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The success of Fayetteville State University is connected to identifying needs and providing solutions to enhance the lives of individuals and their families. Starting with meaningful relationships, we’re expanding our reach – it is a joint mission. This edition of Bronco Pride Magazine demonstrates our actions toward resolving whether higher education is worth it for military services members. At FSU, the answer is an emphatic YES.

As one of the most diverse universities in the nation, we’ve taken pride in delivering accessible options for education to adult learners and partnering with community colleges creating direct transfer pathways. Moreover, we’ve dedicated resources to our military-affiliated student population and encouraged service members and their families to utilize our Military Tuition Scholarship. That’s four years of tuition-free, available to active-duty servicemen, veterans, reservists, their spouses and dependents.

This was an unprecedented year of collaboration with Fort Liberty leadership in strategic engagement and raising the overall awareness of the vast educational opportunities at FSU. My visiting Fort Liberty for the day in February was intentional. FSU is moving beyond general terms like service members and soldiers, and now adding names and faces to the those we look to serve at this institution. I gained a larger sense of admiration walking through the training grounds as thousands of soldiers honed their crafts. I watched in awe as I witnessed soldiers preparing to protect our nation. In fact, I am more committed today of ensuring Fayetteville State University protects their futures by
Chancellor Darrell T. Allison recently visited Fort Liberty to gain a greater understanding of the soldiers “we look to serve” at Fayetteville State University. Photo by Ezekiel Best.
offering programs enhancing their military career by allowing seamless transition into high-paying, high-demand career fields outside of the military. In this, our mission is a joint mission: FSU’s mission is Fort Liberty’s mission. The leadership and vision of Lt. General Christopher Donahue, commanding general and senior mission commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Liberty, is remarkable and I was proud to stand alongside him as FSU endeavors to be even more impactful in the lives of our military.

Earlier this year, we also announced a major partnership with AIR University as FSU is the only Historically Black University approved to participate in their Associate-to-Baccalaureate Cooperative Program. An unprecedented partnership of this kind not only removes barriers for service men and women who seek accessible and affordable academic degree programs at Fayetteville State University, but it underscores, once again, our determination of preserving our highly ranked status as a military-friendly institution.

We take great pride in being an institution supporting the individuals protecting our nation. All our initiatives resulted in an increase in military-affiliated students, marking new records for two consecutive years. Of nearly 7,000 students, 33% are military-affiliated. It is a joint mission to see that continues to rise. Are you in?

With Bronco Pride,
Dr. Kimberly Jeffries Leonard '86
Chair
Board of Governors appointee through 2025

Mr. Glenn B. Adams
Vice Chair
Board of Governors appointee through 2027

Mr. Frederick Nelson Jr. '98
Secretary
North Carolina General Assembly appointee through 2025

Mrs. Joyce A. Adams
Board of Governors appointee through 2027

Mr. Jerry Gregory '84
North Carolina General Assembly appointee through 2027

Dr. Warren McDonald
North Carolina General Assembly appointee through 2027

Mr. John McFayden
Board of Governors appointee through 2027

Dr. Donald Moore '93
Board of Governors appointee through 2027

Mr. Gregory Pinnix '95
Board of Governors appointee through 2025

Mr. William R. Warner
North Carolina General Assembly appointee through 2025

Mr. Stuart Augustine
Board of Governors appointee through 2025

Mr. Frederick Nelson Jr. '98
Secretary
North Carolina General Assembly appointee through 2025

Dr. Donald Moore '93
Board of Governors appointee through 2027

Dr. Brandon Phillips '04
Board of Governors appointee through 2025

DID YOU KNOW?

FSU is a Purple Heart University.
HAPPY #3 TO THE CHANCELLOR! On March 15, 2024, Chancellor Darrell T. Allison celebrated three years at Fayetteville State University.

To help mark the occasion, an article from Allison was published in the local media – not only to reinforce his commitment to FSU, but also to drive home the promise of a bright and exciting future.

“It is said that the third-year anniversary is a testament to strength, longevity, and evidence that a person has been tried – even tested – and has demonstrated commitment and staying power,” he began.

Chancellor Allison reflected about his early days at the university and quickly realizing that there had been a “significant underinvestment” in FSU. Funding was sorely needed to construct new buildings, renovate others, and make long overdue repairs.

“This didn’t sit well with me. As our state’s second oldest university, FSU, along with our students, faculty, staff and alumni, deserved better. Therefore, my commitment and focus went into overdrive, and I am proud to say, on this third anniversary, that FSU has received more than $210 million from the state to help stabilize and advance this deserving university.”

Among the multitude of projects: the construction of a new College of Education, a new residential hall, and a health and wellness center, to name a few.

