

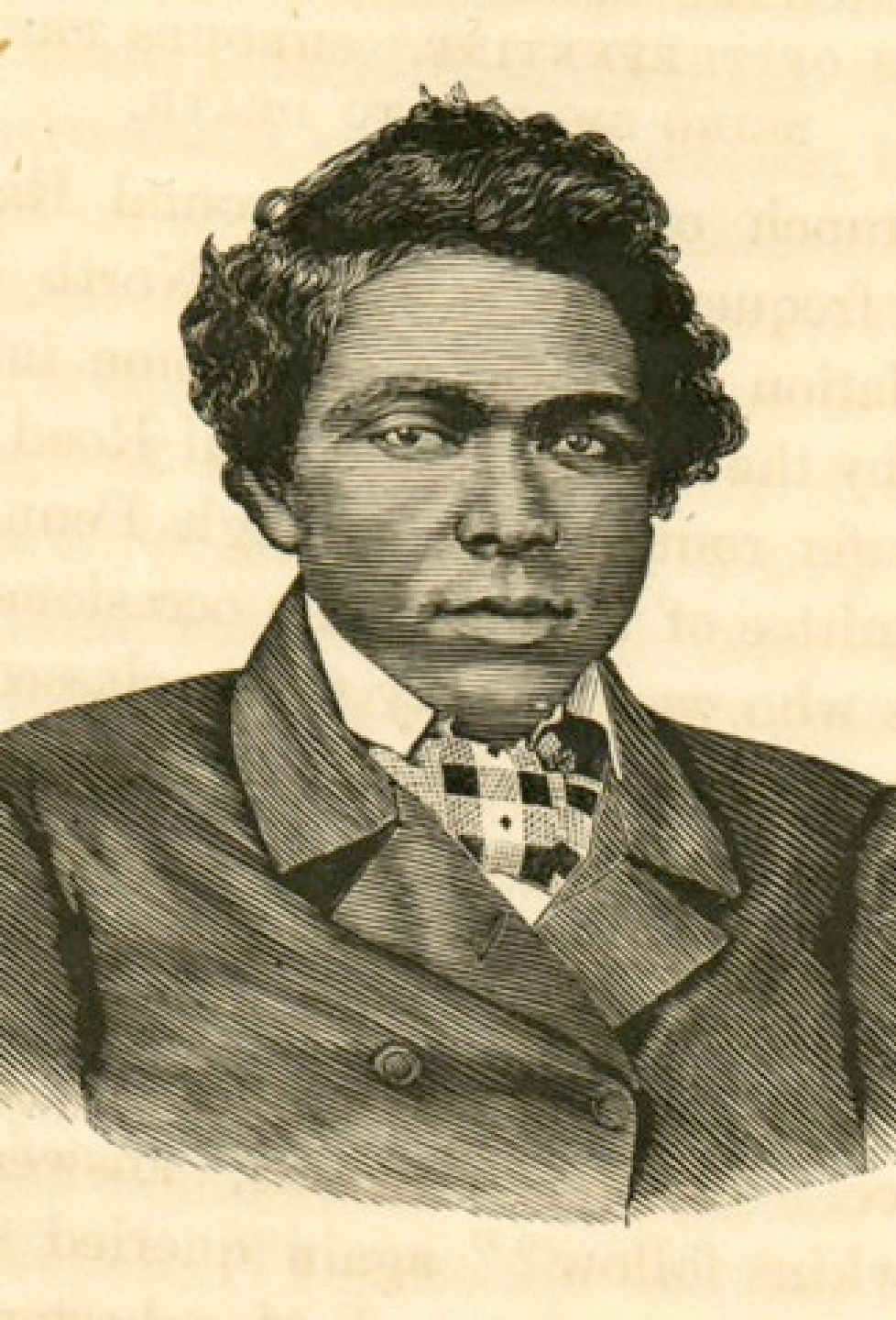
# HISTORICAL BLACK VETERANS THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Kutztown University  
Office of Veterans Services  
February 2021



