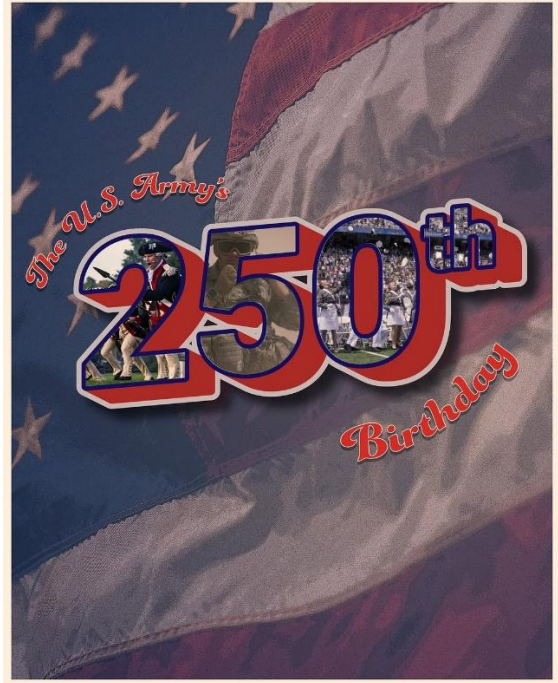


## From Editor's Corner G Adams-Square



It has been two years since our last edition. Surprisingly, two years later something happened. The MGA Political Science has been informing their classes of the upcoming 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The Warner Robins campus had the honor of enrolling student veterans in the American Government class of Dr. Adams-Square.

In this Edition of the Student Veterans *Esprit De Corp*, we will begin with announcements. Then invite you to learn about the experiences of student veterans who not only served our country to protect all of us, but how MGA is serving them. In addition, you will gain a glimpse of the life of a student veteran at Middle Georgia State University. Please take the time to read each of their stories. Let's honor each one and thank each one for their service.



If you are a MGA student veteran, We have a Student Veteran Association (SVA). We are looking for students to join and lead the organization. The SVA covers all five campuses. To get involved contact Carolyn J Clark, Assistant Registrar/Veteran Certifying Official Veterans and Military Resource Center.

## Announcements National Women Veterans Recognition Day Celebration Celebrating the more than 250-year legacy of women's service to our Nation



Celebrated each year on June 12 in recognition of the anniversary of the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act signing, 2026 is the 78th anniversary of that groundbreaking legislation for America's military women, granting women a permanent place and an opportunity for a career in the nation's military. On this special day designated to honor America's military women, past and present, come celebrate with us!

Women Veterans Recognition Day, June 12, is synonymous with the Military Women's Memorial – the place to be to honor and celebrate America's military women on this historic day. Join us for a festive afternoon of music, recognition, celebration, fun, food, and appreciation for some 3 million women patriots who have served and are serving this nation so proudly and well.

Mark your calendar for our June 12 program. Plan to join fellow servicemembers and honored guests at the Military Women's Memorial to celebrate our military women with the nation.

Reserve your tickets –  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/869223339407?aff=oddtcreator>



**All three branches were established in 1775 under the authority of the Second Continental Congress. Created within months of one another to meet distinct strategic needs – land warfare, sea power and amphibious operations. Their shared 250th anniversaries are being commemorated with parades, ceremonial cake cuttings, historical exhibits and community outreach events nationwide.**

### The Military Women's Memorial Explore Oral Histories



The Military Women's Memorial Oral History Collection includes more than 1,400 oral histories of women who served in and with the U.S. Armed Forces from World War I to the present day.

Established in 2000, as the outgrowth of a book project by the Military Women's Memorial staff, and a partnership with the Library of Congress Veterans History Project, the collection covers women's service in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard and their predecessors such as the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps and Women's Army Corps (WAAC/WAC), the Navy Women's Reserve (WAVES), the Coast Guard Women's Reserve (SPARs) and the Marine Corps Women's Reserve. The collection includes women who served in the Reserve and National Guard components, those who deployed in combat operations, and those who served in peacetime.

To honor Women Veterans  
Recognition Day, June 12, 2026

Let's begin with the story of this  
MGA Female Student Veteran.

## Paris Berotte



From Service to Student: A  
Veteran's Journey at Middle  
Georgia State University  
By Paris Desiree Berotte, Student  
Contributor

### From Duty to Degree

For student veteran Paris Desiree Berotte at Middle Georgia State University, the journey to higher education has been shaped by discipline, resilience, and a deep-rooted commitment to service. Originally from Danville, Virginia, her story reflects not only her time in uniform, but also her dedication to family, growth, and community.

After graduating from George Washington High School in Danville, she made a life-changing decision: to join the United States Air Force. Coming from a family with a long history of military service, she wanted to carve her own path by becoming the first in her family to serve in the Air Force. That decision would go on to inspire the next generation, including her nephew, who now follows in her footsteps as a Security Forces Specialist stationed at RAF Lakenheath in the United Kingdom.