Chancellor Allison pointed out that the investment extends to the community, including FSU’s Fayetteville-Cumberland Regional Entrepreneurship and Business Hub, “which is boosting the regional economy and making a tremendous impact on small business owners who are utilizing the space to get certified and trained in government contracts, bid opportunities and more.”

The HUB services 10 counties, including Cumberland, and served more than 5,000 participants in 2023. The HUB has also successfully helped launch 54 new businesses that created 250 new jobs which included minority and women owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses and small businesses within the targeted region and secured more than $30 million dollars in contracts.

Chancellor Allison also touched on creation of a 10-Year Campus Master Plan and a 5-year strategic plan, in addition to the success of the free summer school program.

To read the entire article, click on the QR code:
Fayetteville State University is partnering with the U.S. Air Force’s Air University Associate-to-Baccalaureate Cooperative Program (AU-ABC) to advance educational opportunities for enlisted Airmen and Space Professionals beginning with second 8-week courses this spring 2024.

“We take great pride in being an institution supporting the individuals protecting our nation,” said Chancellor Darrell T. Allison. “An unprecedented partnership of this kind not only removes barriers for servicemen and women who seek accessible and affordable academic degree programs at Fayetteville State University, but it underscores, once again, our determination of preserving our highly ranked status as a military-friendly institution.”

FSU is the only HBCU currently approved to participate in the AU-ABC program, joining more than 100 institutions offering 350 programs to Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) graduates seeking to earn a bachelor’s degree. For the past five years, the AU-ABC program graduated about 6,400 students from partnering institutions annually.

“Air University provides Airmen with many educational and developmental touchpoints throughout their careers to enhance the military readiness and lethality of our joint force. This partnership with Fayetteville State University only increases the flexibility and ability for our Airmen to access the quality education they need to develop and serve our Nation,” said Lt. Col. Thomas P. Talafuse, Community College of the Air Force commander and commandant.

The AU-ABC connects the CCAF with four-year institutions where currently serving members of the Air Force, Space Force, Air Force Reserves and Air National Guard can earn their bachelor’s degree online. It has helped thousands of Airmen pursue and complete their higher education goals with a jumpstart from the completion of their associate degree. Partnering with military friendly institutions, the program maximizes application of military career education and training.

FSU has offered free tuition to qualifying military-affiliated students through the military tuition scholarship since 2022 to reduce financial barriers for military-affiliated, connect individuals with no access to Department of Defense (DOD) tuition assistance. Active duty, members of the National Guard or Reserves with an honorable discharge, military spouses of active-duty service members or veterans, children or other recognized legal dependents of active-duty service members or veterans qualify for the military tuition scholarship. Approximately 33% of FSU’s nearly 7,000 students are military-affiliated.

“The infrastructure FSU leadership has implemented supports our efforts to focus on active-duty military and military-affiliated individuals and families,” said Monica Leach, Ed.D., provost and senior vice chancellor for academic affairs. “We are honored to have the opportunity to assist Airmen on their quest for bachelor’s degree completion.”
Fayetteville State University and Wake Technical Community College signed the Bronco Benefit partnership agreement to guarantee transfer admissions for qualified students on Monday, April 22.

“The addition of Wake Tech in the Bronco Benefit program tremendously elevates student’s access to completing a bachelor’s degree program by making transferring to FSU seamless and appealing,” said FSU Chancellor Darrell T. Allison. “We want students to continue their education with us and receive a high-quality, affordable education while minimizing the time it takes them to graduate.”

FSU aims to remove barriers and provide a smooth transfer process. As a part of the Bronco Benefit agreement, application fees are also waived for transfer students, and Wake Tech students with a 3.0 GPA or higher are eligible for the Bronco Bridge scholarship when enrolling as a full-time student.

Bronco Benefit creates a supportive and seamless process for Wake Tech graduates to successfully transfer to FSU. Students graduating with associate degrees in approved transfer degree programs and meet the university’s transfer admissions requirements gain a direct-entry pathway to FSU. Wake Tech, the largest community college in North Carolina, is the fourth community college to join of the 16 institutions scheduled to join Bronco Benefit.

“At Wake Tech, we celebrate the power of partnerships,” said Wake Tech President, Scott Ralls, Ph.D., “and the incredible range of options they open up for our students. This agreement with FSU will provide exciting possibilities for Wake Tech degree students who want to continue their education at the bachelor’s level – and beyond.”

After students complete 30 credit hours, the Office of Adult Learners, Transfer and Military Students at FSU coordinates support while students conclude their associate degree program and meeting to best align courses for transfer credits.

Bladen Community College and Sandhills Community College joined the Bronco Benefit program earlier this month. Students graduating from Wake Tech, BCC, SCC and FTCC are eligible for scholarships when transferring to FSU and meeting the eligibility requirements.

