

**THE BLACK KNIGHTS' SWORD JUNE 2024**

**SENIOR KNIGHTS  
ON THE MOVE!**



**The Black Knights' Sword is proud to present the seniors who have committed themselves to service to the United States and the United States Army. The Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Myrna Trevino, at the Houston ISD's 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Military and Career Signing Day on 16 May 2024, thanked the Black Knights for what they are about to do.**

**"TO MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER CITIZENS"**

# CHANGE OF MISSION



**DAVID BARAJAS**

GPA: 3.0

## ACTIVITIES

- Unarmed DT
- Color Guard
- Honor Guard



## CAREER BEFORE VS NOW

When I was younger, I wanted to play in the NBA and retire as a Golden State Warriors. Now I'm going into the U.S. Army.

## FINAL WORDS

"Thank you, instructors for motivating and teaching me life skills. I'm grateful for the chance to compete and be on unarmed and ending as city champs and top 5 in 5th brigade. To conclude this message, thank you guys for all the opportunities and friendships I have made, but for the most part my best friend Jai Nava for being there when I need it and a great mentor to me. I'm much thankful for everything love you dodo and the GOAT has signed off."

**ARMY POSITION:** Enlisted Pending Job Placement

**BENEFITS:** GI Bill, Tuition Assistance, Pension

# ARMY TWINS

**FRANK BARAJAS**



GPA: 3.25

## ACTIVITIES

- Unarmed DT
- Barbara Jordan Welding Program (Certified)

## CAREER BEFORE VS NOW

My younger self wanted to be a football player. I'm now joining the U.S. Army going to Germany.

## FINAL WORDS

"First, I want to thank Major Ray for bringing me into the program. Staying allowed me to explore more, get out of my comfort zone, and allowed me to make great friends. You all have given me the best high school experience I could ever ask for. To all the upcoming seniors, I encourage right choices and I wish you all well on whatever career path you choose because you are all great people and the best people in our school. Once again thank you to everyone #signingout"

**ARMY POSITION:** Enlisted Human Resources Personal Actions

**BENEFITS:** GI Bill, Tuition Assistance, Pension



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## JADE RODRIGUEZ

**GPA:** 3.0

### ACTIVITIES

-Mariachi



### CAREER BEFORE VS NOW

When I was younger, I always saw myself being a musician or an artist because I wanted fun and adventure. Now as I've grown and matured, I've found that to get the life that I want I must work hard and for me, joining the military is the way to get there.

### FINAL WORDS

"I want to thank the instructors here in the JROTC program for helping and encouraging me to get where I want to go. Most importantly, I want to thank my mom for allowing me to find my own path in life and supporting me in my endeavors."

**ARMY POSITION:** Enlisted Information Technology Specialist

**BENEFITS:** GI Bill, Tuition Assistance, Pension



## MARIA LOPEZ

**GPA:** 3.6

### ACTIVITIES

-NHS

-Referee Club

-Senior Committee



### CAREER BEFORE VS NOW

I saw myself being a veterinarian and an astronaut, as my way of caring for the nature and curiosity of the unknown. They are different now that I have prioritized myself first and looking up to being what I'm meant to be, a U.S. Army and Commercial pilot.

### FINAL WORDS

"Thank you, instructors, for the growth and discipline you've created within me. Thank you Major for influencing me to get into the U.S. Army. Sgt Paige and Sgt Lopez for giving me great advice when I get in. All my close friends for always making me feel welcomed and look forward for my arrival. My dad for always telling me I have his support. People that made me prove what I am capable of. But most of all, one cadet out of all for being there in the moments where I almost gave up on myself but found the strength by them lending their own, pushing me to finally prioritize myself, and for reminding me that all I went through was to give me more power to keep moving forward, they know who they are."

