

# United States Army Cadet Command



The shield (patch) symbolizes the Army mission of National Defense and is divided into quarters representing the four traditional Military Science courses comprising the Senior ROTC curriculum. The sword signifies courage, gallantry, and self-sacrifice intrinsic to the profession of arms. The lamp denotes the pursuit of knowledge, higher learning, and the partnership of Army ROTC with American colleges and universities. The Greek helmet is symbolic of the ancient civilization concept of the warrior scholar. The motto "Leadership Excellence" expresses the ultimate responsibility of Army ROTC in the discharge of its moral responsibility to the Nation.

# *Patriot Battalion Reserve Officers' Training Corps Commissioning Ceremony*



*Ryan Concert Hall  
at the Smith Center for the Arts  
15 May 2026*

## **Sequence of Events**

### **Entrance of the Official Party**

*Lieutenant Colonel Travis Haigler, Professor of Military Science*

*Rev. Kenneth Sicard, O.P., President of Providence College*

*Rev. Iriarte Andújar, O.P., Associate Dean of Admission & Patriot BN Chaplain*

*Colonel (Retired) Ryan S. Dillon*

### **Honored Guests**

*Brigadier General Kenneth Wisniewski III, Land Component CDR, RING*

*Dr. Thomas Smith, Provost/Sr. Vice President of Academic Affairs, PC*

*Dr. Elizabeth Hamilton, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Rhode Island College*

*Dr. Kimberly Scott, Vice Chancellor Student Affairs, UMASS Dartmouth*

*Mr. Mac Manning, Program Director, Military Affiliated Students, Brown Univ.*

*Ms. Becky Scheusner, Prog. Coordinator, Military Affiliated Students, Brown Univ.*

### **Playing of the National Anthem**

### **Invocation**

*Rev. Kenneth Sicard, O.P., President of Providence College*

### **Introduction & Remarks**

*Lieutenant Colonel Travis Haigler, Professor of Military Science*

### **Guest Speaker**

*Colonel (Retired) Ryan S. Dillon*

### **Oath of Office**

*Lieutenant Colonel Travis Haigler, Professor of Military Science*

### **Pinning of Rank, First Salute & Presentation of Awards**

*Honored Guests and Family Members*

### **Benediction**

*Rev. Iriarte Andújar, O.P., Associate Dean of Admission & Patriot BN Chaplain*

### **Playing of the Army Song & Departing of the Official Party**

### **Reception**

## Guest Speaker

### Colonel (Retired) Ryan S. Dillon



Colonel (Ret.) Ryan S. Dillon is a proud graduate of Providence College, where he was commissioned as a second lieutenant of Infantry in 1995.

He began his career in the 82nd Airborne Division and later commanded in the 173rd Airborne Brigade, leading combat operations during the airborne assault into northern Iraq in March 2003. He subsequently deployed to Afghanistan in 2005 and Pakistan in 2006.

After 11 years as an Airborne Infantry officer, Colonel Dillon attended the Defense Information School and transitioned to the Army Public Affairs field. Over the next 17 years, he served in a series of increasingly senior positions, supporting leaders from the one-star to four-star level. Most notably, he was selected by the Secretary of Defense to serve as the spokesperson for Joint Task Force — Operation Inherent Resolve at the height of the campaign against ISIS, during the liberation of Mosul, Iraq, and Raqqa, Syria.

Colonel Dillon distinguished himself across a broad range of Army and joint assignments in both peacetime and combat. His service included multiple deployments to Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, assignments at the Pentagon, command at the battalion level, and operational roles across U.S. Central Command, U.S. Africa Command, and U.S. Army Europe.

His education includes a Bachelor of Arts in History from Providence College, a Master of Professional Studies in Public Relations and Corporate Communications from Georgetown University, and a Master's degree in International Relations and Strategic Studies from Roma Tre University in Italy.

Colonel Dillon's awards and decorations include the Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, Senior Parachutist Badge with combat jump device, Pathfinder Badge, and the Ranger Tab.

He resides in Vicenza, Italy, with his wife and two daughters. Following his retirement from military service, he became a certified ski instructor and alpine guide. He now leads soldiers and families from the Vicenza Military Community on outdoor adventures throughout northern Italy.

