Recognizing our outstanding student veterans and active military members and those who support them.

November 11, 2015
Hurst Center for Lifelong Learning
Dumke Hall
PROGRAM

WELCOME
JEFFREY STUART

POW/MIA FALLEN SOLDIER TABLE
JEFFREY STUART

NATIONAL ANTHEM
WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY ARMY ROTC CHOIR

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS
PRESIDENT CHARLES A. WIGHT

ROTTC CHOIR
BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC, BALLAD OF THE GREEN BERET

INTRODUCTION OF HAVEN BARLOW
DR. BRUCE DAVIS

GUEST SPEAKER
HAVEN J. BARLOW

AWARD PRESENTATIONS
HENRY KIESTER

CLOSING COMMENTS
JEFFREY STUART

LUNCH SERVED

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

HAVEN J. BARLOW
FORMER STATE SENATOR

DR. CHARLES A. WIGHT
PRESIDENT, WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

DR. JANET WINNIFORD
VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

DR. MADONNE MINER
PROVOST, VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

DR. BRUCE DAVIS
VICE PROVOST AND DEAN, CONTINUING EDUCATION

DEAN AUSTIN
VETERAN STUDENT SENATOR

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:
WSU Division of Continuing Education
WSU Veterans Services Office
OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARD

SFC BARTLY ROE WEBSTER
For demonstration of excellence in leadership, scholarship, and personal integrity applied unselfishly to benefit members of the Weber State University campus and community.

FRIEND OF STUDENT VETERANS/MILITARY MEMBER FACULTY AWARD

LONDON DRAPER-LOWE
For demonstration of outstanding professional qualities and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations to enhance the quality of WSU student veterans and military members educational experience.

FRIEND OF STUDENT VETERANS/MILITARY MEMBERS STAFF AWARD

JILL A. GROB ERICSON
For demonstration of outstanding professional qualities and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations to enhance the quality of WSU student veterans and military members educational experience.

FRIEND OF STUDENT VETERANS/MILITARY MEMBERS STAFF AWARD

AARON GARZA
For demonstration of outstanding professional qualities and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations to enhance the quality of WSU student veterans and military members educational experience.

FRIEND OF STUDENT VETERANS/MILITARY MEMBERS STAFF AWARD

MARGARITA VARA
For demonstration of outstanding professional qualities and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations to enhance the quality of WSU student veterans and military members educational experience.
SUPPORTER OF STUDENT VETERANS/MILITARY MEMBERS NON-UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEE AWARD

KRISTEN BRULEE RALSTON
For demonstration of ability and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations in support of WSU student veterans and military members.

SUPPORT ORGANIZATION FOR
STUDENT VETERANS/MILITARY MEMBERS AWARD

WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY,
JACK RICKARDS, DIRECTOR
For demonstration of ability and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations in support of WSU student veterans and military members.

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI VETERAN/MILITARY MEMBER AWARD

JAMES C. HURST
For demonstration of excellence in leadership, scholarship, and personal integrity and unselfishly applying these talents to benefit the community.

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI VETERAN/MILITARY MEMBER AWARD

DEAN W. HURST
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OUTSTANDING ALUMNI VETERAN/MILITARY MEMBER AWARD

CPT MARK D. RALSTON
For demonstration of excellence in leadership, scholarship, and personal integrity and unselfishly applying these talents to benefit the community.
2015 OUTSTANDING STUDENT VETERAN/MILITARY MEMBER AWARD

PRESENTED TO SFC BARTLY ROE WEBSTER

For demonstration of excellence in leadership, scholarship, and personal integrity applied unselfishly to benefit members of the Weber State University campus and community.

SFC Bartly Webster enlisted in the United States Army in June of 1998. He attended the Army Infantry School and Basic Airborne course at Ft Benning, Georgia and was later assigned to the 327th Infantry in Ft. Campbell, Kentucky as a rifleman. Since his initial enlistment, SFC Webster has served at team leader, squad leader, drill sergeant, senior drill sergeant, platoon sergeant and is currently the Operations NCO and MS III instructor for the Weber State University ROTC program.

SFC Webster has been deployed four times for a total of 57 months during his career serving in Korea, Afghanistan and Iraq. He was awarded two Bronze Star medals, one Meritorious Service medal, five Army Commendation medals, seven Army Achievement medals, one Global War on Terrorism medal, and numerous other awards and recognitions. He has completed the Advanced Warrior Leader course, Drill Sergeant course, Air Assault course, Bradley Fighting Vehicle course, Senior Leader course and the Anti-Terror course.