FSU hosted a partnership event for all 16 community colleges on May 29.

- Alamance Community College
- Bladen Community College
- Carteret Community College
- Central-Piedmont Community College
- Craven Community College
- Fayetteville Technical Community College
- Halifax Community College
- Lenior Community College
- Pitt Community College
- Richmond Community College
- Sampson Community College
- Sandhills Community College
- Southeastern Community College
- Wake Technical Community College
- Wayne Community College
- Wilson Community College
Artificial Intelligence continues to make headlines – and an FSU professor is on the cutting edge of helping shape the future of AI.

For the second consecutive year, Dr. Sambit Bhattacharya, a professor of computer science and director of the Intelligent Systems Lab (ISL), is collaborating with the Laboratory for Analytic Sciences (LAS) at N.C. State University for research on artificial intelligence to enhance national security, according to an announcement earlier this year.

“Students are often drawn to the cutting-edge nature of AI research, and those with a natural inclination towards technology and AI find the application to national security particularly engaging.”

Fayetteville State University’s highly regarded Forensic Science Program, was awarded re-accreditation by the Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC) for a five-year period, 2024-2029, FSU is the first and only Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in North Carolina to achieve this distinction.

FSU’s forensic science students are among the best in their field.
A strong connection to the U.S. Armed Forces – and a history of serving the needs of military-affiliated students, faculty and staff – isn’t a recent development at Fayetteville State University, but rather dates back to the institution’s very beginnings in 1867.

“Of the university’s seven founders, we can confirm that at least two had ancestors who served during the Revolutionary War,” said Nicholle Young St. Leone, an archives technician and historian at Fayetteville State.

On many days, Young St. Leone, smiling and approachable, can be found at her desk on the fourth floor of Charles W. Chesnutt Library. Have questions related to the university’s history? She will likely know the answers or won’t stop digging until she unearths all the facts.

Her own history with the university dates back to 1990 and ’91 when she attended the Early Childhood Learning Center on campus. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from FSU. For Young St. Leone, FSU family roots run deep. Her mother, Dawn Young, is a veteran, longtime educator and proud alumnae.

Young St. Leone is now part of a team with Dr. Kelli Cardenas Walsh and Mr. Charles Anderson in FSU’s Department of History. Part of their mission is to give FSU history presentations at local schools, libraries, and on Fort Liberty.

They have also compiled a print-worthy presentation titled “Military Connections of FSU” which traces the history from inception to present. Here are some of the report’s highlights:

Dr. Ezekiel Ezra Smith – principal and first president from 1883 to 1933 (and for whom Fayetteville’s E.E. Smith High School is named) took two periods of leave from his tenure to serve in the military and national government roles.

During World War II, students from then-Fayetteville State Teachers College served in various branches of the military, including one Tuskegee Airmen. According to a press release, student and 2nd Lt. Andrew Johnson Jr. was awarded his wings and commission from Tuskegee Army Airfield in 1944.
According to the 1947 yearbook, the first veterans returned to campus. Veteran enrollment stood at 70 students, and in a spirit of camaraderie, the Veterans Club was formed.

Dr. Rudolph Jones – served as president of the college from 1956 to 1969. He had served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Former Bronco football player, Alphana Hobbs was presented the Navy’s Bronze Medal for meritorious service in Vietnam in 1970.

Staff Sgt. (ret.) Joyce B. Malone – a Fayetteville civic leader, enlisted in the Marines in 1958 and served for four years, followed by marriage and college at Fayetteville State. In 1971, she joined the Army Reserve – then-Fort Bragg’s 82nd Airborne Division. In 1974, she became the oldest to earn Airborne wings in the U.S. Army Reserve. By age 38, she had completed 15 parachute jumps.

Dr. Lloyd V. Hackley – served as chancellor of Fayetteville State University from 1988 to 1994 and interim chancellor in 2007. He is a retired Air Force major who was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor and the Vietnam Cross.

Command Sgt. Major Michele S. Jones ’93, is the first woman in the U.S. Army Reserve to attain the position of command sergeant major. At one time, she was the highest ranking African American woman enlisted in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. She also served as special assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Defense.

General (ret.) Lloyd J. Austin – who led soldiers at Fort Bragg (now Liberty), spoke to FSU students at the 2012 spring commencement. He returned as the keynote speaker in 2023, this time as the U.S. Secretary of Defense, the first Black American to hold this position. His wife, Charlene D. Austin ’82, earned her bachelor’s degree from Fayetteville State University in 1982.
Dr. Kelli Cardenas Walsh and her son, Army ROTC Cadet Jack Walsh, say they’re both grown in countless ways because of FSU. She is a highly revered history professor. He has been on campus from childhood to now a junior Army ROTC cadet majoring in geospatial science. Photo by Ezekiel Best
Family photos courtesy of Professor Kelli Cardenas Walsh
A LEGACY STORY

Mother and son share a special connection to FSU

Dr. Kelli Cardenas Walsh remembers looking out the window of her history classroom in 2008 to watch her three-year-old son, Jack, frolicking on the playground below.

