

High & Tight

All new students, or "plebes," at Marine Military Academy receive a "high and tight" introductory buzz cut. After the first haircut, cadets can wear their hair closely cropped. Below are some transformation photos from mid-term registration.



Sophomore Ryan Barber of Friendswood, Texas



Freshman James Styskal of Boerne, Texas



Sophomore Logan Ferris of Southlake, Texas



Sophomore Nicholas Nelson of Royse City, Texas

Recent Events

Mid-Term Registration

Marine Military Academy welcomed more than 30 new students at mid-term registration Jan. 6. These plebes kicked off 2018 at a new school — and home!

Plebes begin Introductory Training as soon as they check in. They go through in-processing and quickly begin learning the MMA routine and drill. Plebes must also spend their

first few weekends participating in physical training and marching as well as outdoor activities and challenges in the Back 40.

The plebes will become official MMA cadets at the Introductory Training Graduation Ceremony & Parade Feb. 3.



Eighth-grader Pierce Gann of League City, Texas, is welcomed by his summer camp drill instructor SSgt Alejandro Diaz.



Senior Ryan Barber of Friendswood, Texas, (top) and junior Chukwunonso Odimba of Carrollton, Texas, give Mom a hug.



Sophomore Alec Secord of Southlake, Texas, takes his new haircut in stride.

Recent Events

Snow Day

On Dec. 8, the cadets of Marine Military Academy received an early Christmas present ... snow!! In an area of the country where snow is only seen on TV, a blanket of snow managed to fall in Harlingen, Texas, that morning.

To the disappointment of the boys, classes were not cancelled. However, most of them managed to play in the snow between their class periods.

Seniors Paul Fuerte of Harlingen, Texas, and Conrad Franke of Traverse City, Mich., enjoy the weather.



Holocaust Museum Trip

On Dec. 3, the eighth and ninth-grade Marine Military Academy cadets traveled north to visit the Holocaust Memorial Museum of San Antonio.

Earlier in the semester, the eighth-grade cadets read the novel, "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas," as well as the autobiography, "Night." English teacher Jessica Doan coordinated the field trip to supplement what the boys learned about the Holocaust of World War II from their books.

The boys were not only able to see the exhibits in the museum but had the privilege to listen to the story of Holocaust survivor Rose Williams. The young men left the museum with a greater understanding of tolerance and social responsibility.

The cadets then visited The Alamo for some Texas history. The cadets learned about the Battle of the Alamo as well as Texas heroes such as Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie.



Displayed is the striped uniform worn by prisoners at Nazi concentration camps.



Holocaust survivor Rose Williams speaks to the MMA cadets.

Christmas Party

There was plenty of cheer at Marine Military Academy's Children's Christmas Party Dec. 8.

MMA hosts this annual event to give presents to Harlingen-area boys and girls who are eligible for the Toys for Tots program. More than 100 youngsters attended this year's party, and they all took home a gift and candy bag.

MMA's guests were first treated to a full dinner courtesy of the Mess Hall along with live Christmas music performed by a string trio and the Leatherneck Band. After dinner, every child took a turn to visit with Santa Claus.

Nearly 75 cadets volunteered either as characters or hosts to help make the party memorable for the children and their families.



The granddaughter of MMA employees Carlos and Lollie Centeno beams a smile for the camera.

Plebe Messaging

Introductory Training at Marine Military Academy is often more difficult for the parents than for the new student himself. A "plebe" cannot communicate with his family except through letters for four weeks. However, thanks to cameras and social media, a plebe can sometimes use "sign" language to reach out!



Sophomore Logan Ferris of Southlake, Texas, sends a "text" message to Mom!

Plebe Training

Marine Military Academy's newest students, or "plebes," spend their first few weekends participating in physical conditioning as well as individual and team activities in the Back 40. They also master a key skill at MMA: marching.



Eighth-grader Anuar Fayad Martínez Del Río of Pachuca, Mexico, wants to rappel again!

Recent Events

CyberPatriot

The Marine Military Academy CyberPatriot teams competed in the second and third round of the CyberPatriot X competition Dec. 9 and Jan. 21, respectively. Team 1 is advancing to the next round and will be competing Feb. 11 in the national semi-finals.

CyberPatriot is a hands-on learning club that exposes cadets to the field of cyber defense/information security. The 11 cadets, split into two teams, meet daily after school.

Sophomore Odin Perriaux of Bois-Colombes, France, corrects a security threat.



Pow Wow

Ten Boy Scouts from Marine Military Academy Troop 22 attended the 20th Annual Pow Wow Dec. 1-3.

The MMA cadets were among hundreds of other Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts to attend this event. The boys were plunged into Native American culture and learned about Native American history, language, dancing, drumming,

singing and storytelling. They also participated in numerous arts and activities, such as archery, flintknapping, rope making, native pit cooking, shelter construction, trap making, and animal skinning and hiding.

The highlight of the weekend was the campfire Pow Wow ceremony the evening of Dec. 2.



Eighth-grader Allen Ares of Llano, Texas, (left) and Williford junior Hunter Williford of Kirkland, Wash., carry in a white-tail deer for a skinning lesson.

Recognition

BSA Court of Honor

Troop 22 honored 46 Boy Scouts at its Court of Honor ceremony Dec. 6. The Marine Military Academy cadets listed below advanced in rank and/or earned at least one merit badge in the first semester:

- Eighth-grader **Allen Ares** of Llano, Texas: ★
- Junior **Pierre Bonnimond** of Courbevoie, France: ★★★★★★★★
- Sophomore **Noah Bouillion** of Erath, La.: Scout, ★★★★★
- Freshman **Brandon Currer** of Pawnee, Texas: ★★
- Junior **Joshua Curry** of San Antonio: ★
- Eighth-grader **Dylan DeViney** of Houston: Scout, ★★
- Sophomore **Ethan Dowd** of Dallas: ★
- Sophomore **Theodore Faravelli III** of San Jose, Calif.: Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, ★★
- Freshman **Ryan Frank** of Gilroy, Calif.: Scout
- Junior **Augustin Fuenzalida Spichiger** of Miami: ★
- Freshman **Jesse Hand-Hull** of Boerne, Texas: ★
- Sophomore **Davis Hodnett** of Kilgore, Texas: ★★

- Junior **Brendan Jozwiak** of Cypress, Texas: ★
- Junior **Taniel Katanjian** of Irving, Texas: Tenderfoot, ★
- Freshman **Joshua Ladner** of Fairview, Texas: Tenderfoot, ★★
- Senior **Jonathan Laube** of Richmond, Texas: ★
- Sophomore **Pelayo Martínez Rodríguez Miaja** of Puebla, Mexico: ★
- Freshman **Julian McGinley** of Cypress, Texas: Scout, ★
- Senior **Peter Olson** of Clovis, Calif.: Bronze Palm, Silver Palm, Gold Palm ★
- Senior **Maxim Pepper** of Austin, Texas: ★★
- Senior **Quentin Pilcher** of Catonsville, Md.: ★
- Sophomore **Dakota Poplet** of Laguna Niguel, Calif.: ★
- Freshman **Roosevelt Toussain III** of California City, Calif.: Scout
- Sophomore **Gavin Weaver** of Galt, Calif.: Second Class, First Class, ★
- Junior **Hunter Williford** of Kirkland, Wash.: ★
- Senior **Matthew Wisely** of Waterford, Calif.: Bronze Palm, ★★★★★

★ Merit badge



Junior Hunter Williford of Kirkland, Wash., (left) and eighth-grader Dylan DeViney of Houston accept their awards from Superintendent Col R. Glenn Hill.



Battalion Competition

Delta Company won the 2nd Quarter Marine Military Academy Battalion Competition Jan. 12. Delta will carry the Golden Guidon during the third academic quarter and receive a Friday evening liberty.

The Athletic and Military streamers were also awarded to Delta, but the Academic streamer went to Fox Company.



Commandant of Cadets SgtMaj Ford Kinsley (left) and Superintendent Col R. Glenn Hill attach the Golden Guidon to the Delta Company flagstaff.



