

March 17, 2016

To the Chairman and Members of the Forrest Hall Task Force:

The following is the Military Science Alumni Chapter's official position in regards to the US Army Military Science/ROTC building's name - Forrest Hall.

The Chapter's officials are:

President:

Brig. Gen. David Ogg, U.S. Army (retired); bgdavidogg@gmail.com; phone # upon request.

Vice President

MAJ Chuck Giles, U.S. Army (retired); Charles.giles@comcast.net; phone # upon request

Secretary/Treasurer

Nancy Garner; nancy.garner@mtsu.edu; phone # upon request

Representatives for the Organizational Forum are:

LT. COL. Doug Chaffin, U.S. Army (retired); chaffind@comcast.net; phone # upon request

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/S/

Doug Chaffin

LTC, USA (Ret)

Middle Tennessee State University
Military Science Alumni Chapter
Organizational Forum Position Paper

March 24, 2016

Captain Gerald Davidson, 1964; Captain Charles Tucker, 1965; 1st Lieutenant George Burkhart, 1965; 2nd Lieutenant John Fuque, 1966; Captain Joe Fulghum, Jr., 1967; Captain Robert Boyd, 1967; 1st Lieutenant Pierre Piche, 2003; 1st Lieutenant Kenneth Ballard, 2004.

These eight officers paid the ultimate sacrifice so that we could come together tonight, without fear of reprisal or punishment, to openly voice our opinions, our concerns, and our support, and to exercise the freedoms held so dear by all Americans.

These eight commissionees and all other MTSU-ROTC graduates learned their tradecraft - that of leading our nation's sons and daughters in peace or in war - from classroom studies, practical exercises, and examples exhibited by their instructors as they developed and matured into part of the world's greatest military.

These eight, along with nearly 1500 other commissionees have passed through the halls and classrooms of Forrest Hall over its 60 plus years. We never questioned the building's name...what we knew and still know today is that history, good or bad, is the foundation we officers use to ensure that we do not make the same mistakes.

The Military Science Alumni Chapter members express their gratitude to the Task Force for this opportunity to present their majority's position that the name remain – Forrest Hall.

We do not present this paper to debate the good or bad of General Forrest or of the Civil War. The committee has on-board historians to correctly enlighten the committee on both. However the fact is that the army and the nation reconciled after the war. One effort in the healing process was the naming of ten United States Army posts after Confederate officers, including Army Posts Bragg, Hood, Polk, Rucker and Lee. Confederates were never labeled "traitors." That is a modern, legalistic interpretation. Culturally, we reconciled and accepted the battlefield results, while understanding that the motivations for fighting were complex and varied on both sides.

We do say that Forrest Hall is more than brick and mortar, more than just a building on campus.... it is a "rally point" for our alumni. A rally point, as used by the US Army is a place designated to reassemble and reorganize if forces become dispersed; a place to account for soldiers, disseminate information, and reestablish the chain of command. As our commissionees and graduates are assigned all over the world, we always know that we can come back to Forrest Hall for a safe and secure place, that harbors no ill will because of the name, but a place for our band of brothers and sisters who have lived, and died, defending this nation's freedom to call friendly ground.

Our Military Science Alumni Chapter members conducted a survey regarding the recommendations chartered by the committee. Of the 179 responses, 89% support the position that the name of Forrest Hall remain unchanged, 11% support changing the name of Forrest Hall or have no opinion on the matter. So our Chapter's recommendation to the committee is in support of the keeping the name – Forrest Hall.

At the first forum, it was asked if the Military Science cadets receive training influenced by GEN Forrest. Instruction, past and present, addresses the characteristics and tactics of military

leaders throughout history. World War II's – GEN Patton, Desert Shield / Desert Storm's – GEN Schwarzkopf, and even Civil War's GEN Forrest. Besides classroom instruction, the ROTC Department conducts actual historical battlefield "field trips." For MTSU – Stones River and Chickamauga are two that are used. The cadets walk the battlefield discussing small unit leadership, the military decision making process, and ethics and values needed to lead. The instruction looks at all sides of leadership to help our future leaders do what is right, should they be put into real world situations like those they study. We learn from the experiences of others, their successes and mistakes, both on our side as well as those of our enemies. So yes, the importance of what Forrest did, good or bad, is part of the cadets' training.

And lastly, for some who say you can never come home, we the Alumni Chapter say you are wrong. We do...from wherever our political leaders send us: Vietnam, Korea, Central America, Iraq and Afghanistan. When we come home, we come home to Forrest Hall, where our professional lives began, and to remember and honor those eight from our ranks who gave their lives in defense of our great nation.

Distinguished members of the committee, again thank you for the opportunity present our position. Yours is a difficult, but important task.

Keep the name. Thank you.