

League of Military Veterans Newsletter



Second Baptist Church & St. James AME Church, Elgin

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DID YOU KNOW WE SERVE PROUDLY



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Administrative Information

- General: The Second Baptist Church & St. James League of Military Veteran's Newsletter is published periodically throughout the year. The managing editor is Deacon Ruberl Carr. This newsletter is a collective volunteer effort comprised of articles and items sharing veterans-related news, experiences, and resources amongst veterans, family members and our Church Community.
- The mission of the League of Military Veterans is to function as an in-reach and outreach service body of military veterans dedicated to providing a unifying advocacy for veterans, their families, service organizations and those currently serving in the armed forces to ignite a passion to follow Jesus on the home front and on the battlefield throughout the year.





A Prayer for Soldiers

Brave warriors, should fate find us in battle,

May our cause be just.

May our leaders have clear vision.

May our courage not falter.

May we be triumphant and earn victory
as we show mercy to our enemies.

May our efforts bring lasting peace.

May our sacrifice be always
appreciated by those we serve.

May we return to our loved ones unharmed.

Should we be harmed, may our wounds heal.

Should we perish in the struggle,
may God embrace us and find for us
a place in His Kingdom

Memorial Day

Memorial Day is a sacred occasion when we pay tribute to all the military men and women who have died in service to the United States. It is also an observance that owes its creation to blacks. This tradition began when newly freed slaves decorated the grave sites of Civil War soldiers as a way to honor those who had fought for their freedom. But blacks were not just passive bystanders. Many volunteered to serve in the military, ensuring they were active in reshaping the United States to be truer to its founding principles.

It is for this reason that Memorial Day should hold special significance for all black Americans, but especially for those who are veterans or serving in the military today. As the country memorializes the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice, it is important to remember that thousands of them were black Americans who were treated as second-class citizens in the country for which they fought. But they voluntarily served, anyway, because of their belief in their and in the hope that their display of devotion to the nation would result in gains for all black Americans.

From the Revolutionary War to the current conflicts, black men and women have served with dignity and honor. And many would not or could not live to see the progress the country has made. Black service members have lived in a United States where their people were lynched, segregated and forbidden any involvement in the political process.

Yet they still went off to battle because they believed black people would never be equal in the United States if they didn't fight for it. And they were right. Much of the nation's progress on race is a direct result of black Americans' volunteering for military service, even if it meant death, and performing exceptionally in the process. The gains that black people have made over the past two centuries are not a result of America's benevolence, but of black Americans' willingness to risk life and limb for the country's preservation.

Before there was *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawing racial segregation, there was an executive order from President Harry Truman in 1948 that began the process of desegregating the military. Though this was but one incremental step of many toward a national policy of desegregation, it was the performance of blacks in the military, particularly their distinguished service in World War II that made this order possible.

It wasn't long ago that organizations such as the NAACP had to lobby the federal government to increase black enlistment rates so that all who wanted to serve could do so. Today, black Americans are overrepresented in the military, accounting for 16.5 percent of service members while constituting only 12.2 percent of the U.S. population. Black America's commitment to military service, like racial progress, has been steady for generations.

Of course, service comes with its challenges. The segregation that occurred in the military is well chronicled. And the benefits that went to others who served, such as grants to pay for education and affordable mortgages on preferable terms, were often explicitly withheld from blacks. More recently, controversies over promotion rates and the singling out of blacks in hair grooming policies are a reminder that more work needs to be done. But these occurrences do not undo or invalidate the sacrifices made by blacks in the military for centuries. In fact, they remind us of the necessity and obligation to serve.

So on this Memorial Day, all of us should take a break from the cookouts and celebrating the unofficial dawn of summer to remember those who died for our country. But black America, especially, should remember that this commemoration began because we recognized the importance of honoring those who died on the long march to freedom. And most especially, we must remember black Americans who died defending our country so that we can continue striving to make it free and equal for all.

West Point



A group of black female cadets from West Point who posed for a photograph with their fists raised in the air were scrutinized and accused of divisive behavior. However, after the investigation concluded it was determined that didn't break any Army or Department of Defense rules.

