

ROTC programs encourage students

Air Force alumnus returns for honor, chance to inspire

By JESSICA FARGEN
Staff Reporter

He flew 232 combat missions during the Vietnam War. He has flown more than 2,700 hours in 27 different types of aircraft. He was a test pilot for the F-4, F-111 and the F-16.

And when he attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the 1960s, he bussed tables at the Selleck Hall cafeteria.

Brig. Gen. Claude M. Bolton Jr., a graduate of UNL, walked back onto the university's campus on Friday to become the first person inducted into the Air Force ROTC's Detachment 465's Hall of Fame.

Bolton was here to be honored, but he also was here to educate, encourage and inspire UNL ROTC cadets.

Bolton said he was honored and thrilled to be inducted into the hall of fame and jumped at the opportunity to come back to UNL, which he called "the best university in the land."

Before Bolton was inducted, he spoke to cadets about his expectations for them.

"Challenges can be made a reality with people like you. You have to do better than myself and my colleagues," he said.

Bolton told cadets they are living in challenging times for the military, as the budget is being cut and bases are being closed. He said U.S. citizens do not want a large military when there is no immediate threat to their safety.

There are several things cadets can do now to prepare themselves for the future, when they go out into the real world, Bolton said.

Bolton said cadets should know a history of the Air Force as well as understand other U.S. and foreign military services, should become experts in whatever they do and should not look at their careers as jobs.

"This career has never been a job. I never had a bad assignment because it has everything to do with people. You will meet people that are truly world class," Bolton said.

Matt Bender, cadet wing commander at UNL, presented the hall-of-fame plaque to Bolton. Bender said he was honored "to be associated with the same institution as (Bolton) is."

Jen Trippel, cadet wing executive, said, "He is a good eye-opener for cadets, especially for freshmen. It gives them something to strive for and puts focus in their lives."

Before the induction ceremony, which was held at the Culture Center, 333 N. 14th St., Bolton also spoke to cadets about the Air Force Materiel Command, where he is director of requirements at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

As director of requirements, it is Bolton's job to provide war fighters with equipment, training, tools and testing. Bolton listens to requests and then works with contractors, Congress and other military personnel to get what they need.

Richard Gaddie, Air Force ROTC commander for Detachment 465 at UNL, said Bolton was chosen to be the first inductee into the hall of fame for several reasons.

Gaddie said Bolton represented the university through the ROTC program and the electrical engineering department, where he is a member of the board of directors. He also has been back to speak to UNL cadets in the past few years, and he was the only general officer to receive his commission through Detachment 465.

His success in the military makes him a role model for cadets, Gaddie said.

Bolton joined the Air Force in 1969 and received his wings in 1970. Throughout his career, he has served as squadron and wing safety officer, instructor pilot, test pilot, F-16 program monitor at the Pentagon and deputy program director for the B-2 system program office at the Pentagon.

Bolton said although his career has been exciting and extensive, he was still envious of young people coming into the military because they had so much ahead of them.

"We're putting down the foundation now, and it's up to you to come and make it better

Army cadets make name for Nebraska at national camps

By TED TAYLOR
Senior Reporter

Ahhh, Nebraska.

It's a state known throughout the country for its football, corn, vast expanses of God's green earth and ... exceptional Army ROTC cadets?

It may sound odd, but that soon may be the case after recent years of outstanding work at summer training camps have put UNL's training corps in the same class as some of the nation's best.

This summer, nine cadets from University of Nebraska-Lincoln traveled to Fort Lewis, Wash., for ROTC Advanced Camp, where they basically kicked ROTC butt.

In every one of the performance and leadership evaluations conducted at the camp, including physical fitness, land navigation and rifle marksmanship tests, UNL's senior cadets placed higher than the camp average, Lt. Col. Rick Barrera said.

It was the first time for such an accomplishment in more than 10 years, he said.

"Traditionally we have done at or above the average," he said, "but there was always one area where we didn't do so well."

Dawn Lenz, UNL's only female senior cadet, was also UNL's highest-scoring cadet.

The business administration major from Sioux City, Iowa, said her work at the camp was something for the younger female cadets to look to.

But bragging about how well she did this past summer isn't what will make better cadets, she said.

"I don't play up my camp score a lot," she said. "It was a big honor for me, but I just talk to them about having to work harder because they are women and it's a man's army."

"If they're not ready, they're going to get stomped on by the other schools who are trying to achieve the same goals."

“We have some very outstanding leaders coming out of the program.”

Lt. Col. Rick Barrera
Army ROTC officer

Teamwork with cadets from all over the nation is the most important aspect to doing well at the camp, she said.

None of the regiments at the camp include more than one person from a school.

"You can't survive without the help of your teammates," Lenz said.

Barrera said the military science professors counted on the seniors to use what they've learned as cadets and at the advanced camps in helping the younger cadets.

"We rely on them to train next year's (camp) attendees," he said. "They set an example for the juniors this year who will be going next year."

UNL's battalion commander, Brian Medcalf, who is in charge of all of the cadets on campus, said their work at the camps may help put Nebraska's name on the map.

"People have stereotypes about Nebraska," said the civil engineering student from Clearwater. "But when you go and do well, you become better respected."

More than 3,000 cadets from about 250 schools across the country took part in the summer camp, Barrera said.

"Doing well at the camps, what it signifies for us, as a program, is that our cadets went there very well-trained and prepared," he said. "Leadershipwise, we have some very outstanding leaders coming out of the program."

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