And even though she was immersed in teaching, nothing comforts a mother quite like knowing her child is safe and happy. She remains grateful to the Early Childhood Learning Center at Fayetteville State University.

For mother and son, FSU has always been the school of choice. A place where connections are made and friendships are forged for life.

These days, the associate history professor is likely to look up and see her tall son walking into her office for a visit, wearing his camouflage fatigues as a third-year Army ROTC cadet at Fayetteville State.

"I believe that everything here has matured me. I'm more physically fit, and I feel like I've grown," says Cadet Jack Walsh, 19, who graduated with honors in 2023 from FSU's Cumberland International College before enrolling in the college ROTC program. Now pursuing a bachelor's degree in geospatial science, he is looking forward to a career in the U.S. Army.

By doing so, he will be following in the footsteps of his mother, who served in the Army after high school to help position herself financially for college. "Jack will be fourth-generation military in our family," she says, beaming with pride.

Looking back on Jack's early years, she says his fate appeared to be sealed. A photograph from Career Day shows a confident first-grader, dressed in military camo. Another photo captures Jack meeting Lt. General (now retired) John F. Mulholland Jr. during a visit to the U.S. Army Airborne & Special Operations Museum.

Dr. Walsh says they feel fortunate to be part of the Fayetteville State family and in a place where they are welcomed and embraced. During the photo session for this article, her husband and Jack's father, Tommy, a civilian, visited the campus and helped assist without being asked. That seems to be the Walsh way. Help and serve where you can – because you can.

Bronco Pride.
THE CALL TO SERVE

From left — Mr. Anthony Goode, Mrs. Tiffany Knighten, Ms. Pattie Hargrove, Ms. SeQuenna Pennix, Army Captain John Chapman, Dr. Veronica Alexander, Dr. Pamela Baldwin, Dr. Cierra Griffin, Air Force Lt. Colonel Terilee Hooe, Mrs. Janet E. Brinkley, Mrs. Teresa Griffin, Mr. Jose Torres. Photo by Ezekiel Best
Jeremy Ricketts admits that he was a bit reluctant about attending Fayetteville State University. “I was skeptical at first,” he recalls, “because of another university experience, but once I got in the door at FSU, I immediately felt comfortable. Everyone was absolutely professional ... and nice.”

The year was 2023, and Ricketts had already transitioned out of the U.S. Army with nearly 21 years of service. His wife, a military officer and registered nurse, was getting reassigned to Womack Army Medical Center on Fort Liberty. They would be relocating from Michigan.
“I was skeptical at first because of another university experience, but once I got in the door at FSU, I immediately felt comfortable.”

— Jeremy Ricketts, ’26, U.S. Army veteran

Ricketts, now 45, says it was important for him to continue his education at a university that would accept the academic credits he earned while in the military. He also wanted to set an example for his pre-teen son.

Ricketts is just one of many students annually who seek guidance on-campus at the Military Affiliated and Veteran Student Resource Center or the FSU Learning Center at Fort Liberty. Ricketts visited both, and learned about the free tuition program for military-affiliated students, among other benefits and support. But he received so much more than invaluable information and sage advice. He felt a sense of belonging.

Today, the former sergeant first class is a sophomore well on his way to earning his bachelor’s degree in psychology and a minor in English with an emphasis on writing. He wants to use his knowledge and experience to help other servicemen and women. Ricketts was deployed five times, including three in Iraq. He lives with PTSD and feels like he can relate to others who have survived combat situations.

Ricketts believes he found the best fit in FSU and enjoys the camaraderie on campus. And he can always count on a team to keep him on-track with his academic and career goals.

“Most of my dealings have been with Mr. (Anthony) Goode in the Military Affiliated and Veteran Student Resource Center. He’s very intuitive and very, very patient. Intellectual. And he’s a veteran,” Ricketts says. “I’ve also had great conversations with another veteran, Dr. (Cierra L.) Griffin.”

And that in itself has been therapeutic.
DID YOU KNOW

About 1 in 3 students at FSU is military-affiliated and eligible for free tuition. That includes active-duty service members, members of the National Guard or Reserves, veterans with an honorable discharge, military spouses of active-duty service members or veterans, and children or other recognized legal dependents of active-duty service members or veterans.

THE NEED IS GREAT

Military-affiliated students account for roughly 33 percent of the FSU student population of nearly 7,000. For comparison, Chancellor Darrell T. Allison recently pointed out at FSU’s second annual Military Appreciation Luncheon (see pages 32-33) that the average at most colleges and universities in just about 3 percent.