The inquiry found that the picture was “among several taken in the spur-of-the-moment,” the U.S. Military Academy said in a news release. The release continued: “It was intended to demonstrate ‘unity’ and ‘pride,’ according to the findings of the inquiry.”

The photograph showed 16 cadets posing at the U.S. Military Academy, all pictured in cadet dress uniforms and raising their fists. The cadets won't face any punishment, the release stated.

A letter from Lt. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, Jr., academy superintendent, did note that the cadets would receive some instruction, though. “As members of the Profession of

West Point - cont'd

Arms, we are held to a high standard, where our actions are constantly observed and scrutinized in the public domain,” the letter states. “We all must understand that a symbol or gesture that one group of people may find harmless may offend others. As Army officers, we are not afforded the luxury of a lack of awareness of how we are perceived.”

In a report last week, the Army Times reported that the image had “been shared widely in military circles, with claims the women are supporting the Black Lives Matter movement.” As the suggestion arose, however, others said the picture displayed something else entirely.

Army Times reported that “several readers” sent the picture to the publication, raising questions about whether the cadets were in violation of a Department of Defense directive about political activities.

Among the critics was one blogger who noted in an article titled: “Racism Within West Point.” “This overt display of the black lives matter movement is not, in itself wrong, but to do so while in uniform is completely unprofessional and not in keeping with what the USMA stands for,...and in violation of the Military's Directive.

The inquiry found that there wasn't any violation of the directive though, and stated: “based upon available evidence none of the participants, through their actions, intended to show support for a political movement.”

Sue Fulton, a West Point graduate, posted a similar photo of the group to Twitter in late April; she told The Post in an email Monday that the style of the picture was a “long-held tradition” at West Point, in which “different teams and groups get together on their own to mimic the high-collar, ultra-serious photos of 19th century cadets.”

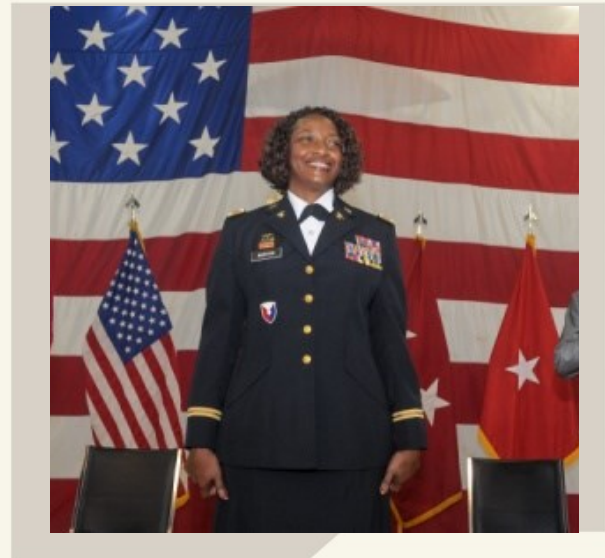
Let's look at the positive side of this: They are 16 African-American women graduating in a class of close to 1,000 cadets; they've worked hard, accomplished a lot, and pride, unity, and determination is what that pictures express. **THEY ARE** in keeping with the best of West Point traditions and values.

Final exams have concluded and about 1,000 cadets graduated from West Point on May 21 including all of the cadets pictured.



Chief Warrant Officer 5 Tywanda B. Morton

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Tywanda B. Morton, senior property book officer, became the first female and African-American promoted to chief warrant officer five in the Maryland Army National Guard. The ceremony took place at the Lt. Col. Melvin H. Cade Armory in Baltimore, Nov. 7, 2013. Morton began her Army career at Cade Armory in 1987. Chief warrant officer five is the highest rank in the Warrant Officer Corps.





Lieutenant Colonel Keisha Flagg

LTC Flagg is the Diversity Management Liaison Officer for the USMC. Upon promotion to Lieutenant Colonel and acceptance of her new role, she had the following to say:

“Seventy years ago the first African-American Marines endured grueling training at Montford Point Camp, breaking ground — and breaking racial barriers — to transform the face of the Corps. Because of those brave men, I am able to serve today.