## Patriot Battalion Class of 2026

Jae-Sun Brown	Field Artillery, National Guard
Paul Cronin	Engineer, Regular Army
Theodore Fisher	Infantry, Regular Army
Isandry Garcia Pena	Armor, Regular Army
Griffin Gouck	Aviation, Regular Army
Carston Maher	Adjutant General, Reserves
Mariama Ndiaye	Logistics, National Guard
Kourtney Paine	Logistics, National Guard
Zachary Pryor	Infantry, Regular Army
Julia Rendon	Cyber Corps, Regular Army
Edward Torres	Field Artillery, Regular Army
Jason Vitelli	Logistics, Regular Army
Thomas Yun	Infantry, Regular Army

### The following Cadets have branch detailed:

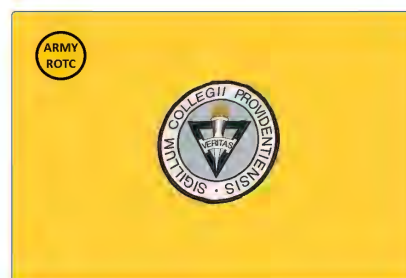
Isandry Garcia Pena	Adjutant General, Regular Army
Zachary Pryor	Military Intelligence, Regular Army

## ***Patriot Battalion Distinguished Military Graduates***

*The following members have distinguished themselves by meeting the standards in displaying outstanding qualities of leadership, high moral character, noteworthy academic achievement, superior camp performance, and exceptional aptitude for military service.*

***Paul Cronin, Providence College***  
***Theodore Fisher, Brown University***  
***Ellison Mucharsky, Brown University***  
***Edward Torres, Brown University***  
***Jason Vitelli, Providence College***  
***Thomas Yun, Brown University***

## The Patriot Battalion Colors



The flag of the Patriot Battalion incorporates the seal of Providence College. The Triangle represents the Trinity, which teaches the student to live according to the higher principles of supernatural grace. The Torch, indicative of learning, is emblematic of the Dominican Order.

The motto, "VERITAS" means Truth, and is the proper objective of all intellectual activity.

## The Guidon



Historically the guidon served as a point around which Soldiers of the unit would rally in battle. The guidon is traditionally in the forefront of a formation and signifies the continuity of the organization even as Soldiers move on to other units. The guidon is a great source of pride for the unit and carries with it the lineage, history and home of the unit. The Patriot Battalion guidon features the Army ROTC "Leadership Excellence" patch worn by all Army ROTC cadets across the country.



## The National Colors



The flag of the United States is a living symbol that calls to our spirit, reminding us of the greatness of America. We cherish and uphold it because it is the standard of honor under which we live. The proper name of the nation's symbol is the United States Flag; however, it is sometimes referred to as Old Glory

or the Stars and Stripes. We view the flag with devotion, for it represents our national heritage of noble deeds, splendid accomplishment, and untold sacrifices which combined to establish the moral character of our country. Our flag is a symbol that makes our past one with the present and makes the present a foundation for tomorrow. It signifies a people dedicated to liberty, justice and freedom for all.

## The Army Flag



The Army flag was dedicated and unfurled to the general public on 14 June 1956, at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, on the 181st anniversary of the establishment of the U.S. Army by the Continental Congress in 1775. Measuring 4 feet 4 inches by 5 feet 6 inches, the flag is

of white silk with a blue embroidered central design of the original War Office seal. "United States Army" is inscribed in white letters on a scarlet scroll, with the year "1775" in blue numerals below. The 188 streamers attached to the Army Flag staff denote campaigns fought by the Army throughout our nation's history. Each streamer (2 ¾ inches wide and 4 feet long) is embroidered with the designation of a campaign and the year (s) in which it occurred. The colors derive from the campaign ribbon authorized for service in that particular war.

## Presentation of Awards

### The Department of The Army Distinguished Military Graduate

This prestigious distinction is awarded to the top 20% of all Cadets, nationwide for displaying outstanding qualities of leadership, high moral character, exemplary academic achievement, superior Advanced Camp performance, and exceptional aptitude for military service.

### The Military Order of Foreign Wars Academic Excellence Award

Honoring a deserving Cadet for their outstanding leadership, loyalty, and devotion to duty.

### The Rhode Island College ROTC Achievement Award

Awarded for attaining the highest standing of military aptitude, moral character, scholastic achievement, and leadership potential.

### The UMASS Dartmouth ROTC Achievement Award

Awarded for attaining the highest standing of military aptitude, moral character, scholastic achievement, and leadership potential.

### The Brown University ROTC Achievement Award

Awarded for attaining the highest standing of military aptitude, moral character, scholastic achievement, and leadership potential.