**ARMY POSITION:** Enlisted Aviation Operations Specialist

**BENEFITS:** GI Bill, Tuition Assistance, Pension



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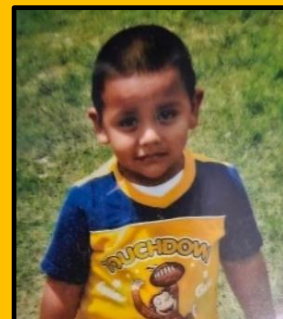


## SANTIAGO RIVERA

**GPA:** 2.8

### ACTIVITIES

- Marksmanship
- Open Mat Wrestling



### CAREER PATH

When I was younger, I knew I wanted to go into the military. Sometime past and I found interest in pursuing architect, but I knew deep down going into the army was my calling.

### FINAL WORDS

"I want to thank my parents. And leave off with saying, do what you find hard and tedious to do now so you don't regret not trying it in the future."

**ARMY POSITION:** Enlisted Infantry

**BENEFITS:** GI Bill, Tuition Assistance, Pension

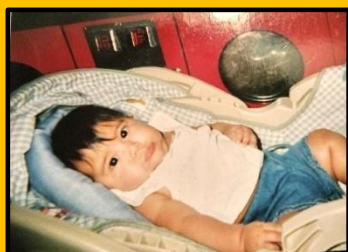
**CASH BONUS:** \$44,000

## JAI NAVA

**GPA:** 4.5

### ACTIVITIES

- Unarmed
- Marksmanship
- Physical Training
- NHS
- Diamonds Group



### CAREER PATH

I knew I loved caring for individuals particularly children, so I envisioned myself as a childcare provider or mentor. But I never thought of where I would go after HS, now I'm going to attend the United States Military Academy and still achieve my goal of service.

### FINAL WORDS

"Thank you to all my teachers, instructors, coaches, and friends especially my family. Y'all believed in me before I could see my full potential. I will continue to use the strength that you've given me to become a person who will bring good to what I do."

**ARMY POSITION:** Accepted to United States Military Academy at West Point

**CAREER PATH:** Army Officer





# OPTIONS

Army JROTC encourages young people to explore all options for their future. Whether it is trade school, community college, university life, or military, young people with solid information will make the best choice for themselves. For serving in the military, here are the benefits:

**Health Insurance**

**College Money**

**Job Training**

**Travel**

**Work Experience**

**Pride in serving the country.**



# TOP 10%

Annually, Houston MSTC recognizes seniors who have elevated themselves to the top 10% of their class. This year, seniors Cadet Staff Sergeant Angelita Brown and Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Jai Nava. Jai Nava is ranked #5 in her class.

Both young ladies were cornerstones of the #1 ranked female physical fitness team helping their team win #1 within district for the previous two consecutive years.

Both young ladies are also varsity level athletes where Angelita has been a member of the basketball team, track team, soccer team, and the newly formed flag football team. Jai has several years of service to the volleyball team.

The Black Knights are proud of what our scholar-athletes do and will continue to do. Each of them has also earned Army JROTC honor cords for their graduation uniforms.

Congratulations and best of luck!



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## **THE SITUATION AT DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA**

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## ARMY AND ALL SERVICE COMPETITION

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, the Black Knights Elite armed drill team left Houston, TX for Daytona Beach, Florida to compete against the absolute best JROTC programs in the United States.

**There are over 1,700 Army JROTC programs and the Black Knights Elite won 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall.**

**For all service against Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps programs which total over 3,200 programs nationally, the Black Knights competed in the top division finishing 7<sup>th</sup> place. The color guard placed 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in the United States.**

Sergeant First Class Abbie Lopez led the team to and from Daytona Beach from 1 – 6 May. Coach Adam Obregon, Houston MSTC Alum, is the primary instructional coach who has taught this team how win at the highest level. The booster club president, Fabiola Torres, served as the female escort helping the ladies on the team with hair maintenance and also made sure everyone had the proper nutrition.

The goal for next year is to get back to Daytona Beach and advance beyond 7<sup>th</sup> place national.



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