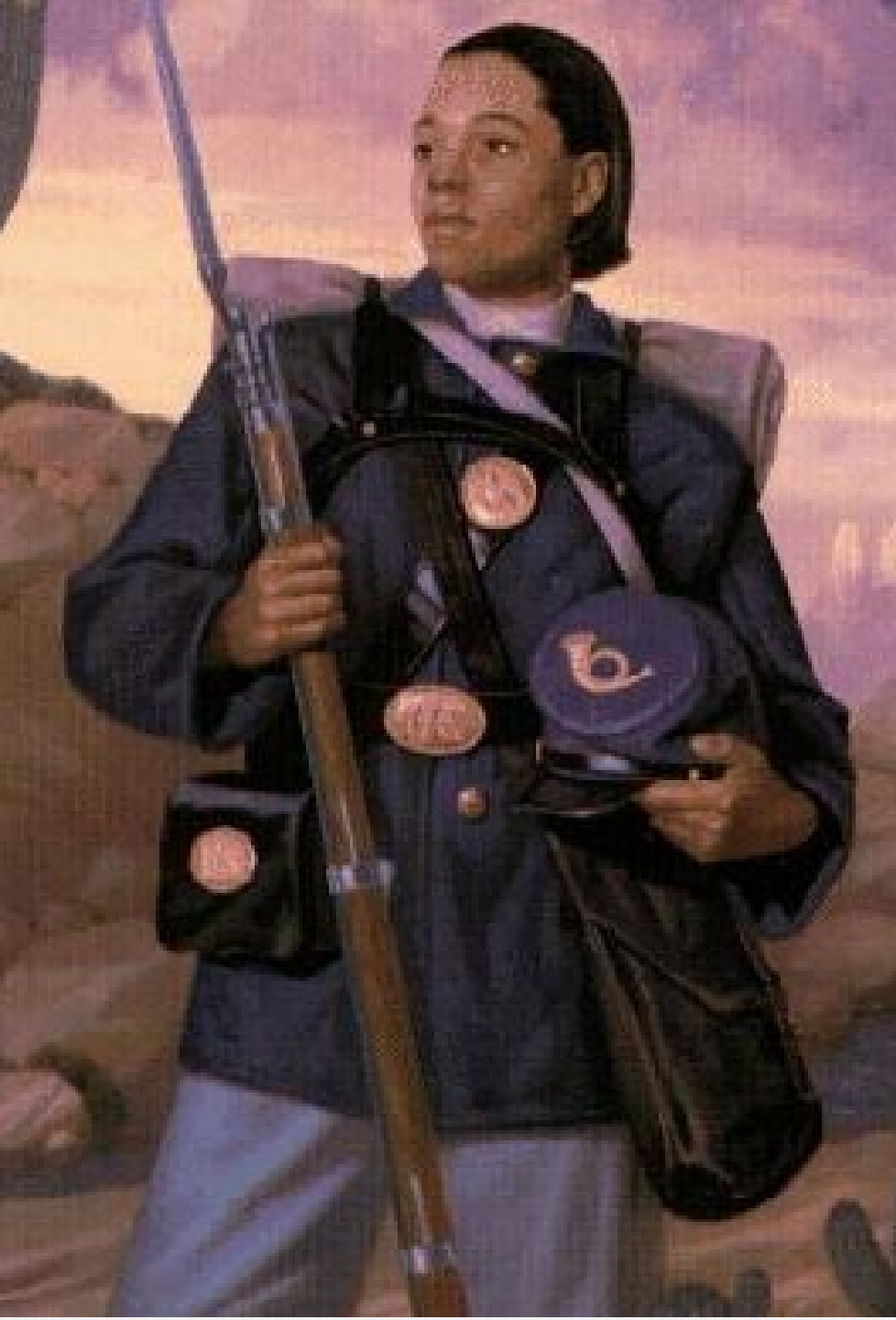
## ARAMINTA “HARRIET TUBMAN” ROSS

- Born: Between 1820 – 1822. Exact birthday is unknown.
- Died: 10 March 1913
- Known as “Moses” due to her selflessness of freeing enslaved people while serving in the Civil War
- Initially served as a cook and a nurse
- To date, Tubman is to have freed well over 300 African-American men, women and children



