

Army War College Distance Education students share their stories and reflections about 9/11

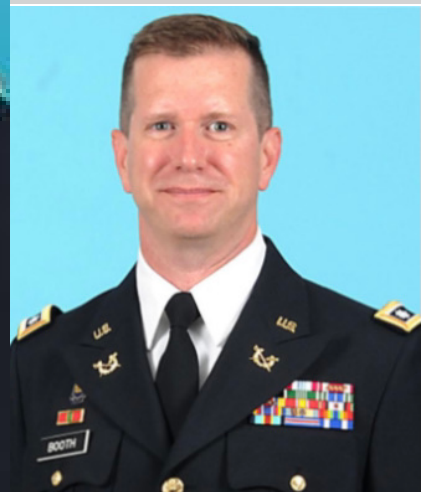
By Elena Patton 10 September 2021



Lt. Col. Jeremy Davis



Col. Jacob Johnson



Lt. Col. Tom Booth



Many of this year's Army War College students were just beginning their military careers when 9/11 occurred. Here is seven of their stories. "Because I was just starting out in my military career, 9/11 sent it off

on a trajectory that I was not expecting. On 9/11, I was at work watching the twin towers collapse. I had joined a peacetime Army but spent the next two decades as the operational reserve for a wartime army. In 2005, I was in Afghanistan. Five years after that, I was part of the transition from Operation Iraqi Freedom to Operation New Dawn. Getting mobilized every four to five years became a regular and expected occurrence. This last year, I stood watch in Washington D.C. as part of Operation Noble Eagle: an enduring mission to defend the capital against airborne threats and ensure an attack like the 9/11 strike on the Pentagon never happens again that only exists because of the events of 9/11. 9/11 dramatically impacted the entire duration of my career as an Army officer and continues to influence my life to this day. It's an honor to be a Citizen-Soldier entrusted with a no-fail mission protecting the pillars of democracy."

Lt. Col. Jeremy Davis

Deputy Commander, 164th Air Defense Artillery Brigade/Director of Engineering R&D at Nielsen, New Port Richey, Florida

"Deployed to Afghanistan in 2010, my veterinary service support squad was responsible for the health of several thousand military working dogs and some small detachments of pack animals. The most significant memories are of the dedication and sacrifice of the MWD teams, especially the bond shared between the handler and dog. It was an honor to be affiliated with such service members and to ensure the best possible care in an austere, kinetic environment. Many canine warriors were killed in action, but without them, the list of Marines would be much longer. The IED detector dogs saved hundreds, if not thousands of lives."

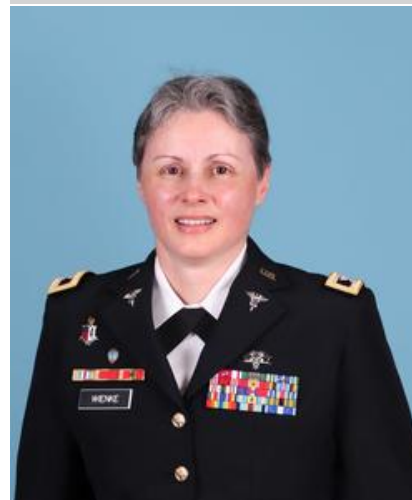
Col. Jacob Johnson

Assistant Veterinary Corps Chief for Reserve and Mobilization Affairs based at Joint Base San Antonio, TX and reside in Auburn, AL and Associate Professor of Veterinary Anesthesia/Pain Management at Auburn University

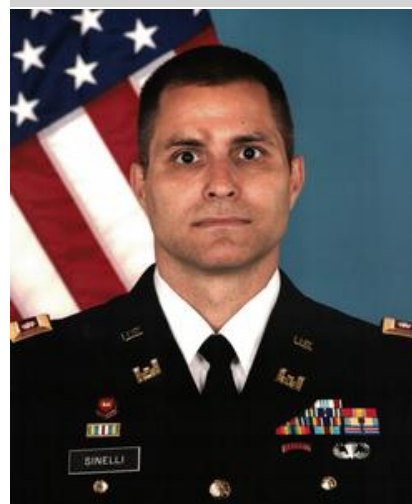
"As a young 1LT with less than two years in the U.S. Army Reserve when 9/11 happened and the son of a retired Philadelphia firefighter, I was initially simply grateful that I was in a position to possibly "do something," whereas I vividly remember how helpless most Americans felt in the days and weeks right after that awful day. The call came in late November 2001, and I was mobilized to Fort Drum, NY, with many from my Reserve unit. Leaving behind my family, I traveled to Upstate New York, serving as the trial counsel for the garrison at Fort Drum. Sixteen years later, I would