Since becoming a Marine, I have been inspired by other groundbreakers. Col. Gilda Jackson, the first African-American woman to achieve that rank in the Marine Corps, is a modern-day hero of mine. So is Col. Stephanie Smith, a fellow Marine who has provided me with countless hours of advice and guidance. Col. Smith helped me break my own ground and become one of the few black women to achieve the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

My path here wasn't easy or short. I was born to a single mother in West Palm Beach, Fla. My mom enlisted in the Navy because she wanted a better life for me. It worked, in more ways than I think she anticipated.

Initially, her service opened doors and provided financial stability that would otherwise have been difficult to achieve — and in fact wasn't achievable for many families like mine. She met a wonderful man at her first duty station, and he adopted me. Their union and their service changed my life then, and continued to change my life. They inspired me to join.

Becoming a Marine was extremely physically and mentally challenging, as I discovered in basic training, and as has remained true throughout my 17-year career. It's also incredibly rewarding.

I have been presented with opportunities I could never have imagined: I was the first female Officer in Charge of the Jungle Warfare Training Center, and I was also the Camp Commander of Camp Gonsalves. I



was the only woman there, yet I led a group of Marines who respected my rank and billet. Today I serve as a Diversity Management Liaison Officer. I manage research and educational programs to help the Marine Corps authentically connect with the brightest men and women among America's diverse youth. I am proud to hold a position that represents so much for men and women of color and brings such great opportunities and exciting challenges to minorities nationwide.

I am grateful to the men and women who paved the way for me, and February is the ideal month to honor them.

Because of the Marine Corps, which respects and values the contributions of African Americans to the security of our country, I can be a proud Marine. Because of the example of my parents and the inspiration of Cols. Jackson and Smith, I am honored to wear this uniform. And perhaps because of my example, young and motivated African Americans will join this life-changing organization and break new ground for future generations. *Semper Fi.*”



Fred Tiz Morrison Navy Seal

As part of the U.S. Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams (UDT), which were a precursor to the current U.S. Navy SEAL Teams, Fred "Tiz" Morrison was the first African-American Navy SEAL/Frogman. Morrison was awarded the Bronze Star for his heroics in the Korean War as part of UDT Team 12. Morrison was known as an expert in underwater demolitions. He was a veteran of the World War II and was part of UDT Team 1 in 1948. His official rank is U.S. Navy Engineman 2nd Class. Nicknamed "The Real Tarzan," there is little information on the life of Tiz Morrison. He has since passed on, but will always be remembered as the Navy's first African American Navy SEAL.

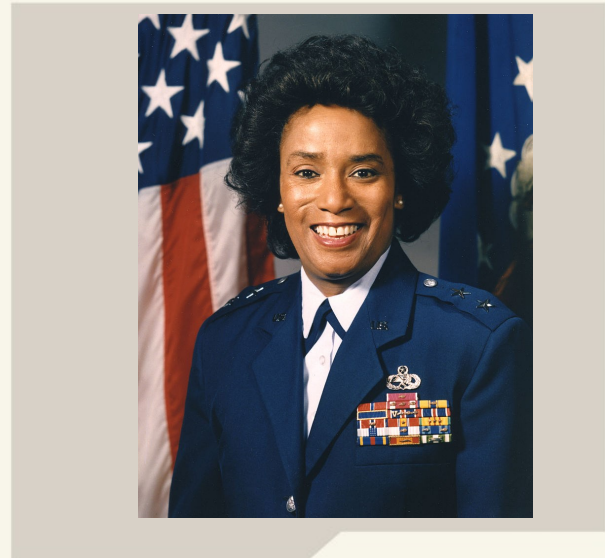




Major General Marcelite Jordan-Harris

Marcelite Jordan graduated from Spelman College, earning her B.A. in speech and drama in 1964. She was commissioned through Officer Training School, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas in 1965 and held a variety of assignments in the Air Force. Marcelite Harris's career included many "firsts", as she was the first female aircraft maintenance officer, one of the first two female air officers commanding at the United States Air Force Academy, and the Air Force's first female Director of Maintenance.^[1] She served as a White House social aide during the Carter administration. Her service medals and decorations include the Bronze Star, the Presidential Unit Citation, and the Vietnam Service Medal. Harris retired as a major general in 1997, the highest ranking female officer in the Air Force and the Nation's highest ranking African American woman in the Department of Defense. Upon retirement from the Air Force, Harris served NASA as the Florida Site Director and Logistics Process Owner for United Space Alliance, the company managing the Nation's Shuttle Program. Besides her Spelman B.A., she holds a B.S. in Business Management from the University of Maryland University College. In 1999, Harris was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree from Spelman College. Harris is a member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