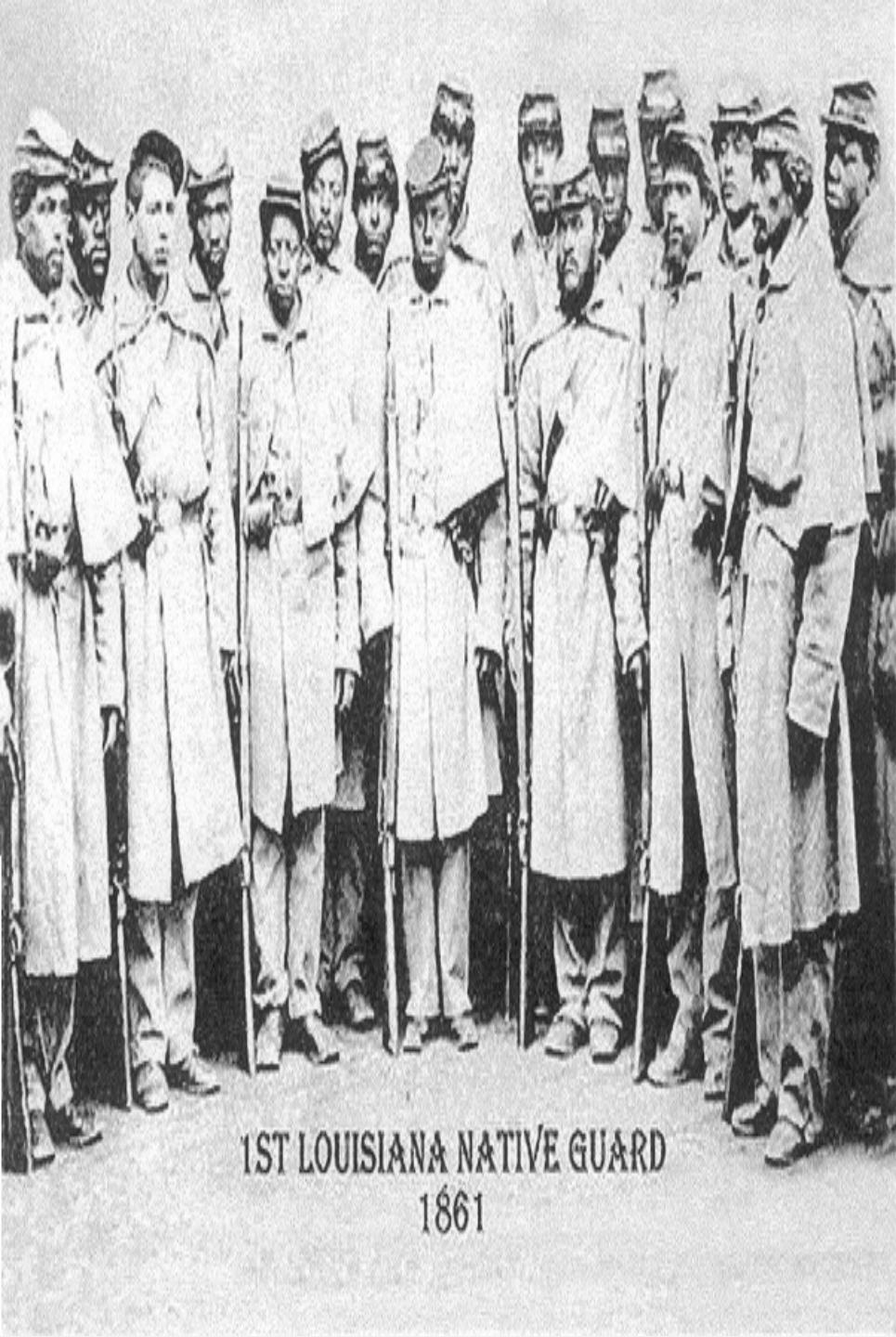
## ABRAHAM GALLOWAY

- Born: 8 February 1837
- Died: 1 September 1870
- Supported the Union Army as a spy as well as on the Senate North Carolina seat
- Posed as a slave to help free other slaves as well as gain Confederate troop secret information and tactics
- 1 of 5 black leaders that met with President Abraham Lincoln to encouraging the official abolishment slavery



## CATHAY “WILLIAM CATHAY” WILLIAMS

- Birth: September 1842 (exact day of death is unknown)
- Death: 1893 (exact date of death is unknown)
- First black woman to enlist into U.S. Army 38<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment (by falsifying herself as a man [William Cathay] in order to participate, due to prohibition of women serving)
- Participated in the Battle of Pea Ridge and Red River Campaign
- Discharged from U.S. Army on 14 October 1868 once found to be a woman by doctors assisting with her smallpox diagnostic



## 73<sup>RD</sup> REGIMENT INFANTRY U.S. COLORED TROOPS

- Organized in September 27, 1862
- Originally known as the 1<sup>st</sup> Louisiana Native Guard prior to being attached to 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Division during March of 1865 and future attachments
- All black Confederate unit
- Most of the men volunteered to perform duty
- Prior to attachment, the troop lost



## MONTFORD POINT MARINES

- Originated in 1942
  - The unit became legally official under the Executive Order 8802 signed by former President Franklin Roosevelt in 1941 banning discrimination of government workers (military included).
- Well over 20,000 African-American men signed up for recruitment once legally allowed to serve
- Service members within the troop helped encourage the Roosevelt cabinet to end of segregated troops within the Marines in 1941
  - The unit wanted to serve and the government needed more men for World War II.



