The Black Knights won overall first place in the annual HISD’s “Bluebonnet Drill Competition,” winning for a third consecutive year (2022, 2023, 2024).

“TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS”
FOR THE RECORD
Here are the stats for the competition from March 2\textsuperscript{nd}:

1\textsuperscript{st} Place Armed Drill (1\textsuperscript{st} in inspection, regulation, and exhibition)
1\textsuperscript{st} Place Unarmed Drill (1\textsuperscript{st} in inspection, 2\textsuperscript{nd} in regulation, and 3\textsuperscript{rd} in exhibition)
1\textsuperscript{st} Place Primary Color Guard
7\textsuperscript{th} Place Secondary Color Guard
1\textsuperscript{st} Place Female Fitness (Ranked #1 Yamileth Aviles, Ranked #2 Angelita Brown)
1\textsuperscript{st} Place Male Fitness (Ranked #1 Luis ChavezHerrera, Ranked #2 Diego Roldan, Ranked #3 Steven Silva)
4\textsuperscript{th} Place Archery
15\textsuperscript{th} Place Marksmanship
8\textsuperscript{th} Place Female Swim
9\textsuperscript{th} Place Male Swim

The Sam Houston MSTC 1\textsuperscript{st} Battalion Black Knights dominated this competition. Here are the scores for the top ten programs:

- 1\textsuperscript{st}: Sam Houston MSTC 1,450 points  2\textsuperscript{nd} Place: Pearland 690 points  3\textsuperscript{rd} Place: Scarborough 630 points
- 4\textsuperscript{th} Place: Waller HS 600 points  5\textsuperscript{th} Place: Northside HS 460 points  6\textsuperscript{th} Place: Windmill Lakes-Orem 390 points
- 7\textsuperscript{th} Place: Bellaire HS 385 points  8\textsuperscript{th} Place: Waltrip HS 380 points  9\textsuperscript{th} Place: Westbury HS 335 points
- 10\textsuperscript{th} Place: Westside HS 335 points

The competition took place at Westside High School on March 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2024.

“TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS”
TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS

Staff Sergeant Rodriguez is the Army recruiter who helps students at Sam Houston enlist into the United States Army.

To be qualified, a young person needs to be on track to graduate on time, pass a basic minimum academic test (ASVAB), not have legal issues, be drug free, and meet height and weight standards. This school year to date, five Black Knights have elected to enlist in the U.S. Army or Army Reserve. Benefits young people must consider: Hazelwood Act (Texas money for college), on the job training, health insurance, G.I. Bill for college, $4,000 annually for Tuition Assistance, earn Veteran’s Housing Voucher to purchase a home, Veteran’s preference for civilian employment, retirement pension.

I DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR!

Senior Santiago Rivera enlisted into the United States Army in March of 2024 as an infantryman earning a $44,000 cash bonus along with the G.I. Bill and Tuition Assistance that fully pays for his college education.

Santiago joined JROTC at Sam Houston MSTC at the start of his second semester of his senior year. He stated he joined JROTC because he knew he was soon graduating and needed something to do after high school.

Since joining in January, he trained to compete on the marksmanship team learning very quickly how to handle an air rifle. JROTC does not recruit young people to join the military, but the program does help those who want to join the military either as an officer or enlisted person learn more about the profession of arms.

The program gives young people another view of what life could look like after high school along with teaching them leadership skills, history, tradition, public service, and communication skills.

There is no requirement to join the military in this program, but some do choose to raise their right hand and take the oath of enlistment.

Above: Santiago competing in a district marksmanship match in March.
Left: Staff Sergeant Rodriguez is Houston MSTC’s Army recruiter.

Staff Sergeant Rodriguez is the Army recruiter who helps students at Sam Houston enlist into the United States Army. To be qualified, a young person needs to be on track to graduate on time, pass a basic minimum academic test (ASVAB), not have legal issues, be drug free, and meet height and weight standards. This school year to date, five Black Knights have elected to enlist in the U.S. Army or Army Reserve. Benefits young people must consider: Hazelwood Act (Texas money for college), on the job training, health insurance, G.I. Bill for college, $4,000 annually for Tuition Assistance, earn Veteran’s Housing Voucher to purchase a home, Veteran’s preference for civilian employment, retirement pension.

“TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS”
Cadet Sergeant Ethan Erazo  
Cadet 2nd Lieutenant Luis Castellanos

**Career Focused**

Ethan and Luis are two of many Black Knights who attend the Barbara Jordan Career Center to learn a special skill that will make them more marketable in the work force. Both are 11th grade drill team members with ambitions of military service, but they are also learning valuable skills that will make them employable in a high demand career path. Army instructors encourage cadets to diversify their educational opportunities by seeking enrollment into a program at BJCC. The way to apply is during the 10th grade year. To qualify, a student must have good attendance and good conduct, so it is imperative that underclassmen begin to think about their futures and how they can succeed.

- Have 12.0 credits by August 2024 (We do not count NGs for credit unless they are cleared);
- Have good attendance;
- Be starting your third year of high school in August 2024;
- Be on track to graduate with your classmates in the spring of 2026.

11th grader Luis is considering enlisting in the U.S. Army or a life in welding. He is keeping his options open.

“TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS”
Annually, the Black Knights visit the feeder middle schools in the spring to recruit for new team members. In March, 80 eight graders asked to sign up for Army JROTC. 10 students participated in the push up contest, five males and five females, and the 8th grade class cheered on their fellow Eagles.

The Black Knights will keep in contact with the 80 students who signed up to keep them interested and provide mentorship about what is to come in high school.

In March, Ms. Agu brought her class to the JROTC hall to reinforce the lesson she taught concerning military and veterans. She had her students thank the Army instructors for their service and shake their hands. It was a moving gesture and the JROTC instructors are thankful for our friends.

“TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS”
On March 18, the Black Knights’ Honor Guard team presented the colors at the annual National Women’s Day Celebration Luncheon, but this time, they had support from the Mariachi band. Ms. Zambrano, Mariachi band leader, trained two young ladies to sing the national anthem during the presentation.

The CMAA is a group focused on civil engineering, and annually they highlight women in the Houston area who are accomplished in the field of engineering. The Black Knights have supported this event now three years in a row.

Working with the Mariachi band was a special treat for all involved. Thank you to Ms. Zambrano and the lovely singers who represented Sam Houston MSTC with Pride!
GREETINGS, the Black Knights look beyond the present and into how we can pave the path for the future. "Leave it BETTER than you found it". Our Battalion works hard to achieve the most out of what they are given. Either to be top in the district, earn certificates in welding, or to find their calling after high school. Grinding our way to victory was only the start. Now we are looking for our future leaders to continue our legacy. They will be our legacy. We will continue to strive for EXCELLENCE!!! GO BLACK KNIGHTS

THE BLACK KNIGHTS continue to soar as they win the yearly HISD Bluebonnet Drill competition which now puts them as the Bluebonnet Drill champions for the 3rd year in a row. Our cadets continue to handle business inside and outside of the classroom as we had a cadet enlist into the U.S Army. The Black Knights continue to dominate as they prepare for Nationals in Daytona Florida. GO BLACK KNIGHTS!!!!

The military ball is April 13th starting at 5:30pm at the VFW, 27 Farrel Street west of Houston MSTC. Also, please support our carwash on April 6th at the VFW starting 11am. We want to thank in advance those who are supporting our military ball from Barbara Jordan’s Culinary department, Ms. Candace Watson-Mack with decorations, and all teachers and faculty who purchased a ticket. See you at the ball.

“TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS”