

University of Mississippi

eGrove

University of Mississippi News

5-10-2018

Army ROTC Cadet, Engineering Senior Receives National Recognition

Edwin B. Smith

Follow this and additional works at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews>

Recommended Citation

Smith, Edwin B., "Army ROTC Cadet, Engineering Senior Receives National Recognition" (2018). *University of Mississippi News*. 447.

<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews/447>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Mississippi News by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

Army ROTC Cadet, Engineering Senior Receives National Recognition

UM student Donald Lorbecke selected for Society of American Military Engineers Award of Merit

 MAY 10, 2018 BY **EDWIN B. SMITH**

[Fa](#) [Tv](#) [Li](#) [Er](#) [Cc](#) [SM](#) [Pr](#) [St](#)



Army ROTC Cadet Donald Lorbecke (right), receives the Society of American Military Engineers Award of Merit presented by Lt. Com. Joshua Taylor. Photo by Kevin Bain/Ole Miss Communications

OXFORD, Miss. – Most military personnel are honored after having engaged in active combat, but one University of Mississippi **Army ROTC** cadet is being nationally recognized before even being commissioned.

CDT Donald Lorbecke, a fifth-year senior majoring in **mechanical engineering** with a minor in military science from Madison, Alabama, has been selected to receive the Society of American Military Engineers ROTC Award of Merit.

Awardees must be in the top 25 percent of their engineering class and in the top 25 percent of their Reserve Officers' Training Corps class. Recipients are selected through a central military service board for the Army, Navy and Air Force ROTC programs.

"It is a fairly select award that is competitive among all service branches commissioning programs," said Lt. Commander Joshua Taylor, chair of the university's Army ROTC and professor of military science. "With over 5,000 cadets per cohort nationwide in Army ROTC alone, it is quite an honor for him."

Lorbecke, who receives his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering Saturday at Commencement, will be commissioned in the Mississippi Army National Guard as a 2nd Lieutenant Engineer Officer. He said he is humbled by his recognition.

"I was very honored to learn the selection process for this award," he said. "Sometimes, I forget that I am doing more than people expect. I think it is because I am doing what I love: military and engineering."

Taylor said Lorbecke is "unmatched by his peers in terms of his character, competence and commitment to duty."

"I have watched Cadet Lorbecke grow as a leader and embrace a sense of stewardship for the profession," he said. "He is completely selfless in all actions and commits more time toward giving back to our program."

"He is a genuine leader and will excel in all that he does. It was a privilege to have him in our program."

Lorbecke and his sister, Margo Lorbecke, were raised by their aunt and uncle, Jean and Jeff Downs of Madison. The Downs, both Ole Miss alumni, influenced Lorbecke's decision to attend the university.

"My aunt did 20 years in the Army and my uncle is a mechanical engineer," he said. "One cousin is also a mechanical engineer. Another one is a geological engineer and served in the Army as well."

Lorbecke said he is grateful for professors in both the mechanical engineering department and Army ROTC program.

"Dr. (Erik) Hurlen (instructional assistant professor of mechanical engineering) and Dr. Raj (Arunachalam Rajendran, chair and professor of mechanical engineering) are very smart and supportive professors," he said. "Both these men should never leave this university because of the impact they make here."

As for his ROTC instructors, Lorbecke lists Capt. Joseph Gooch, operations officer and MS III instructor, and Maj. Ronald Rogers, MSARNG recruiting BN, Program XO and MS I instructor, as having been his most influential.

Follow us on social



Campus Briefs

Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children's play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

[Read the story ...](#)

More Posts from this Category

Thank You To Our Donors

Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

[Read the story ...](#)

More Posts from this Category

Ole Miss In the News

Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith's Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith's enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith's 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school's first African-American student.

"They showed you how a great leader should act and take care of soldiers," he said. "Capt. Gooch prepared us for our advanced camp summer evaluations last year. Without him, I would not have received the Distinguished Military Graduate Award.

"Maj. Rogers was the assistant professor of military science and the National Guard Simultaneous Membership Program instructor. His presence would give you this feeling that he truly did care for the development in others and the program."

Rajendran commended Lorbecke upon his recognition.

"I've always admired Don's attitude and demeanor towards all activities during throughout his undergraduate education here at the Ole Miss," he said.



Donald Lorbecke speaks during the recent Cadet 'Change of Command' ceremony. Photo by Kevin Bain/Ole Miss Communications

"James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier," a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)



Army ROTC Lt. Com. Joshua Taylor (left) and Marni Kendricks, assistant dean of engineering, congratulate Donald Lorbecke for winning the Society of American Military Engineers Award of Merit. Submitted photo

Rajendran interacted with Lorbecke during the 2018 American Society of Mechanical Engineers robot design competition. Lorbecke was a member on one of the two teams that participated in the competitions at Pennsylvania State University at State College, Pennsylvania.

"Don and his team designed the robot with enormous passion and hard work," Rajendran said. "He has been a rising star as an ROTC cadet. Winning the SAME award further confirms Dons' well-rounded accomplishments."

Engineering school Dean Alex Cheng agreed.

"Donald is a remarkable young man with excellent leadership, strong determination and true integrity," Cheng said. "He is well-deserving of this award and I believe he will soon distinguish himself in his very promising military and engineering career. We are proud to claim him as an Ole Miss engineering alum."

The SAME Award of Merit, a bronze medal with bronze key replica, was authorized in 1948 to be awarded annually to outstanding junior and senior engineering students in the ROTC program. A central military service board selects outstanding students for the awards from nominations submitted by the professors of military science and technology, naval science and aerospace studies.

 FILED UNDER: [2018/06-JUNE ENGINEERING E-NEWS LETTER](#), [COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS](#), [ENGINEERING NEWS ARCHIVE](#), [ENGINEERING STUDENT NEWS](#), [FEATURED NEWS](#), [NEWS RELEASES](#), [SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING](#)