### The First Command Leadership Excellence Award

Awarded to a Patriot Battalion Cadet for their outstanding military leadership potential, scholastic merit and high moral character.

### The J. Hull Family Award

Given to a Brown University Cadet who contributes to the overall success of the ROTC program. This award is a public display of support by the Hull family.

### The Patriot Battalion Class of 1999 Award

Presented to a Cadet who exemplifies the value of teamwork and unquestionably upholds the legacy of the Class of 1999!

### Providence College President's Trophy

This award was established in 1958 by the Very Reverend Robert Slavin, to recognize a Providence College Senior Cadet who has demonstrated outstanding ROTC achievement, honor, character, and leadership.

## **Presentation of Awards**

### **The Rhode Island Chapter Association of the United States Army Award**

Awarded to a Cadet for excellence in Military studies and for demonstrated leadership and their contributions to the program.

### **The Robert Riesman First Infantry Division Award**

Given in memory of Colonel Riesman, an advocate of the ROTC college program, this award is an embodiment of his belief that quality leaders are educated, molded, and nurtured in educational institutions. Presented to a Cadet that was selected for active duty in a combat arms branch and who has demonstrated exceptional loyalty and devotion to the ideals of the First Infantry Division.

### **1LT Brian McPhillips (USMC) Memorial Award**

Given in memory of Lieutenant Brian McPhillips, killed in action in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM on April 4th, 2003 as a member of the 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division. A Providence College alum who received his commission in the US Marine Corps in 2000 Presented to a Cadet who best exemplifies the qualities of Lieutenant McPhillips and demonstrated excellence in Scholastic and Military Studies.

### **Providence College "Class of '66" Award**

Given in memory of the Providence College class of 1966, from which three graduates were killed in action in the Republic of Vietnam. Presented to a Providence College Cadet who best exemplifies the values of citizenship and service to the Nation.

### **The CPT John "Jay" Tobin Memorial Award**

Given in memory of Captain Tobin, a native of Belmont, MA, commissioning class of 1998, who served as an Air Defense and Ordnance Officer with a combat tour to Kosovo in 2000. This award is sponsored by Captain Tobin's family and presented by his classmates to honor his memory. Presented to a Cadet who best exemplifies and displays outstanding leadership, high moral character, and an exceptional aptitude for military service.

### **The 1LT Gregory J. Paredes Memorial Award**

Established on March 31, 1988 by the Paredes family. Given in memory of Lieutenant Paredes, commissioning class of 1985, who gave his life in the line of duty in a heroic attempt to rescue a wounded American Soldier. Presented to a Senior Cadet who best demonstrates scholastic excellence and traits of moral courage, selflessness, and loyalty while a member of the Patriot Battalion.

The Vitalization Act also resulted in both four-year and two-year ROTC scholarships.

ROTC programs around the nation did witness a decline in enrollment during the late 1960s and early 1970s, due to the changing public opinion toward military service. The revitalization of ROTC began in the 1973-1974 academic year, as women were allowed to enroll in the ROTC program.

In 1982, Bryant College (now Bryant University) was added to the Patriot Battalion and in 1983 the following were included: Brown University, Johnson and Wales University, University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, Rhode Island College, Community College of RI and Bristol Community College. Throughout its history, the ROTC program at Providence College has been continually recognized as one of the top programs in the New England and New York area. To date 2,061 officers have been commissioned through the Providence College Program.



*Graduation, January 28, 1944, Army Specialist Training Program collection, Providence College Archives and Special Collections*

## **Patriot Battalion History**

The Providence College ROTC Battalion has been proud to help develop the leaders of tomorrow.

ROTC at Providence College dates back to 8 January 1951, when the Very Reverend Robert J. Slavin, O.P., then President of the College, received word via Western Union Telegram that the Department of the Army had approved establishment of a Reserve Officers' Training Corps within the college curriculum. The first PMS&T, Colonel Roy P. Moss, was appointed to activate a Transportation Corps Unit on 1 March 1951. On 19 September 1951, Colonel Moss officially opened the Military Science Department of the Providence College Transportation Corps Unit.

The original student enrollment for the 1951-1952 academic year was 512 cadets. In 1953, the first ROTC graduating class, consisting of seven men, received commissions in the Transportation Corps. At the beginning of the 1954-1955 academic year the unit was re-designated as a General Military Science Program.

