. Army Cadet Command is hosting a national competition at Fort Knox, Kentucky called “The Raider Challenge.” The Black Knights Excalibur, fitness team, has registered and intends on competing in the “Challenge” level which is for beginners. Six females and eight males will represent Sam Houston MSTC and HISD at the competition slated for 3 November 2023.



“TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS”

OPERATION: DOUBLE DOWN

We want you to join our
LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE!
Ask your JROTC Instructors for
additional information

D2 NATIONAL Runners-up
1st Place Battalion in Houston
1st place Armed Drill
1st Place Primary Color Guard
1st Place Secondary Color Guard
1st place Male PT
1st Place Female PT
1st Place Marksmanship
1st Place Flag Folding
2nd Place Unarmed Drill



Notes from the Senior Army Instructor: Major Micah A. Ray Sr.

First, I want to welcome Sergeant First Class Abbie Lopez to our instructor team. He has a fantastic story as he is an alum of Sam Houston High School who then went on to serve our country in the U.S. Army. He retired in 2021 and now serves as our freshmen instructor and drill team coach. SFC Barry Page and I are very happy to have him on board and this program will only get better as a direct result of his arrival.

Our goals for this year are to **defend** the Superintendent's Cup, take two drill teams to the national drill meet in Daytona Beach, take our fitness team to Fort Knox, Kentucky, qualify no less than 12 cadet instructors who will teach classes, and have fun while we do it all. Finally, we want to grow our booster club as we have the best booster club any program could possibly have.

To my fellow teachers and administrators, we are looking for motivated freshmen who want to serve this battalion and develop themselves mentally and physically. Send students to B152 if they are serious about leadership.

Finally, special thanks to Mattress Mack for taking an interest in our cadets. We hope to work with you sooner rather than later.

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BATTALION COMMANDER

Greetings to all, much has been accomplished by current and past cadets this past summer. Whether grinding physically or mentally to take the next step towards growing character, skills, or into a leader. Now it's time for the Black Knights to not only continue our hard work but to show off how dedicated and great we are as a battalion, in and out of the classroom. We've came back stronger from the workouts, summer camps, and continue to strive for EXCELLENCE. As we are THE BLACK KNIGHTS at Sam Houston MSTC ready for duty. Let's have a great and amazing year.



COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

Greetings to all of you, summer is officially over, and we are ready to start the school year. Cadets from both teams have been working hard during the summer to prepare to dominate and once again be a winning battalion this year. Many cadets have grown mentally and physically and have become better leaders. The Black Knights are ready to kick off the school year in the right direction. We are excited to see what comes during the 2023-2024 school year. Good luck to all. GO BLACK KNIGHTS



EXECUTIVE OFFICER

We have come a long way from last year and this year is just a new journey. I am excited for what is to come and our experiences from now on. Make the most of your year and strive to be the best you possibly can be. Don't stop fighting Black Knights! Keep pushing forward! Have a great year and strive for excellence Black Knights!

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