

On behalf of the faculty, staff, students, and alumni, let me welcome you to The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and thank you for your service to our country. Please know that this campus appreciates your sacrifices for us, and we are honored to be able to offer this program back to you.

We have a long history of service with the military here on our campus. During the 1940s, we actually hosted cadets from the Army Air force Pilot Training Program. Their classes were held on campus and the cadets lived in University housing that had been vacated by the number of male students who had left for the war. The army even erected temporary barracks on our practice football fields for some of the cadets. The troops drilled on Chamberlain Field and in the main quadrangle.

We hosted an ROTC program here for many years, before it was lost due to budget cuts—certainly not from lack of enrollment or participation by the campus. Through an extended effort that brought both campus and community leaders together for a common cause, we were able to restore ROTC to our campus and are proud to say that it has become an integral part of our campus life and continues to grow. I particularly enjoy seeing our cadets present the colors at University functions. It is always quite moving and makes me proud to be an American.

Numerous Chattanooga alumni have distinguished themselves through military service. We are particularly proud of our retired four-star General B.B. Bell, and we know he is one of many. In fact, our main formal entrance to campus is called the Alumni Memorial Gate and is dedicated to all of our alumni who have died in service to their country in the armed forces.

Currently, we are pleased to have about 300 veterans among our student body, many of whom take advantage of the G.I. Bill—considered one of the most significant pieces of legislation ever enacted by Congress. Despite political leanings, this continues to be one of the most universally popular and successful of all federal programs, and UTC is honored to participate and to serve veterans and their families.

John F. Kennedy said, “A nation reveals itself not only by the men it produces, but also by the men it honors, the men it remembers.” And I would add to that the women, as well. It is indeed a true honor and privilege to be here with you today and to have you in Chattanooga and on this campus. We honor you, we are here to help you, and hopefully, you will come to see the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga as place you appreciate and remember as well.

Thank you.