Before 1957, ROTC was required for all physically qualified freshman and sophomore students, except those engaged in pre-ecclesiastical studies and veterans of the armed forces.

In August of 1956, the Rifle Range was built, and in September of the same year, the Pershing Rifles had its official inauguration into the Providence College ROTC Unit as company K-12. During the early 1960s the Providence College ROTC Unit provided the U.S. Army with many qualified officers, who served in the Vietnam conflict. As a result of the ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964, students from local colleges not offering an ROTC program became eligible to participate in the program at Providence College.

## **Presentation of Awards**

### **COL Gerald F. Dillon & COL Ryan S. Dillion ROTC Award**

Presented to a Providence College Cadet who has been selected for Active Duty and will commission into either the Infantry or Combat Arms branch, and displays an extraordinary level of loyalty, duty, selflessness, and a general love for Military Service.

### **The Legacy Leader Award**

Awarded to an individual who naturally puts others before self through simple acts of leadership. This Cadet has unknowingly laid the groundwork for other's success and leaves a significant impact on both the Cadets of Patriot Battalion and members of the local community, mission first, people always.

### **Grand Lodge of Rhode Island Sons & Daughters of Italy in America Award**

Awarded to a Senior Cadet for their loyalty and service to the Patriot Battalion.

### **The LTC (Ret.) Joseph A. Cichon, Jr. Award**

Awarded to a Cadet that displays an extraordinary level of loyalty, duty, and their contributions to the program.

### **The Providence College COL J. Gardner Conway Alumni Award**

COL Conway enlisted in the Rhode Island National Guard in 1931, and served in the South Pacific during World War II. He was a member of the 1/103rd Field Artillery. COL Conway committed himself to numerous military, Providence College and civic affairs. His life positively influenced many great organizations. In 1989, COL Conway received the Mal Brown Award from the Greater Providence Chapter of the Providence College Alumni Association. The award is the highest accolade given to PC Alumni "whose lives have exemplified the love and loyalty for PC that was characteristic of Mal Brown." *Presented to a superior Providence College Cadet who has achieved the highest standing in terms of military attitude, moral character, holistic achievement, and leadership potential; ultimately typifying the honor and humanity of COL J. Gardner Conway.*

## The Army Song

March along, sing our song, with the Army of the free  
Count the brave, count the true, who have fought to victory  
We're the Army and proud of our name  
We're the Army and proudly proclaim  
First to fight for the right,  
And to build the Nation's might,  
And The Army Goes Rolling Along  
Proud of all we have done,  
Fighting till the battle's won,  
And the Army Goes Rolling Along.  
Then it's Hi! Hi! Hey!  
The Army's on its way.  
Count off the cadence loud and strong (TWO! THREE!)  
For where e'er we go,  
You will always know  
That The Army Goes Rolling Along.



**Front Row (L to R):** 2LT Pryor, 2LT Cronin, 2LT Vitelli, 2LT Rendon,  
2LT Garcia, 2LT Paine, CDT Mucharsky

**Back Row (L to R):** 2LT Torres, 2LT Yun, 2LT Fisher,  
2LT Gouck, CDT Mokonchu, 2LT Ndiaye, 2LT Maher, 2LT Brown

## History of the Patriot Battalion Shoulder Sleeve Insignia



A shoulder sleeve insignia (often abbreviated SSI), is an embroidered patch used by major formations of the United States Army. Each formation has a unique patch, and the U.S. Army is unique among the U.S. Armed Forces in that all Soldiers are required to wear the patch of their headquarters as part of their uniforms.

Shoulder sleeve insignia are often created with symbolism alluding to the unit's formation. Examples include the 82nd Airborne Division, which included an "AA" on its patch alluding to the "All American" Soldiers from every state that made it up, and the 29th Infantry Division, which included blue and grey to allude to Soldiers that made it up being from states on both sides of the American Civil War.

The shoulder sleeve insignia of the Patriot Battalion bears the Dominican Cross on a shield of black in honor of the Battalion's Dominican host school, Providence College. Above the shield is a scroll bearing the word "PROVIDENCE," the home to almost all of the colleges and universities supported by the Battalion.

Cadets receive the shoulder sleeve insignia of the Patriot Battalion during their contracting ceremony as a symbol of their entrance into Profession of Arms. From that moment on, they are required to wear it on their uniform as a visible reminder of their commitment to the Battalion, the U.S. Army and their newly chosen profession.