As a senior leader on multiple deployments in several war zones, SFC Webster made countless leadership decisions that resulted in soldier lives saved and missions accomplished. As a drill sergeant he developed the future warriors of the next generations of soldiers in the United States Army. His numerous leadership roles have affected hundreds of young soldiers and increased the United States military ability to fight wars on multiple fronts. In SFC Webster's current military assignment as the Weber State Army ROTC Military Science MS III instructor, he teaches and mentors approximately 25 cadets who will be our future military officers.

SFC Webster is also a full-time student majoring in Applied Environmental Geoscience. He will graduate with his Bachelor of Science degree in April 2016. His ability to balance a huge work load and multiple critical issues sets him apart as a great leader, student, military member and combat veteran.

SFC Webster is married to Amber Webster, who also works at Weber State. They have two children, Lilly and McCray. In what little free time that SFC Webster has he enjoys fishing, horse-related activities, and most of all spending time with his wife and children.

He hopes to retire from the Army in the next two years and begin his civilian career utilizing his degree from Weber State University.
2015 FRIEND OF STUDENT VETERAN/MILITARY MEMBER FACULTY AWARD

PRESENTED TO LONDON DRAPER-LOWE
For demonstration of outstanding professional qualities and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations to enhance the quality of WSU student veterans and military members educational experience.

London Draper-Lowe joined the Weber State University faculty as an adjunct professor in January 2000. By July of that same year she was hired as a full-time professor. She received her Nursing degree in Austin, Texas and is currently in a Ph.D. program at the University of Northern Colorado.

During her tenure here at Weber State, London has taught classes in women’s health, childbearing, high risk families, nursing leadership and management, threats and crises, and honors seminar in the Nursing program. She is currently the Honors advisor and Army ROTC nursing faculty advisor.

London has been the driving force behind Weber State Army ROTC becoming one of the top nurse-producing schools in the western United States. She has represented Weber State at several nursing symposiums and been the lead in establishing guaranteed slots for ROTC cadets into Weber State’s Nursing program. She has mentored over 30 cadets and veterans who have become Army nurses and are currently serving around the world in various capacities.

London’s ability and commitment to the veteran/military student sets her apart and enriches not only those she advises and trains to become a nurse, but the countless number of injured soldiers and civilians who are treated by those she has trained.

London is not only busy with her Ph.D. program, but also volunteers in several organizations including the Weber-Morgan Medical Reserve Corps-Nurse team, the American Red Cross Northern Chapter, the Community Emergency Response team-Huntsville and Eden, and Liberty Medical Certification Team.

London loves spending time outdoors with her family in a variety of activities including sailing, skiing and hiking. She is a very busy “Mom” but always seems to find time to help whenever she is needed.
PRESENTED TO DR. JILL A. GROB ERICSON

For demonstration of outstanding professional qualities and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations to enhance the quality of WSU student veterans and military members educational experience.

Dr. Jill Ericson served on the WSU Military Outreach and Veteran Education (MOVE) committee from the time it was formed until last year. Jill’s father, a Navy veteran, was the first in his family to earn a college degree. He credited the GI Bill for granting him access to college degree attainment.

Jill greatly appreciates MOVE as a forum for action-oriented, military-focused conversations between a broad array of WSU staff and others who are interested, motivated, and empowered to help our institution best serve those who serve our nation on our behalf.

Jill is transitioning out of being the director of Weber State University’s Student Success Center, a position she has held for almost 13 years, to make it possible for her husband to accept an out-of-state job in a newly expanded VA hospital’s rehabilitation unit.

Before relocating to accept Weber’s position, Jill’s higher education employment included middle-management positions at Northern Arizona University and Seton Hall University. Her degrees include an education doctorate from Rutgers University, a master of public administration from Seton Hall University, and a Bachelor of Science from Syracuse University.
2015 FRIEND OF STUDENT VETERANS/ MILITARY MEMBERS STAFF AWARD

PRESENTED TO AARON GARZA
For demonstration of outstanding professional qualities and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations to enhance the quality of WSU student veterans and military members educational experience.

Taking a “break” in between his sophomore and junior years at St. John’s College, Aaron Garza served as an infantryman in the US Army’s 1st Cavalry Division from 1990 to 1992. He had signed up for what his squad leader called the “two-year college boy” enlistment. He was deployed to the first Persian Gulf War about 10 days after completing Basic and Advanced Training. Later, after returning stateside and completing his term of service, he went back to earn his Bachelor of Art degree from St. John’s College in 1994, and later earned his juris doctorate from the S.J. Quinney College of Law at the University of Utah in 2009.

Aaron worked as an academic advisor at Weber State University for two periods of time for a total of seven years before being hired into his current position as records supervisor. Aaron has worked tirelessly to ensure veterans receive credit for their military experience. He worked to make the Joint Services Transcripts available for the WSU Veterans Services office and provided accurate, up-to-date statistical data required for the State of Utah Board of Regents.