Junior Alejandro Fonseca of Atizapan, Mexico, carries the Golden Guidon and Military and Athletic streamers for Delta.

3.0 Luncheon

At lunchtime on Jan. 30, 105 Marine Military Academy cadets were treated to a footlong Subway sandwich for earning an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher and passing every subject for the second academic quarter.

After the luncheon, the young men enjoyed an afternoon of liberty. MMA throws this event after every academic quarter.



Eighth-grader David Stilwell of New York (top) freshman Zihao Du of Shanghai dig into their sandwiches.

Recognition

Eagle Scout Project

A Marine Military Academy Boy Scout recently turned an old storehouse into a new tool library, a library that will allow low-income residents of Harlingen to "check out" building tools to construct or repair their homes.

Junior **Pierre Bonnimond** of Courbevoie, France, began working on the tool library for the Habitat for Humanity Harlingen location in September to fulfill his community service project for his Eagle Scout promotion.

Before he could even remodel the storehouse, Bonnimond and his team needed to clear and clean the untidy structure. Then the Boy Scouts used their carpentry skills to build and install shelving, and create a hallway. After all the installations, the young men painted the interior, transforming the



Junior Pierre Bonnimond of Courbevoie, France, paints the shelving of the tool library.

storehouse into a new library facility.

Bonnimond completed the tool library project Jan. 6. He is slated to become an official Eagle Scout in May.

Soccer Intramural Champions

Delta Company won the Marine Military Academy Intramural Soccer Championship Dec. 3. This coup led Delta to receive the Athletic streamer

at the Jan. 12 Battalion Competition. Delta will try to hold on to its winning streak at the flag football intramural competition.



The Delta Company soccer team gathers for a victory photo.

Alumni Affairs

Alumni Reunion

Now is the time to make plans for Marine Military Academy's 52nd Alumni Reunion April 20-22.

Reunion events will begin the morning of Friday, April 20 on the MMA campus. All alumni are encouraged to arrive in time for the Alumni Reunion Parade at 4 p.m. After the parade reception, the

reunion will be moved to the Hilton Garden Inn at South Padre Island.

Reunion events are free except for the Saturday dinner. To register and reserve a hotel room, visit MMA-TX.org/Alumni/Reunions to download the forms. For questions, email flores@MMA-TX.org or call (956) 421-9232.

Spotlight

Col Donald Higginbotham

Many know him as an attorney or judge, but few know Marine Military Academy friend Col Donald Higginbotham, USMCR (Ret), as a Vietnam War hero.

During the Vietnam War, Texas-native Col Higginbotham served as a judge advocate in the U.S. Marine Corps and as a defense counsel in the 1st Marine Division.

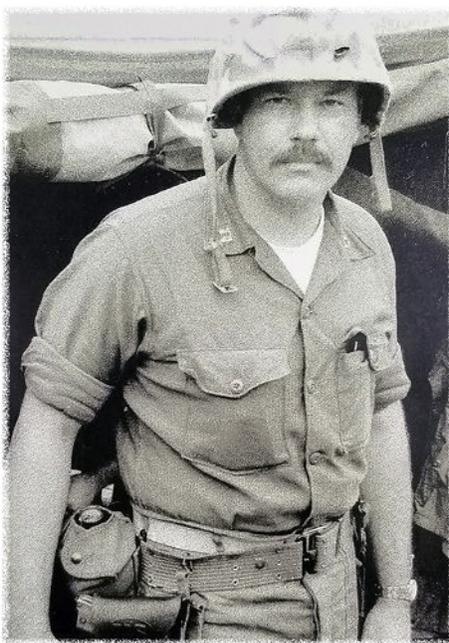
A young captain at the time, he always looked to command an infantry unit. Capt Higginbotham was given command of Hill 327, a reaction company near Danang, Vietnam. He molded his company into an effective combat unit.

On Jan. 30, 1968, the North Vietnamese launched the Tet Offensive attacks on South Vietnam forces. An enemy sapper mortared and overran a ridgeline above the 1st Marine Division's command post on Hill 327.