## HENRY OSSIAN FLIPPER

- Born: March 21, 1856
- Died: April 26, 1940
- Graduated from West Point Military Academy in 1877
- First non-white commissioned officer to lead the Buffalo Soldiers as a Second Lieutenant
- Dismissed from the U.S. Army under Article 133 – Conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman, equivalence of a dishonorable discharge today
- Due to the backlash and harshness of his sentencing, former President Bill Clinton posthumously pardoned Flipper's conviction and was issued an honorable discharge in February of 1999



## ROBERT SMALLS

- Born: April 5, 1839
- Died: February 23, 1915
- Served in the Union Navy
- Escaped slavery via cargo ship with 7 of his crewmen's family and his own family to the North to be free
- Founded the Republican Party of South Carolina
- Held a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives from South Carolina's 5<sup>th</sup> District March 18, 1884 – March 3, 1887





## THE 761<sup>ST</sup> TANK BATTALION

- Branch: United States Army
- Active during 1942 – 1946 (segregated) and 1947 – 1955 (integrated)
- Were predominantly made up of African American Soldiers and known as the “military Black Panthers”
  - Partially due to their ongoing issues with white Soldiers and law enforcement
- Participated in World War II
- Professional baseball player Jackie Robinson was a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant with the battalion until forcibly transferred to another unit due to legal issues, then eventually left the Army to pursue baseball



## THE 1<sup>ST</sup> RHODE ISLAND REGIMENT

- Branch: Continental Army – Rhode Island
- Active: 1775 – 1783
- Participated in the Siege of Boston, the New York campaign, the Battle of Red Bank, the Battle of Rhode Island and the Siege of Yorktown
- Due to the shortage of white Soldiers, the Rhode Island General Assembly was created to allow black slaves to enlist and become free men at the end of their service agreement



STORMING FORT WAGNER

## THE 54<sup>TH</sup> MASSACHUSETTS INFANTRY

- Branch: Union Army
- Active: March 13, 1863 – August 4, 1865
- Participated in the Battle of Grimball's Landing, the Second Battle of Fort Wagner, the Battle of Olustee, the Battle of Honey Hill, and the Battle of Boykin's Mill
- Events inspired for the 1989 movie *Glory*
- Second African American unit allowed to serve during the American Civil War



## THE 15<sup>TH</sup> NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD REGIMENT – HARLEM HELLFIGHTERS

- Branch: United States Army
- Active: May 15, 1942 – February 3, 1946





## GREGORY DIMITRI GADSON

- Born: February 19, 1966
- Branch: United States Army
- Active: 1989 – 2014
- Served as commander at Fort Belvoir
- Participated in Operation Desert Storm, Kosovo War, Iraq War, and War in Afghanistan
- First service member to naturally utilize two prosthetic knees after losing both legs to a roadside bomb in 2007 and continue serving



## LAWRENCE JOEL

- Born: February 22, 1928
- Died: February 4, 1984
- Branch: United States Army
- Active: 1946 – 1973
- First African-American to receive Medal of Honor for the Vietnam War and prior to the Spanish-American War
- Participated in Korean War and was wounded in Vietnam War



## NEEDHAM ROBERTS

- Born: April 28, 1901
- Died: April 18, 1949
- Branch: United States Army New York National Guard
- Active: 1917– 1919
- Lied about age in order to serve (claimed to be eighteen when he was actually seventeen at the time of enlistment)
- Participated in World War I and earned a Croix de guerre and Purple Heart due to being wounded while in combat



## WILLIAM HARVEY CARNEY

- Born: February 29, 1840
- Died: December 9, 1909
- Branch: United States Army – Union
- Active: 1863 – 1864
- Participated in American Civil War and Second Battle of Fort Wagner
- Received an honorable discharge due to disability gained from combat then went on as a mailman for the next 30 years





## BUFFALO SOLDIERS – 10<sup>TH</sup> CAVALRY REGIMENT

- Formed: September 21, 1866 in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
- Active: 1866 – 1951
- Branch: United States Army
- Participated in American Indian Wars, Spanish-American War, Philippine-American War, Mexican Border War, World War I, and World War II
- Taft Henry was the last living Buffalo Soldier until his passing on June 26, 2020



## BENJAMIN OLIVER DAVIS, SR.

- Born: 18 December 1912
- Died: 4 July 2002
- First African-American Brigadier General in the U.S. Air Force
- Participated in World War II, Korean War, Second Taiwan Strait Crisis, Vietnam War
- Retired as a 4 Star General after 9 December 1998
- In 1942, Davis served as the commander for the 99<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squad (first all-black air unit) as a Lieutenant Colonel