The military-affiliated are a wide-ranging group, including:

- Active-duty service members
- Members of the National Guard or Reserves
- Veterans with an honorable discharge
- Military spouses of active-duty service members or veterans
- Children or other recognized legal dependents of active-duty service members or veterans

Dr. Cierra L. Griffin, an Air Force and Army veteran, chats with Jeremy Ricketts who is pursuing his psychology degree after serving nearly 21 years in the Army, including three deployments to Iraq. Photo by Ezekiel Best
“We should serve our military because they serve us.”

— Dr. Pamela Baldwin

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

It takes multiple teams to strengthen the ties between Fayetteville State and the military community – and make a key difference in the lives of others.

The Military Affiliated and Veteran Student Resource Center, located on the second floor of Broadwell College of Business and Economics, could best be described as the "boots on the ground" and "in the trenches" team. This group of dedicated professionals falls under the direction of Dr. Pamela Baldwin, the associate vice chancellor for student success and enrollment management since September 2023. Dr. Baldwin is vastly familiar with military culture, having both a father and brother who have served.

Military-affiliated individuals who are interested in attending FSU – or are already enrolled and have questions or need support – are likely to visit the offices here.

“We should serve our military because they serve us,” Dr. Baldwin says.

“The Military Affiliated Academic Team under Janet Brinkley is top-notch,” Dr. Baldwin adds. “Our team members are veterans, military spouses, adult learners, and FSU alumni.” Ms. Brinkley is the spouse of a veteran.

“Our four certifying officials, housed in the Veteran and Military Affiliated and Veteran Student Resource Center, certify approximately 900 students per semester.
"Everyone in the veterans center has helped me, including Janet and Anthony ... and Dr. Cierra Griffin who made sure I have all of the classes I need. They make sure you are staying on-track with your academic and career goals. And they understand families. I'm able to show my young son what I am doing in school - and we do our homework together."

— Jasmine Freeman '26, U.S. Army veteran

The team of three on Fort Liberty serves about 300 students per semester,” Dr. Baldwin continues.

The team’s goals are to increase our military enrollment, ensure a seamless transition for our military affiliated student population, and provide excellent customer service. "Their work is critical to our mission," says Dr. Baldwin.

On Fort Liberty, help with applications and information, as well as mental health counseling, can be found at the FSU Learning Center (in the old Bowley school). The center is under the direction of Command Sgt. Major (ret.) Dr. Veronica Alexander, who holds a doctorate in counseling.

"We’re a one-stop shop on FSU for Fort Liberty," she says.

She observes that many prospective students aren’t just interested in academics, but in the complete “college experience.”

Army veteran Jasmine Freeman confers with Janet. E. Brinkley, associate director of military-affiliated services, and Anthony Goode Anthony, a retired Army Sergeant First Class and VA school certifying official.

Photo by Ezekiel Best
Some ask about Greek life with a desire to join a fraternity or sorority.

“We speak their language,” says Dr. Cierra L. Griffin, who works on Dr. Baldwin’s team as the executive director for adult learners, transfer, and military students. Dr. Griffin is both an Air Force and Army veteran.

“FSU has offered free tuition to qualifying military-affiliated students through the military tuition scholarship since 2022 to reduce financial barriers for military-connected individuals with no access to Department of Defense (DOD) tuition assistance,” she wrote in an article for a local business publication.

“Increasing access to education for military-affiliated students is essential for supporting military families, facilitating transitions to civilian life, promoting career advancement, and addressing educational disparities,” she adds.

“FSU’s military tuition scholarship covers the full cost of tuition, which is $500 per year for North Carolina residents and $2,500 per year for out-of-state students.” The military tuition scholarship is open to all military-affiliated individuals listed in the above bullet.

DID YOU KNOW?

Fayetteville State is the #1 HBCU nationally enrolling military-affiliated students – and #1 in the UNC System.
“From a veterans perspective, I couldn’t see myself going to another school.”
— Olleah Brown ’25, U.S. Air Force veteran

Olleah Brown, who served four years in the U.S. Air Force, found the help she needed to begin her educational journey at FSU because of the dedicated team based on-campus. Her story is similar to many students who had long wanted to go to college, but didn’t have the funds and had no desire to take out loans and plunge into debt. So, they joined the service and looked at their educational options after getting out.

“I feel like Fayetteville State rolled out the red carpet for me,” says Brown, 25, who is working to graduate in May 2025 with a bachelor’s degree in business and a concentration in healthcare. “The biggest thing that impressed me was the veterans resource center. They helped me on how to use my GI Bill ... and making sure my college credits from the military transferred.”

“I love Fayetteville State,” she adds. “From a veterans perspective, I couldn’t see myself going to another school.”