Major General Harris is now Treasurer of the Atlanta Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and serves as a Director on the Board of Peachtree Hope



Charter School. Also, General Harris was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve as a member of the Board of Visitors for the United States Air Force Academy. The Board inquires into the morale, discipline, curriculum, instruction, physical equipment, fiscal affairs, academic methods and other matters relating to the Academy which the Board decides to consider. The Board meets at least four times per year, with at least two of those meetings at the Academy. The Board prepares semi-annual reports containing its views and recommendations pertaining to the Academy. Each written report is submitted concurrently to the Secretary of Defense, through the Secretary of the Air Force, and to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.



Master Chief Vincent W. Patton III

Vincent W. Patton III, a native of Detroit, MI was born in 1954. During high school he was an Eagle Scout, a part of the Naval Sea Cadets Corps and after graduating in 1972 he enlisted in the Coast Guard. He began his career as a Radioman but in 1979 changed rate to Yeoman.

During his career he served at many units both afloat and ashore including a tour as the Command Master Chief for the Coast Guard Atlantic Area where he served as senior enlisted advisor during Operation Support Democracy, the largest alien migration operation in history. In May 1998 Patton became the first African American Master Chief in the history of the Coast Guard, the service's top senior enlisted rank. He served as principal advisor to the Commandant of the Coast Guard as well as the secretaries of Transportation and Defense.

While serving in the Coast Guard he completed his education, earning his Doctorate degree in 1984 from the American University in Washington, D.C. In addition to his Doctorate he also holds a Masters Degree in Counseling a Bachelor of Science in Social Work and a Bachelor of Arts in Communications.

Master Chief Patton's education also included U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Academy, U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, and the Department of Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. A highly decorated service member, he received several awards during his 30 year career including the Distinguished Service Medal. Not only is Master Chief Patton a permanent Cutterman (more than five years of sea service) but he also completed 10 jumps with the U.S. Army 82nd Airborne Division becoming one of very few Coast Guardsman to do so and earn their "parachutist wings" specialty badge. Master Chief Patton retired on November 1, 2002 after 30 years but his



education continued as he completed another Masters of Theology degree in Applied Religious Studies.

Even after retirement, service was a continuing theme in his life. Patton made missionary trips to Haiti and taught at-risk youth seamanship and sailing skills. He also continued to serve by volunteering with the USO to visit military members during the holiday season in the Persian Gulf and Southwest Asia in 2003 and in Cuba in 2004.

He currently is still a very active member of the military community acting as Vice President for Homeland Security Programs with the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA) International, as well as serving as co-chair for the National Coast Guard Retiree Council.

In the Spotlight

Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth Democrat 8th District, Illinois



Ladda Tammy Duckworth is the first Asian-American congresswoman for Illinois and the first disabled female veteran to take a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Congresswoman Duckworth was born on March 12, 1968, in Bangkok, Thailand. She was deployed to serve in the Iraq War in 2004 and lost both of her legs when her helicopter was struck. In 2006 she became director of the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs. In 2009, President Barack Obama appointed Duckworth as assistant secretary in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. In 2012 she was elected to Congress, representing Illinois' 8th District.