As the enemy soldiers were about to reach the division command post, Capt Higginbotham deployed his men and led a counter-attack that threw back the enemy and secured a vital hill where he established a defensive position.

For his extraordinary action, he was awarded the Legion of Merit with a Combat "V" — uncommon for a Marine with a captain's rank.

Col Higginbotham served 33 years in the Marine Corps Reserve. He is a retired Texas attorney, and municipal and county court-at-law judge residing in Georgetown, Texas.



Col Donald Higginbotham, USMC (Ret), in his infantry days at Vietnam.

Parent's Corner

Fox Company

Fox Company will be the home for Marine Military Academy's seventh and eighth-grade cadets starting Fall 2018. This restructure is intended to keep MMA's junior high students together for a stronger learning community.

Except for those selected as the senior leaders, all Fox cadets will be transferred to the company of their choice for the 2018-19 school year. MSgt Robert Fracasso will remain the drill instructor for Fox.

Public Notice

Asbestos Plan

IN ACCORDANCE with 40 CFR Part 763 of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Section 736.93 pertaining to the Asbestos-in-School Identification and Notification Rule, Marine Military Academy hereby notifies all concerned parties of the availability of an Asbestos Management Plan. The plan and copy of inspections and assessments are available for review during office hours, Monday through Friday, in the Central Administrative Office. Should any interested parties desire to view the plan, contact the MMA Facilities Department at (956) 423-6006, ext. 244, or facilities@MMA-TX.org.

Student of the Month - December



Jack Kostelnik of Comfort, Texas - English

Rank: Cadet First Sergeant
Grade: 11, Activity: Football
Future education goals: I will study engineering at The Citadel or Arizona State University.
Career goals: I will be an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Jared Walker of San Antonio - Foreign Language

Rank: Cadet Staff Sergeant
Grade: 11, Activity: Drill Team
Future education goals: I am attending Texas Tech University and majoring in architecture.
Career goals: I am going to be an architect.

Jayden Massengale of Montgomery, Texas - General Studies

Rank: Cadet Staff Sergeant
Grade: 10, Activity: Football
Future education goals: I will attend the University of Texas and study mechanical engineering.
Career goals: I will work as a mechanical engineer.

Austin Jones of Thornton, Colo. - Math

Rank: Cadet Corporal
Grade: 10, Activity: Jiu-jitsu
Future education goals: My aim is to gain acceptance into a service academy and study kinesiology.
Career goals: My goal is to be an officer in the Army or Marine Corps.

Hans English of Austin, Texas - Science

Rank: Cadet Lance Corporal
Grade: 12, Activity: Jiu-jitsu
Future education goals: I will study psychology and genetics at Texas A&M University.
Career goals: I plan to attend medical school and become a psychiatrist.

Cameron Rush of Edmond, Okla. - Social Studies

Rank: Cadet Second Lieutenant
Grade: 12, Activity: Tennis
Future education goals: I am enlisting in the Air Force and later attending St. Gregory's University.
Career goals: After I earn my communications degree, I will work for a public relations firm.

Cadet of the Month - December



Matthew Anderson of Colleyville, Texas - Alpha Company

Rank: Cadet Corporal
Grade: 10, Activity: Weightlifting
Future education goals: My goal is to graduate from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
Career goals: I would like a career as a computer hardware engineer.

Shi Lun Yang of Kaohsiung, Taiwan - Delta Company

Rank: Cadet Lance Corporal
Grade: 9, Activity: Basketball
Future education goals: I plan to attend Texas A&M University and major in engineering.
Career goals: I plan to be a Marine Corps officer.

Enrique Falcon of Muzquiz, Mexico - Echo Company

Rank: Cadet Lance Corporal
Grade: 8, Activities: Soccer & weightlifting
Future education goals: I would like to attend Harvard University for international business.
Career goals: I would like to own my own business.

Alejandro Salazar Mar of Papantla, Mexico - Fox Company

Rank: Cadet Lance Corporal
Grade: 11, Activity: Drill Team
Future education goals: I will study business at Universidad de las Americas Puebla.
Career goals: I plan to work in my family's citrus exportation business.