Col. Kermit Huebner



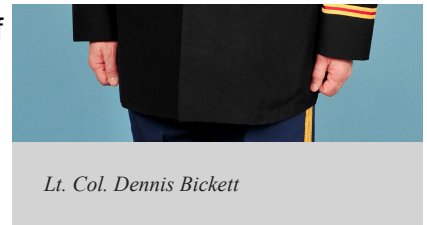
Col. Rachel Wienke



Col. Andy Sinelli



again mobilize, and this time deployed to Afghanistan for a one-year tour of duty. These two mobilizations have bookended my career, made me a better lawyer, officer, and soldier than I was before, and made me want to continue to serve and pass along my knowledge and experience to the next generation of U.S. Army Reserve officers and enlisted who will likely be called upon one day to do the same.”



Lt. Col. Dennis Bickett

Lt. Col. Tom Booth

JAG Corps officer serving presently as the SJA for the 100th Training Division at Fort Knox and Judge of the Superior Court of New Jersey

“The events of 9/11/2001 profoundly impacted me and my career. I was on temporary duty assignment to Ft. Detrick, Maryland, in my last year of an emergency medicine residency with plans to fulfill my active-duty obligation focused on academic emergency medicine and research. I was in awe when a plane struck the World Trade Center, in shock watching footage of the second plane strike, and both angered and helpless upon reports that a third plane struck the Pentagon without any opportunity to get to the site and assist. A sense of dread took hold upon hearing that Flight 93’s flight path made Ft. Detrick a potential target, and we were placed on lockdown. Relief quickly turned to solemnity, learning of the selfless sacrifice made by those passengers to save countless lives. Their selfless service prompted me to change career paths to operational and flight medicine, which afforded opportunities to witness untold acts of heroism by our service members and embracing then refinement of Combat Casualty Care concepts to best tend to our wounded. The heroic actions of Flight 93’s passengers are a constant reminder of duty owed our Nation and is a reason I continue to serve.”

Col. Kermit Huebner

Senior Flight Surgeon, West Virginia Army National Guard and Personal Services Contractor, Wright-Patterson Medical Center, Assistant Professor of Emergency

“The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, shocked and horrified me. Seeing this attack on the United States strengthened my resolve to continue to serve. Throughout my continued career in the Army, 9/11 and the associated Global War on Terrorism have been a constant reminder of the importance of what we do as a military. It is an incredible honor to have a part in protecting our country and our way of life.”

Col. Rachel Wienke

Assistant Chief of Staff for Human Resources / G1 for Regional Health Command-Pacific.

“The Reserves my unit was activated in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The deployment reignited my career in the Army. As the Army is about relationships and an all-volunteer service, the deployment created lasting relationships that I still have today nearly 20 years later. On all-volunteer service: enjoying the mission, unit, and people I’ve worked with.”

Col. Andy Sinelli

Commander 301st Forward Engineer Support Team-Main (FEST-M)

“I was a 2LT in the South Dakota National Guard on 9/11. I had one younger brother in the Marine Corps and another younger brother in his 3rd year at the Naval Academy.

My mom was a third-grade teacher, and she had one of her colleagues ask her, ‘Aren’t you scared that you have three sons in the military?’ Her response was tremendous. She said, ‘Yes, I am terrified. But we need someone to have sons that are in the military.’ 9/11 and the subsequent deployment requirements transitioned the National Guard from a strategic reserve to an operational force. I take incredible pride in being a member of the National Guard, which has proven to be such a valuable part of the defense of our Nation over the last 20 years.”

Lt. Col. Dennis Bickett

Director of Family Services, G1 Joint Forces Headquarters, South Dakota National Guard