Berotte served a total of six years in the military, including time in the Air Force Reserve. Her primary role was as a Security Forces Specialist, where she was responsible for maintaining safety and security on base. While stationed at Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa, Japan, she conducted gate operations, performed patrol duties, and

monitored surveillance systems. Her strong performance led to selection for a special duty assignment supporting flight line and airfield security missions: an important role ensuring the protection of critical Air Force operations. In addition to her security duties, she volunteered with the American Red Cross in Okinawa, helping coordinate special events and support services for the military community. Her commitment to service extended beyond her assigned responsibilities, showing her dedication to helping others. Later in her career, she cross-trained into Traffic Management, where she supported logistics operations at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, North Carolina. In this role, she processed and coordinated cargo and shipment movement, ensuring that essential supplies and equipment were delivered efficiently. She also remained actively involved in her unit by volunteering for squadron events and contributing to team coordination efforts.

Having completed her full military service obligation, Berotte is no longer eligible for involuntary recall or deployment, allowing her to fully focus on her current chapter: education and family life.

Today, she is not only a student, but also a wife to a retired United States Marine Corps veteran and a proud mother of five children. Balancing academics, family responsibilities, and personal growth is no small task, but her military background has equipped her with the discipline and resilience needed to succeed. Her educational journey began after earning a diploma in Certified Medical Assisting from Miller-Motte College in Jacksonville, North Carolina. Now at Middle Georgia State University, Berotte is working toward her future goals of becoming a nurse and eventually obtaining a Bachelor of Science in Health Services Administration, combining her passion for patient care with leadership in healthcare. When asked about her experience at Middle Georgia State University, Berotte describes it as positive and supportive. As a student veteran, she has found a sense of belonging among peers and appreciates the resources available to help veterans transition into academic life. She values the understanding and encouragement shown by faculty and staff, which has made

balancing school and family more manageable.

As a student veteran, Berotte emphasizes that while veterans bring discipline, leadership, and real-world experience to the classroom, many are also navigating major life transitions and challenges like Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): a challenge she personally faces, which can impact focus, stress levels, and overall adjustment to academic life. Despite this, student veterans continue to show resilience and determination, making understanding and support on campus especially important. One of her biggest inspirations is her sister, a retired Marine Corps veteran. As a Marine in the communications and Electronics field, she served as a Radio Chief and Electromagnetic Spectrum Manager, playing a key role in maintaining secure and reliable communications to support mission success. Throughout her career, she also took on responsibilities as a recruiter, building strong community relations and guiding individuals through the enlistment process. During her time with the Wounded Warrior Regiment stationed at Quantico, Virginia, she helped Marines and their families access critical benefits and resources. Watching her sister's impact motivated Berotte to serve with purpose and compassion throughout her own military career. Looking back, Berotte's journey: from Danville, Virginia, to military bases across the world, and now to a college classroom in Georgia: is a powerful example of perseverance and growth. Her story is not just about military service, but about continuing to serve in new ways: as a student, a mother, a wife, and a role model for future generations.



**Thank you for your service  
Paris Berotte!**

## **MGA Student Veteran Jordan C Simmons**

A Student Veteran

My name is Jordan Simmons, and I served five years in the United States Army as an infantryman, a role often described as the military's primary ground combat force.

From 2019 to 2023, I was stationed at Camp Vilseck in Bavaria, Germany, where I experienced both the challenges and rewards that came with military life.

During my service, I participated in large-scale multinational and international training operations involving thousands of soldiers. These exercises focused on maintaining readiness and strengthening cooperation with allied nations across Europe. My experiences abroad exposed me to both the intensity of military operations and the importance of teamwork under pressure.

In February 2022, my unit was deployed to Latvia, a country located north of Belarus and bordering Russia. What was expected to be a standard training rotation quickly changed when Russia invaded Ukraine just two days into our deployment. I and his fellow soldiers remained in Latvia for four months as part of a deterrence mission aimed at preventing further conflict from spreading northward.

After returning to Germany, my company was later sent to Kosovo in October 2022. Kosovo, which declared independence from Serbia in 2008, was home to Camp Bondsteel, where an Iraqi refugee camp had been established during the United States' withdrawal from Iraq. My company managed welfare and operations at the camp while also using biometric technology to identify potential criminals or known terrorists among incoming refugees.

My unit and I spent three additional months in Kosovo before being relieved by United States Marines. I currently remain in the inactive reserves with one year left on my contract, meaning I could still be called back to active duty if necessary.

I was attached to the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, specifically the 3rd

Squadron, Iron Troop, and 1st Platoon. By the end of my military career, I had achieved the rank of Sergeant.