“It’s inspiring to be in a multicultural environment with people from all backgrounds. I feel a sense of belonging here at FSU ... I also appreciate the opportunities FSU offers for resume writing and career development, and the availability of faculty and staff and the Student Veterans Association that I volunteer for as the disabilities services liaison. Everyone helps each other out. I feel like I’m home.”
— Jessica Booker ’25, U.S. Army veteran
U.S. Army Captain John Chapman

"That speaks to the high professionalism and dedication to excellence amongst our students, cadets, and institution."

— Captain John Chapman

U.S. Army Lt. Colonel Terilee C. "TL" Hook

"We call ourselves the quiet professionals."

— Lt. Colonel Terilee C. “TL” Hook

THE ROLE OF THE ROTC

Fayetteville State University maintains a long tradition of outstanding ROTC programs to prepare cadets for careers in the U.S. Army or Air Force.

Captain John Chapman, department chair for Army ROTC, is also an assistant professor of military science.

“We have two Army Cadre, me and SFC John Haynesworth,” he explains. “We instruct our freshman through junior-level cadets here at FSU, and our seniors are taught by our professor of military science, Lt. Colonel Philip Goddard at Campbell University.”

He says the program keeps “a healthy average of 80 cadets” with half composed of Green to Gold cadets. That is, active-duty option cadets who have served or are serving in the active-duty army who are selected to participate in ROTC across the nation. Each Green to Gold cadet, he says, can attend any public university in the country. Of the 45 Green to Gold Cadets from Fort Liberty, 27 chose to attend FSU for Fall 2024.

“‘That speaks to the high professionalism and dedication to excellence amongst our students, cadets, and institution,’” says Chapman, who has served the past decade leading Combat Engineers in the 3rd Cavalry Regiment, Regimental Engineer Squadron, and the 101st Airborne Division Air Assault, 3rd Brigade Rakkasans.

Lt. Colonel Terilee C. “TL” Hook is the commander of the Air Force ROTC “Detachment 607” with 35 cadets.

With a reputation for being tough but fair, the career aviator who grew up in an Air Force family blazed many trails before joining the FSU team. She served as a combat air advisor to the Afghanistan Air Force in Shindand Air Base, and she was also the youngest director of staff in the history of the 353rd Special Operations Group at Kadena Air Base in Japan.

Hook and Chapman both identify with the FSU motto, Res Non Verba. Deeds Not Words.

“We call ourselves the quiet professionals,” says Commander Hook.
DID YOU KNOW

Fayetteville State University is named to the “Best For Vets” list nationally by Military Times.

For more information:

Resource Center: tinyurl.com/FSU-Military-Resource-Center

Scholarship: tinyurl.com/FSU-Military-Scholarship

Smiling selfies are de rigueur on Commissioning Day.
There is yet another team that works, largely behind the scenes, to build a solid bridge between Fayetteville State University and Fort Liberty. The mission: Create partnerships that are a win-win all-around.

Having leaders with proven track records and established relationships in the military and government could also help graduates secure paid internships and lucrative jobs.

The Division of External Affairs and Military Relations is led by Vice Chancellor Wesley Fountain, who describes him as possessing a “principled leadership style informed by personal and professional integrity.”

Ariel Aponte recently joined the division as associate vice chancellor for external affairs. Aponte, who served as a chief warrant officer in U.S. Army Special Forces, is described as “an expert at building can-do teams that thrive in the most demanding of operational environments.”

They are joined in their efforts by four-star General (ret.) Michael X. Garrett who provides consultation to the division. General Garrett’s primary role is executive-in-residence for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and Dr. Marcus S. Cox, dean, and military advisor to the Chancellor. He also serves as the chair of the advisory board for the Ethics and Leadership Institute.

General Garrett had initiated a lunch meeting with Chancellor Darrell T. Allison shortly after he arrived at FSU in 2021 and while Garrett was still FORSCOM commander and senior military officer at Fort Bragg (now Liberty).

“I believe that Fayetteville State and Fort Liberty have always had a functional relationship, the university had representatives on base and offered courses for the many soldiers, civilians and family members in the pursuit of their college degree,” General Garrett notes. “The chancellor thought we could do better and that we should do more.”

He recalls telling his team afterward that he wanted “to do what I could to help him bring his vision to fruition and do more to assist FSU in any way that I could.”

“University growth is one of our highest priorities and Fort Liberty with its large military, civilian and family population is fertile ground for growth. Education makes all of us better and increases the quality of our students. The result is a better people, community and Army.”

SECURING PARTNERSHIPS
“University growth is one of our highest priorities and Fort Liberty with its large military, civilian and family population is fertile ground for growth. Education makes all of us better and increases the quality of our students. The result is a better people, community and Army.”