Aaron is married to Weber State University professor Azenett Garza, and they are the proud parents of two daughters and two sons. He hopes they will all attend Weber State also.
PRESENTED TO MARGARITA VARA
For demonstration of outstanding professional qualities and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations to enhance the quality of WSU student veterans and military members educational experience.

Margarita Vara is currently an academic advisor in the Student Success Center at Weber State University. She came into this role as a military spouse when her husband was assigned to Hill Air Force Base in 2005. Prior to coming to Utah, her husband’s career took their family to Florida, Turkey, Italy, Guam, and Germany.

Between tours she managed to earn her Bachelor of Science degree in business and management from the University of Maryland University College. She then went on to complete her master of science in academic advising from Kansas State University two years ago. With each of her husband’s assignments she had the opportunity to work at the college/university that was represented at each military installation. She helped military members and their family members progress in their education.

In her position in the Student Success Center, Margarita serves as the liaison to the Services for Veteran Students office. She was also invited and has served on the Military Outreach and Veteran Education (MOVE) committee since 2009. Her role on the MOVE committee has been to help advocate for active duty military students, veteran students, and their families by contributing to committee ideas drawing from her own experience as a military spouse as well as her academic advising expertise.
2015 SUPPORTER OF STUDENT VETERANS / MILITARY MEMBERS NON-UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEE AWARD

PRESENTED TO KRISTEN BRULEE RALSTON
For demonstration of ability and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations in support of WSU student veterans and military members.

Kristen Brulee Ralston grew up in California enjoying the “surfer chick” life. She competed in surfing and other high school sports before coming to Utah with her mother in the spring of 2004. She quickly transitioned from surf adventures to mountain adventures and enrolled at Weber State that fall. Shortly after enrolling she took a ROTC class. Always looking for an adventure, Kristen joined the Ranger Challenge team. As the only female on the team, Kristen pushed many of the males just to keep up with her, and she was tough as nails, a trait that would serve her well in the future. Kristen was the key to the team that competed at Fort Hunter in Liggett, California and took 3rd among all schools in the western United States. Another team member was Mark Ralston, her then worse antagonist.

Kristen went on to get her associate’s degree from Weber State University. Over the next two years, Mark and Kristen reconciled their competitive nature and fell in love and were married on 10 March 2006.

Shortly after being married, Mark and Kristen moved to Ft Bragg, North Carolina where Mark began training for some of the military’s most extreme schools. Kristen has been tireless in her support of Mark’s chosen profession of arms and has been the ultimate supporter and the foundation to their military family. Kristen has been incredible in her role of mother and wife. She constantly creates a wonderful home and life for their five children. Kristen delivered two of their five children while Mark was deployed overseas.

In 2013 on a combat patrol, Mark’s Team Sargent, MSG George Banner, was shot and killed. It an incredibly difficult time for the Banner family and all those who knew, worked with, and loved MSG Banner. Shortly after his death, his wife Michele was having a very difficult time coping with the struggles of having lost her husband. As a way to help her, Kristen had her move into the Ralston home to be close to those that loved and supported her. Even though Mark was deployed, Kristen had four kids under the age of six at the time, she invited a new grieving widow to live with her and her family. Kristen’s willingness to do whatever is necessary to help others and those around her is incredible. She is giving, supportive and cheerful in even the most difficult of situations.
PRESENTED TO WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY, JACK RICKARDS, DIRECTOR

For demonstration of ability and willingness to go above and beyond standard expectations in support of WSU student veterans and military members.

The Weber State University Law Enforcement Academy is a satellite academy of Utah Peace Officer Standards and Training. Established in 1984, WSU has long been a premier law enforcement training center in the western United States. It currently provides three different certifications: Special Functions Officer (SFO), Basic Corrections Officer (BCO) and Law Enforcement Officer (LEO). Graduates of the Law Enforcement Academy can be found working as police and corrections officers throughout Utah and the western United States.

The Law Enforcement Academy’s support of military veterans is evident by the 50 veterans who have graduated from the program in the last few years. For many years it was policy that students provided their own equipment and uniforms. That cost became prohibitive to many veterans attending the Academy. Within the last few years, the Academy was instrumental in finding a way to provide equipment and uniforms at no cost to the veterans, and thus allowing many more veterans to attend and begin a career in law enforcement.

Finding new ways to support and assist our veterans is a constant goal of the Academy. Those 50 veterans are now serving in municipalities around the state.

The Weber State University Law Enforcement Academy is led by Captain Jack Rickards with staff members Heather Cross, Arnold Butcher, Paul Kotter, Alton Johnston, Jen Faumina and Adrian Eads.
2015 OUTSTANDING ALUMNI VETERAN/MILITARY MEMBER AWARD

PRESENTED TO DR. JAMES C. HURST

For demonstration of excellence in leadership, scholarship, and personal integrity and unselfishly applying these talents to benefit the community.