Now attending Middle Georgia State University as a student veteran, my experience at the university has been both enjoyable and professional. I especially appreciate the support provided to veterans on campus and the welcoming attitude of faculty and staff.

For students who might be interested in the military, it can be extremely demanding at times, but it can also change your life forever in a positive way. I believe people should try it if they have ever been curious. It's only three years.

Today, I continue transitioning from military service to academic life while sharing my experiences with fellow students and encouraging others to consider the opportunities and responsibilities that come with service



**Jordan C. Simmons**  
**Thank you for your  
service**



## MGA Student Veteran Arturo Castillo

### My Military Experience



Arturo Castillo  
American Gov  
Dr. Grace Adams  
April 25, 2026

My military experience is truly a unique experience I thank God for letting me be able to see the Airforce. I joined in 2015, which took me almost two years after high school to join, due to the delay of the medical documents they needed.

I was in 7th grade when I had a very important surgery to remove a dead "organ" inside of me that would cause necrosis if not removed, and this procedure delayed me. Two years after my second MEPS visit, they had to check this surgery to verify that I am eligible to join. After this long delay ensuring a proper inspection of me before joining the service I got a call telling me I was ordered to be at the recruitment office about a month later.

So, after the long delay I get on a flight to San Antonio for basic military training. 8 weeks of BMT for the Airforce at the end we were given paperwork with our scores and jobs to apply for. I had to choose between medical, security forces, and logistics management for my career in service.

I was denied security forces for failing an eye test, medical and logistics being my last two options got the paperwork for Logistics. After that, I trained for weeks, staying in San Antonio where my training was as most of my BMT unit was dispersed. Training was simple and just basic instruction on what the job will be. At the end of training, we get our orders to determine where we will go. I got orders for Seattle Washington, a

duty station many people said was beautiful.

One of my classmates saw my orders and wanted to trade since Seattle had some of his family from Hawaii his home.

Shockingly, I saw his orders for Guam, an island I knew nothing about which would surprise me still.

I accepted it and he looked happy as he says, "I won't be on another island after all," a group of us all burst out laughing to the statement since we did not think of it that way. Getting to Guam and seeing the island was a breathtaking experience, since I traded for this location with no clue what to expect.

At the first duty station I met my office and supervisor who told me that I joined the service at the worst time that I was told that they removed a lot of people. I had to fill an E-5 position being a fresh new airman in the service confused to the idea that the military technically shrunk.

My Unit in Guam was the 554 Redhorse Unit with history being it originated in the Vietnam War. Our dress code was a little different since we had to wear a red hat with the unit's logo as the standard headgear to wear in uniform. The Unit was based on what seemed to be like a construction crew but with guns and special forces included.

My first mission what this massive, endless, mountain of tools and equipment someone in the past threw away. I had to consolidate, organize, inventory, and ensure the warehouse would be viable to use for future use. Took me almost a year to finally get it fixed and cleaned. Our unit also had to deploy a lot, so I had to manage weapons and be certified on M249, M240, Barretta and M4 the only weapons we had in our vault. It was fun to shoot and be at the range a couple times a week getting trained for our deployment. We even had an EOD in our unit, so we would hear constant bombs going off during training sessions.

The special forces that would sometimes run the physical training were some of the worst experiences in my life, being that they really did push the limits and my body could not. One day during PT we did our standard pushups, sit-ups, burpees and 2-3

miles with hills then one day my body just popped, a shiver down my whole body, a static shock on my lower right hip area, I just remember I could not move fast enough to get to work on time I will get in trouble.

This started a long journey I am still working on today of confusion since I feel like I was not heard. Then out of the blue I was given orders for deployment with the whole unit which was just months of training and ordering deployment gear for this mission.

We were told to do more training had to do some special Army training in New Mexico which felt more like an ICE training camp seeing border patrol and other government officials. The training was just more basic survival training, shooting weapons and a lot of hiking with over what seems to be 200lbs of weight.

I remember we had been issued plates to put on our vest and everyone around me got some nice size weights so when it came to my turn I thought of the same but I was mistaken the gentleman giving weights stopped, looked me up and down, proceeded to dig deeper for another size, I kid you not it felt like a 100lbs of armor plating was put on me.

Those weeks of training were even more hellish than the EODs PT sessions on my body. I kept pushing through this pain in my back, legs and random shocks randomly on my body seeing everyone else push through this training I was determined to never give up.

I pushed and passed all my training, afterwards we were once again asked to train but in Texas. We got back on the flight headed to San Antonio where it seems more of my training was needed but was called the SERE training you see on TV. It seemed we got the one level below, but it was still focused on the risk of being captured in combat zones. After so many days or endless training we ended up in Qatar with it being our HQ for the time and we spit off into many different units scattered across many different locations.