Ryan Rakowitz of Seguin, Texas - Golf Company

Rank: Cadet Staff Sergeant
Grade: 12, Activities: Football & basketball
Future education goals: I will study conservation law enforcement at Texas Tech University.
Career goals: I am going to be a game warden.

Dylan DeViney of Houston - Leatherneck Band

Company: Delta, Rank: Cadet Private First Class
Grade: 8
Future education goals: I plan to go to Hawaii Pacific University and study marine biology.
Career goals: I want to become a marine biologist or marine engineering.

Edward Zidd of Austin, Texas - Silent Drill Team

Company: Delta, Rank: Cadet Lance Corporal
Grade: 12
Future education goals: I am going to UTSA, and I will major in computer programming.
Career goals: I am going to be a computer programmer.

Student of the Month - January



Paul Fuerte of Harlingen, Texas - English

Rank: Cadet Private First Class
Grade: 12, Activity: Weightlifting
Future education goals: I will major in criminal justice at Texas A&M-Kingsville.
Career goals: I intend on becoming an Army officer.

Alan Said Maccise of Naucalpan, Mexico - Foreign Language

Rank: Cadet First Sergeant
Grade: 11, Activity: Flight Training
Future education goals: I will earn an MBA, ideally at Pennsylvania State University.
Career goals: I will manage the operations and investments of my father's clothing business.

Rui Zhang of Beijing - General Studies

Rank: Cadet Corporal
Grade: 12, Activities: Soccer & weightlifting
Future education goals: I am going to study journalism at the University of Oregon.
Career goals: I would like to be a sports journalist and cover nationwide events.

Luis Ibañez Marin of Naucalpan, Mexico - Math

Rank: Cadet Lance Corporal
Grade: 10, Activities: Football & boxing
Future education goals: I will attend the U.S. Air Force Academy or Texas A&M University.
Career goals: I am joining the U.S. Air Force as a commissioned officer.

Frederick Abell III of Katy, Texas - Science

Rank: Cadet Private First Class
Grade: 9, Activities: Jiu-jitsu & weightlifting
Future education goals: I aim to study electrical engineering at the U.S. Air Force Academy.
Career goals: I plan to be a pilot in the Air Force.

Matthew Anderson of Colleyville, Texas - Social Studies

Rank: Cadet Corporal
Grade: 10, Activity: Weightlifting
Future education goals: I hope to attend Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
Career goals: I am going to be a software engineer.

Cadet of the Month - January



Christian Andrew Morse of Converse, Texas - Alpha Company

Rank: Cadet First Lieutenant
Grade: 12, Activities: Basketball & football
Future education goals: I am studying criminal justice at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.
Career goals: I am going to be an officer in the Marine Corps.

Odin Perriaux of Bois-Colombes, France - Delta Company

Rank: Cadet Private First Class
Grade: 10, Activity: Jiu-jitsu
Future education goals: I am going to attend a top-tier university for cybersecurity.
Career goals: I want to be a cybersecurity specialist.

Luis Ibañez Marin of Naucalpan, Mexico - Echo Company

Rank: Cadet Lance Corporal
Grade: 10, Activities: Football & boxing
Future education goals: I will attend the U.S. Air Force Academy or Texas A&M University.
Career goals: After college, I will join the U.S. Air Force as a commissioned officer.

Victor Campos Ballesteros of Monclova, Mexico - Fox Company

Rank: Cadet Lance Corporal
Grade: 10, Activity: Weightlifting
Future education goals: I plan to attend Texas A&M University and study economics.
Career goals: I plan to work for my family's trucking company and then start my own fleet.

Adon Stassi of Sacramento, Calif. - Golf Company

Rank: Cadet Private First Class
Grade: 10, Activity: Soccer
Future education goals: I will study business or wildlife biology at UC Davis or TCU.
Career goals: I see myself working in real estate or for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Allen Ares of Llano, Texas - Leatherneck Band

Company: Echo, Rank: Cadet Private First Class
Grade: 8
Future education goals: I would like to attend Texas A&M University on an NROTC scholarship.
Career goals: After I earn my economics degree, I plan to be a Naval officer.