James C. Hurst was born in 1935 in Ogden, Utah, the last of four children of Leo C. & Ione Salt Hurst. He graduated from Ogden High School in 1953 where he served as student body president.

In the summer of 1953 James volunteered for the draft. He was nominated for and completed Ranger School in June 1954 and was deployed to Korea. He served there from July 1954 to August 1955, following in the steps of his two older brothers who served in WWII – Dean Hurst as a Paratrooper and Farr Hurst as a machinist in the US Air Corp. James was discharged with the rank of sergeant.

He married Joan Rees in 1958. They have 4 children, 13 grandchildren, and 8 great grandchildren.

James completed his associate’s degree from Weber State College in 1959 where he served again as student body president. He then earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Utah and his Ph.D. in psychology from BYU and Duke Universities.

James’ career in higher education included positions at Colorado State University, University of Texas – Austin, and University of Wyoming. He retired in 2000 as vice president and professor of psychology at the University of Wyoming. He then returned to Utah and moved into his current home in Mountain Green.

In 2005, James and Joan were called as a couple on an LDS church mission to Santiago, Chile and then in again in 2008 to Frankfurt, Germany as an area mental health advisor.

James has served in many civic volunteer leadership positions including chair and member of the WSU Student Affairs Advancement Council, WSU Alumni Association Emeriti Council President, and he provided leadership for the WSU Alumni Association Emeriti Council’s 2003 “Greatest Generation” event honoring WSU’s World War II veterans which included a series of lectures, exhibits, films, panel discussions and banquet. James served as Sons of Utah Pioneers chapter president in 2013 and is currently national president-elect 2015 and will serve as national president in 2016.

In 2013 James received the WSU Emeriti Alumni Lifetime Achievement award.
2015 OUTSTANDING ALUMNI VETERAN/MILITARY MEMBER AWARD

PRESENTED TO DR. DEAN W. HURST

For demonstration of excellence in leadership, scholarship, and personal integrity and unselfishly applying these talents to benefit the community.

Dr. Dean W. Hurst served with the 82nd Airborne, US Army, Paratroopers, Ft. Bragg, NC., from March 1945 through October 1946. One highlight he cherishes was being selected as a member of the 82nd Airborne Honor Guard that marched in the New York City Victory Day Parade.

Dean attended Weber State College for one quarter before entering the military. Upon returning, he re-enrolled and graduated from Weber State College in 1948.

After several years in private business and after several years of “outside” work for Weber State College, he became a full-time Weber State employee as Development and Alumni Director in 1967. He retired in 1991 after nearly 25 years at Weber. During those years he served as Executive Director of College Relations, Assistant to the President for College Relations, and retired as VP of College Relations.
2015 OUTSTANDING ALUMNI VETERAN/MILITARY MEMBER AWARD

PRESENTED TO CPT MARK D. RALSTON
For demonstration of excellence in leadership, scholarship, and personal integrity and unselfishly applying these talents to benefit the community.

CPT Mark D. Ralston grew up as an Army brat living around the world following his father General Dave Ralston. Mark attended Weber State University on a ROTC scholarship and participated in Ranger Challenge. He completed a Bachelor of Integrated Studies in 2007.

Upon receiving his commission as a 2LT, Mark attended Field Artillery Officer basic course and was then selected to attend Special Forces training in Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. Over the next seven years, Mark attended and graduated from the military’s most extreme and challenging courses including Special Forces Qualification, Basic Airborne, Ranger School, Military Free Fall, Search Escape Rescue and Evasion, Special Forces Advanced Urban Combat, and Special Operations Jumpmaster course. In short he has become Captain America.

Mark has been deployed three times to locations around the world and is currently preparing for his fourth deployment next year. Each deployment has been in the center of hostile areas. As a detachment commander, Mark constantly made life and death decisions that had significant impact on his soldiers, military operations and affected foreign policy in the regions where he served. He exemplifies what an Army warrior should be, and someone that Weber State University should be proud to have come through our doors. He is currently assigned to 3rd Special Forces Group, Airborne, Ft. Bragg, North Carolina.

Mark’s awards include three Bronze Star medals, Bronze Star medal with V device, Army Commendation medal with V device, two Army Commendation medals, Army Achievement medal, Global War on Terrorism, Combat Infantry Badge, Special Forces Tab, Ranger Tab, Military Free Fall wings, Airborne Badge, and the Jump Master Badge. Mark also speaks Pushto, native language in Afghanistan.

Mark is married to his college sweetheart, Kristen. They met while competing in Ranger Challenge at Weber State University. They have five children, two of whom were born while Mark was deployed. Mark and Kristen enjoy fishing, attending countless children's activities, and long moonlight walks on the beach.
In Flanders Fields
Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD (1872-1918) Canadian Army

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.