## SAMUEL L. GRAVELLY, JR.

- Born: 4 June 1922
- Died: 22 October 2004
- First African-American Navy commander to lead ship into combat, obtain the rank Captain and Rear Admiral
- Originally had interest with U.S. Army but was rejected due to an existing health issue
- Participated in World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War



## 370<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY REGIMENT (8<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY REGIMENT)

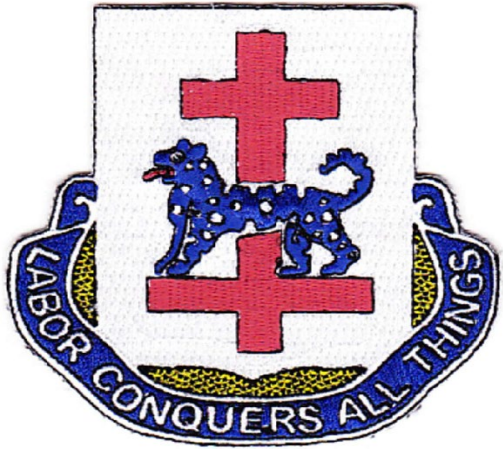
- Branch: U.S. Army Illinois National Guard
- Founded in 1870s
- Active during 1917-1918 and 1942-1946
- Located in Chicago, Illinois
  - Built in 1914 and the first armory for an all African American unit
- Participated in World War I
  - Only unit led under all-black officers





## HAZEL JOHNSON-BROWN

- Born: 10 October 1927
- Died: 5 August 2011
- First African-American female General in 1979
- First black Chief of U.S. Army Nurse Corps
- Enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1955
- Participated in Operation Desert Storm and Vietnam until she succumbed to her illness



## 366<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY REGIMENT

- Branch: U.S. Army Reserves
- Active during 1917-1919 and 1940-1945
- Located in Fort Devens, Massachusetts
- Participated in World War I, World War 2 and combat in Italy with the 92<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division (all black unit)
- Notable Veterans Attached to Unit: James F. Hamlet, William L. Dawson, Frederic E. Davison and Aaron R. Fisher





## DORIS "DORIE" MILLER

- Born: October 12, 1919
- Died: November 24, 1943
- Branch: United States Navy
- Active: 1939– 1943
- Participated in World War II, the Attack on Pearl Harbor and the Battle of Makin, Gilbert Islands
- Awarded Navy Cross, Purple Heart and Combat Action Ribbon
- Miller was the first African-American to be awarded Navy Cross



## COLIN LUTHER POWELL

- Born: 5 April 1937
- Promoted to 4-Star General for the U.S. Army on 4 April 1989
- First African-American Secretary of the State
  - Technically was the highest ranking African-American holding a federal position prior to President Barack Obama's election win
- Maintain many staffing and command position during his 35 years of service
- Participated in Vietnam War, Invasion of Panama and Gulf War





## THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

- First Black military aviators in United States Army Air Corps
- To date, known to have 992 trained airmen and well over 14,000 members including mechanics, fuelers, logistics specialists, and many more mission related specialist
- Events inspired by the 2012 movie “Red Tails”
- Participated in World War II
- Honored with Congressional Gold Medal for acts of bravery and selfless-ness in 2007



## FRANK E. PETERSON JR.

- Born: March 2, 1932
- Died: August 25, 2015
- Branch: United States Navy & United States Marine Corps
- Active: 1950 – 1952 (Navy) & 1952 – 1988 (Marine Corps)
- Participated in Korean War and Vietnam War
- Awarded Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross and Purple Heart Medal
- Peterson was the first African-American Marine Corps aviator and general



## VERNICE ARMOUR

- Born: 1973 (exact birthdate is unknown)
- First African-American female naval aviator and combat pilot
- Participated in two tours of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Invasion of Iraq and Battle of Najaf
- Also became the first African-American police officer in Tempe, Arizona
- Her grandfather was also the first African-American to serve in an integrated troop from 1942 to 1949



**in Korea**



## BERRY GORDY JR.

- Born: 28 November 1929
- Drafted into the U.S. Army in 1951 for the Korean War
- Assigned to 58th Field Artillery Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division
- Performed his active duty as a chaplain's assistant
- Eventually left duty to pursue music within Motown Record Corporation



## MONTEL BRIAN ANTHONY WILLIAMS

- Born: 3 July 1956
- Enlisted into the U.S. Marines in 1974
- Graduated from U.S. Naval Academy with a General Engineering degree in 1980
- Retired rank of Lieutenant Commander (LCDR/O-4)
  - Equivalence of Army Major (MAJ/O-4)
- Eventually left serving to pursue television hosting as well as motivational speaking