— General (ret.) Michael X. Garrett

DID YOU KNOW?

FSU has been designated as a Military Friendly School for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.
MORE PARTNERSHIP NEWS

To learn more about FSU’s partnership with the U.S. Air Force’s AIR University, plus the Bronco Benefit partnership with community colleges, turn to pages 9-10.

DID YOU KNOW?

Fayetteville State University’s MBA online program ranks #3 for veterans in North Carolina by U.S. World and News.
A recent special event at Fayetteville State University was so much more – it was a long-awaited reunion.

The Air Force Dining Out event served to commemorate the Air Force ROTC detachment’s 50th commissioning anniversary. This event was led by Lt. Colonel Terilee Hook and her cadets, who connected with the first six FSU Air Force ROTC cadets to commission as officers in 1974. Four were able to attend: Major Frank Douglas, Colonel Travis Lewis, Lt. Colonel Frank Melvin and Colonel Bobby Washington. FSU Air Force ROTC graduates were also in attendance.

Several of the first six to commission created the FSU ROTC Cadre Inc., which is a 501c3 nonprofit devoted to supporting FSU ROTC programs by providing financial and mentoring support.

“The Dining Out, jointly held by AFROTC Detachment 607 and FSU ROTC Cadre Inc.,” noted Colonel (ret.) Washington, “was symbolic of the strength of FSU’s partnership with the military. It demonstrates the importance of the university’s visionary leadership 50 years ago and continues today, as both Air Force and Army ROTC programs commission large numbers of 2nd lieutenants (2LT) in May 2024.”

He called the event a “bookend-to-bookend” example of the FSU program’s continuity: “The original officers were commissioned by Chancellor Charles Lyons in 1974 and marked the 50th year of the program and its support by now Chancellor Darrell T. Allison.”

This event took place on Saturday, May 4, at 4 p.m., in Rudolph Jones Student Center. The guest speaker was U.S. Army Major General (ret.) Rodney O. Anderson ’12.

“FSU, through its leadership in establishing AFROTC as a career choice, provided me an opportunity. With leadership preparation during my last two years at FSU and a bachelor’s degree conferred, I was given the opportunity to compete in a fiercely competitive environment.

With determination and a ‘can-do’ attitude, every officer commissioned from FSU in 1974 succeeded in completing 20-plus years, retiring and moving on in other leadership capacities in civilian life.”

— U.S. Air Force Colonel (ret.) Bobby Washington
It seems like everywhere you turn these days, there’s Affion Crockett. Flip on the TV, and he’s being interviewed by Michael Strahan on GMA and Kelly Clarkson on her popular talk show. Go to the movies, and see his latest film, “A Hip Hop Story,” which he refers to as “a love letter” to the genre, and Clarkson simply deems “hilarious.”

Crockett took a chance on Hollywood after graduating from Fayetteville State University in 1995 with a bachelor’s degree in business administration. A year earlier, he had been crowned the first Mr. FSU Contest winner, which offered some initial glimpses into his rising star power.

Now, by all appearances, Crockett’s talent and hard work have paid off. He is a rare multi-hyphenate producer, director, actor, writer, rapper, dancer and stand-up comedian.

Current FSU students know his name and influence in the entertainment industry – and a fearless pursuit of his dream. As soon as Crockett’s indie movie released in February, many Broncos headed for theaters to show their support and share laughs. The reviews have been resoundingly positive and thumbs-up.

In various interviews, Crockett makes two things abundantly clear. One, growing up as an Army brat and the recurring “new kid” helped drive him creatively, utilizing his talents for rap and dance to connect
In 2015, Affion Crockett spoke about his alma mater in this video that aired on regional TV stations.

“A Hip Hop Story” – Affion Crockett’s latest movie, of which he self-financed.

“Being the new kid in the military world, you’re going to get different reactions wherever you go,” he reflects in a phone interview. “They can want to bully you if you’re not the star jock or a football player that all the girls wanted to be around.”

Crockett harkened back to places he remembers well, stationed in Germany with his military family and even at Ponderosa Elementary in Fayetteville, not far from Fort Bragg (now Liberty). “I was the skinny, awkward kid ... but once they saw me dancing and rappin’, that saved my social persona,” he recalls.

Crockett looks back on his days at Fayetteville State University with fondness and gratitude – and he doesn’t hesitate to give credit where credit is due. “Dr. Council was the first person who believed in me,” he says of Dr. Juanette Council, vice chancellor for student affairs.

Yet, Crockett somehow always knew he was meant for a special life – one in which he would not only meet his heroes, but act alongside them, like Eddie Murphy in “Beverly Hills Cop IV: Axel F,” set for July 3 release in theaters. He also has performed with the Wayans brothers in multiple projects. Crockett says he feels he came into his own (in the public’s eye) for his work on the Nick Cannon’s 2005 MTV/VH1 series, “Wild’n Out.”