ROLL CALL

Second Baptist Church-St, James AME Church, Elgin
League of Military Veterans

Rev. Johnny Jackson

Rev. Albert Fontenot

Kym Fowler

Deacon Ruberl Carr

Rev. Carlos Mullins

Kaila Daniel

Deacon Terry Jones

Deacon Dan Brown

Curtis Sartor

Deacon Calvin Giddens

Leon Montgomery

Darnell Alston

Bill Harlan (Taps 20 Sep 2014)

Divine Jackson

Xanthia Hicks

Valerie Richards

John Bell

Bruce Wilkins

Michelle King

Howard Taylor

Phyliss Higgins

CSM John E. Dill

John Harper

Nakia Ford

James Bennett

Peter Shannon

Sonya Ebhotemen

Sean Brewer

Bryan Turner

Issac Howard

Bennie Chapman

Keith Barnes

Kenneth Scruggs

Torrence Clark

Joshua Williams

Col. W. E. Scott

Freddie Crowell

Kevin Williams

Otis Matthews

Jerome Cunningham

James Williams

Curtis Rice

Tyrone St. John

Nathan Thomas

Tonia Moore

Leon Dixon

Donnell Daniel

Pamela Gibson

James Davis

Rich Emmanuel

Ray Holt

Alvin Gregory McCray

Edward Folds

Latresha Hazelwood

Roberta Shockley

James Harvey



SBC – St James AME
League of
Military Veteran's Ministry

PROUD TO BE A VETERAN

NAME: _____

BRANCH OF SERVICE: _____

SERVICE YEARS: FROM _____ TO _____

LAST SERVICE RANK: _____

DUTY STATION: _____

MOS: _____

VFW / AMERICAN LEGION: _____

COMMENDATIONS: _____

MILITARY ACADEMY / ROTC: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION:

HOME ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

If you are interested in joining or supporting the Veteran's Ministry, please fill out this form and return to Leon Montgomery (SBC) or Dr. Wes Scott (St. James) or one of the members of our group. Welcome Home Veterans!

SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH / ST. JAMES AME VETERANS MINISTRY WASHINGTON DC TRIP

After many months of planning, on a beautiful April evening, members of the Second Baptist Church / St. James AME Veterans Ministry arrived in the suburbs of Washington DC. The 11 Veterans travelled with their families for a weekend devoted to fellowship and visiting sites in the nation's capital that are of particular interest to Veterans.

Our visit kicked off with a group dinner at National Harbor, MD at which the Veterans were joined by James K. Blake, US Air Force Retired, and his wife Ruth. (James is the cousin of Greg McCray).

On Friday morning, after breakfast and prayer, we departed for the first of many events on our packed itinerary. Our first stop was a meeting with Mark Kirk, US Senator for Illinois (R) at the Hart Senate Building. Colonel Wes Scott introduced our Veterans group and thanked him for supporting Veterans issues on Capitol Hill. During our meeting, Senator Kirk discussed his military experiences and mentioned that he had just received approval for a major Veterans healthcare appropriation that he initiated. At the conclusion of the discussion, Col Scott presented Senator Kirk with a "challenge coin".

Our next event was a meeting at the office of Senator Dick Durbin, US Senator for Illinois (D). with his legislative assistant for veteran's affairs, Erum Ibrahim-Ali. Following our discussion, a challenge coin was also presented to be given to Senator Durbin. The next leg of our trip found us at one of the most famous addresses in the world, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue – the White House! The group spent over an hour there viewing the White House gardens, state dining room, the Green Room, Red Room, portraits of presidents and their families, various dignitaries and other guests.

Our most enlightening visit that day was with our Representative, Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth (D – IL, District 08). Congresswoman Duckworth, a major supporter of Veterans' rights and issues gave us an overview of the various programs and initiatives in which she is engaged. Additionally, she provided valuable information regarding internships available to college and high school students and insights into entering military academies for college-ready students. Congresswoman Duckworth also volunteered to support our ministry by providing assistance from her staff in conducting a Veterans' outreach program at our church.

The next day was spent visiting various sites around the Nation's Capitol including Arlington National Cemetery and the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, the Iwo Jima, WWII & Korean War Memorials and the Smithsonian Museums. Of course no trip to DC would be complete without a windshield tour of Georgetown, Howard University, Embassy Row, and other monuments and memorials in the area.

To culminate our visit, we attended service on Sunday morning at Central Baptist Church, Camp Springs MD where we were warmly received by the Pastor, Reverend Lincoln M. Burruss Jr. and members of the congregation.

In summary, we enjoyed a wonderful time of fellowship and reflection in our nation's capital during which many friendships were made and renewed. Many thanks to all of those who made this trip happen.