I was in Qatar for about 9 months or so with my new Job being that I had to receive products orders, inspect it, have customs inspect and then shipped off to one of many locations. My job changed in

Qatar once President Trump was president; he wanted to clean the excessive spending in the military. Seeing his new vision changed my job once again being that I had to find unused equipment, tools, vehicles, and any more valuables used by the military industrial complex.

My leadership came with many different side jobs including self-teaching myself, a billion-dollar supply program called HAZMAT. Ordering hazardous products for our unit but somehow got recommended to support the Army as well in certain areas to order them hazardous materials too.

I went to Dubai as well to clean up our unit's massive junkyard of tools, gear, and equipment which took a few weeks. Afterwards I went back to Qatar to finish my time there ensuring the orders were still being placed, I inspected materials, ordered materials from local to military software. Qatar was unique the local customs inspector liked me that I would always be invited for some tea and cookies while watching Camel's race.

I still remember two things from these rich folks one being that they mock us for not being able to afford a camel in America and two that they are all related, as in they are the kings' "cousin" as mentioned and seeing they wealth they had I cannot deny their claims.

A very weird world with many different customs than the United States but even we got trained on how to deal with the locals too. I want to say I calculated about 1 billion dollars' worth of products or money spent to turn around and see it be turned back into the same military industrial complex, seeing that the 1 billion was later turned into 375 million back into our "economy".

This specific task helped promote an officer into a Captain and he took all work credit. My Chiefs at the time would tell me how bad they felt angry that I was not rewarded for my hard work on a project. At the end I was surprised by the nomination for a medal of accomplishment which only 5 out of the 400 people in the unit saw that my chief's support was not in vain made me very happy, knowing that I wasn't ignored with the efforts I put into that deployment.

I was the lead on the projects with the help of many Tech Sergeants (E-6) who worked for me to ensure full cooperation in the completion of Presidents Trump's orders. A E-4 to need to tell Sergeants what to do is not a normal experience from what I was taught from my Chief (E-9) and seeing what I accomplished was rewarded with a medal.

After my deployment I went back to Guam to finish my two-year service there having it cut almost in half. After my time there I was sent to my next duty station South Carolina, Sumter called Shaw Airforce base.

I was tasked with working equipment until I was transferred to an Aircraft part store where we were always busy getting parts for the mechanics to repair the aircraft. A very common occurrence I miss in Shaw would be the jets flying over me hearing them go, feeling the whole warehouse shaken from these never-ending training flights. I was on night duty almost seeming to get any sleep, getting hurt at work since it felt like no one was working but me.

I felt crazy being here and this is when my back started to finally give up. I have been going to the doctors since the very beginning of my time of service asking for medical help on my back. All this training, countless sleep all led to my back finally just giving up, I could not run no more at all, body shakes, leg gives up so I fall, I am still dealing with this issue today.

I got out in 2019 which felt illegal to this day, but I was told since I could not pass the run part of the P.T test I was told to be discharged. I am still a little heart broken by how it all ended at Shaw but come to find out later in 2024 by my 100th imaging it felt like I was finally told on paper I had congenital spinal stenosis. 2025 was truly the first time I was told my condition of being born with an undeveloped and messed up back.

I should never have joined the military for the fact that I was born with what seems to be a rare genetic disorder that just got destroyed in the military service from overworking sleepless nights, to the one hundred plus hours of training with gear which was too heavy for my spine to hold.

I am still struggling today with this as I write this my back hasn't stopped hurting in which seems to be weeks and I fall a few times a week, I got hit by a door on my back and my wife had to help push me into my car for my whole body got shocked into almost a paralysis state.

I am scared I might not be able to walk one day but I am blessed to have a loving wife who supports me with our two kids. I had a weird experience but do not let this experience scare you, just know that the military has very intense demands, but you will not regret the time you joined if you do join.

My military experience was truly a challenge but a fun time as well as I wish I was not born broken so I could have continue my service but I thank God for allowing me to still experience a world outside of Georgia.



**MGA Student Veteran**

**Arturo Castillo,**

**Thank you for your**

**service**

To all our readers keep reading. Let's continue to remember our troops: those who are currently serving. You may not be able to send a care package but a card or a letter of kind words and encouragement speaks volumes. Always remember those who have served and those who gave their lives for us to enjoy life and the pursuit of happiness. We hope our tribute to MGA student veterans in preparation of the America 250 Celebration is a reminder to veteran students how valuable to MGA each of you enriches us. Our mission is to assure you that we are here for you. May peace, safety, and wellness surround each of you and your family! Thank you for your service. We look forward to serving you in our next edition.

**This spot is for you! If you were missing from our May edition, 2026, we can help. We invite you to share your military-to-college experience with us. For consideration in the Fall 2026 issue, please submit your story and pictures to [grace.adamssquare@mga.edu](mailto:grace.adamssquare@mga.edu)**