“Manifestation is a real thing,” Crockett says. “I always knew I’d be working with my heroes. My faith, my spirit knew, but my brain didn’t know it yet.”

These days, he’s probably most excited about achieving “A Hip Hop Story” in an ever-changing entertainment landscape with AI and post-two union strikes. “We made an instant classic,” he says. “People are clamoring to see it and it’s resonating with popular culture. And it’s gotten 90 percent on Rotten Tomatoes!"

And now it’s easier to watch, too. The movie is streaming exclusively at www.ahiphopstory.com.

First Mr. FSU Contest – Affion Crockett crowned Mr. FSU in 1994.
Gratitude. Partnership. Service. These are just a few of the themes that emerged in an inspiring Military Appreciation Luncheon, the second annual, held April 15 at Rudolph Jones Student Center on the campus of Fayetteville State University.

Attendees included representatives from Fort Liberty, active-duty soldiers and veterans, FSU faculty, staff and students, and elected officials, among other VIPs.

Chancellor Darrell T. Allison opened with good news about record numbers of military-affiliated choosing to attend FSU – or about one in three students – as well as the university’s “Best For Vets” rankings in Military Times. Foremost was the strong partnership between FSU and Fort Liberty.

That last fact was reinforced by the Lt. General Christopher T. “Chris” Donahue, commanding general of XVIII Airborne Corps and previously commanding general of the 82nd Airborne Division, and four-star General (ret.) Michael X. Garrett, who served as the commanding general of United States Army Forces Command, and is currently military executive-
in-residence to Fayetteville State University and an invaluable connector between the university and Fort Liberty.

With Allison as moderator, the three participated in a “fireside chat,” with no fire, a point that the chancellor addressed with humor, and temperatures outside hovering around 90.

Their hot topics ranged from the importance of reputation to the mark of a real servant leader. Or, as General Garrison put it so succinctly, “There’s only one way to lead. By personal example.”

“Leadership is simple. There’s only one way to lead. By personal example.”
— General (ret.) Michael X. Garrett

“Leaders show genuine care and concern for everyone around.”
— Lt. General Christopher T. Donahue
Dr. Terri Moore-Brown is passionate about helping FSU’s next generation of social workers through contributing to scholarships

Ask Dr. Terri Moore-Brown what compels her to contribute financially to her employer, Fayetteville State University, and she responds simply and without hesitation.

“My mom and dad,” she says. “They emphasized the importance of giving,” she explains. “You always give back. Find something that’s important to you – something that you’re passionate about – and make a difference.”

For Professor Moore-Brown, that means contributing toward scholarships for both graduate and undergraduate students in the School of Social Work in which she has taught since 2001. She, along with colleagues, alumni, social work students and friends of the School of Social Work, made contributions and endowed the Master of Social Work Scholarship.

She currently has funds drafted monthly from her paycheck with hopes to endow a scholarship targeting bachelor of social work (BSW) students.

“I’ve seen the struggles some of our FSU students experienced,” she says. “I feel like it’s important that I play my part to help persons who need financial support and have the desire to become social workers to make their dreams come true.”

She speaks eloquently on how social workers, through counseling, provision of resources and community organizing, empower individuals, groups and communities to enhance their quality of life. In addition, she states with pride, “One of the core pillars of the School of Social work’s mission is to equip our undergraduate and graduate students with knowledge and skills to meet the needs of military-affiliated populations. By leveraging their inherent resilience, students are trained to guide these individuals toward pathways of renewal and empowerment.”

Every time she watches new social work graduates accept their diplomas, she envisions during a graduate’s career roughly 5,000 people will be helped by a decision to become a social worker.

“When you watch them walk across that stage, it’s magical,” she says.

Dr. Moore-Brown is not an alumna of Fayetteville State University, but points proudly to several of her family members who are alums. Her husband, David C. Brown, Jr. ’77, is a graduate of FSU’s business school, and has joined her in the quest to keep giving to the university until the scholarship is endowed for BSW students. A brother-in-law and sister-in-law are also forever Broncos.

Dr. Moore-Brown is especially proud of her mother, a stay-at-home mom and military wife, who went back to school and chose FSU to earn her education degree and become a teacher.

For anyone who is interested in giving back to FSU, Dr. Moore-Brown suggests starting small if needed, but just begin. She also recommends talking with someone in the Division of University Advancement to learn more about the many ways of giving financially to Fayetteville State. She points out that a benefit of payroll deduction is funds are pre-tax.

“I just encourage everyone to give,” she says, “especially if you received your degree, or enjoyed programs and services provided by Fayetteville State University.”
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