John Liveringhouse of Sartell, Minn. - Silent Drill Team

Company: Delta, Rank: Cadet Lance Corporal
Grade: 11
Future education goals: I plan to attend the University of Minnesota and study chemistry.
Career goals: I will continue my education and likely become a biomedical scientist.

Important Dates

- **March 6-9:** Third Quarter Exams
- **March 9:** Start of Spring Break, flight departure after noon
- **March 18:** End of Spring Break, return by 6 p.m.
- **March 19:** Start of 4th Quarter
- **April 5:** H.M. Smith Dinner, 6 p.m.
- **April 13-14:** Spring Fling Family Weekend
- **April 13:** Ring Ceremony, noon
- **April 14:** ACT, 8 a.m.
- **April 20:** Alumni Reunion Parade, 4 p.m.
- **May 5:** SAT, 8 a.m.
- **May 7:** Deadline for 2018-19 Financial Aid Application
- **May 14-16:** 2nd Semester Exams
- **May 18:** Eagle Scout Ceremony: 10 a.m.
- **May 18:** Annual Awards, 1:30 p.m.
- **May 19:** Graduation Parade & Military Awards: 9 a.m.
- **May 19:** Graduation Ceremony: 11 a.m.
- **June 1:** Re-enrollment Contracts Due
- **June 26:** Check-in for Summer Camp Cadet Instructors

The MMA LEADER is a bi-monthly publication for patrons of Marine Military Academy. To receive a digital version via email, send your address to the editor.

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Extra! Extra!

Former NASA Astronaut



Former NASA astronaut Col. Michael Fossum, USAFR (Ret), will be the recipient of the Iwo Jima Leadership award at Marine Military Academy's General H.M. Smith Dinner April 5. Col Fossum is a veteran of three space flights and seven spacewalks. He is presently the chief operating officer at Texas A&M University at Galveston.

To reserve a seat or table, call (956) 421-9230 or email grider@MMA-TX.org.

Former NASA astronaut Michael Fossum will be honored at the Gen H.M. Smith Dinner.

Giving

Recent Donations

In Honor Of

- Dr. John Butler
- Guadalupe Huerta "Jaime"
- Forrest N. Johnson - MMA '70
- Wendell F. Johnson - MMA '72
- Robert Mueller, USMC Veteran
- Adon Michael Stassi - MMA Cadet, G Co.

In Memory Of

- Guillermo C. Alvarez
- E.V. Bonner "Chip" - MMA '74
- CWO Roy E. Bristo, Jr., USMCR (Ret)
- Jack H. Brouse - VMF 422
- Elkin S. Drew "Tex"
- Capt Robert E. Fore, USMC (Ret)
- Sgt David Fuller, USMC (Ret) - 9th Marines RVN
- Maria Y. Gonzalez
- Gregory Alan Grider "Greg"
- Chris Heard - MMA '99
- Virginia W. Hill
- Alejandro Hinojosa Sr.
- Marissa Hogan

- Virginia Louise Reinhart Huston
- Linda R.N. Johnson
- Gerard Alec Julien "Gerry" - MMA Cadet "E" Co.
- Howard Lombard "Lee" - MMA '76
- Maj Edward T. McGee, USMCR (Ret)
- Adrian Edward Quintero
- Bennie L. Reynolds, USMC, "Ben" B-1-7, WWHH
- Charles A. Ringler
- Tyler R. Secrest - MMA '07
- Capt Robert J. Shirk, USMC
- Richard Spann - VMF 422
- Sgt Andy Stevens, USMC - KIA, IRAQ 12/1/05
- SSgt Dennis Studenny - 5th Marines, RVN
- The 4 U.S. Army Rangers Killed in Niger
- Pfc Brian A. Thornton, USMC - KIA, ROK 1951
- 1stSgt Frank T. Von Rintel, USMC (Ret) "Bud"
- SSgt E.L. "Knobby" Walsh, USMC - 7th Marines, Korea