



West Point Class of 1960
October 30, 2011

Chairman
Distinguished Graduate Award Committee
c/o Linda Giacoio
West Point Association of Graduates
698 Mills Road
West Point, New York 10996

Dear Sir:

The Class of 1960 is proud to present **LTG James H. Johnson, Jr.** as our second nominee for the award of Distinguished Graduate. LTG Johnson excels in all of the areas we value in distinguishing himself as a graduate who exemplifies the ideals of DUTY, HONOR, COUNTRY. These excerpts of his accomplishments speak eloquently for themselves.

SERVICE TO COUNTRY

- Commissioned Infantry. Qualified as Airborne Ranger and Master Parachutist with Bronze Combat Star. Since World War II, only US Army division commander to lead his division into combat by parachute assault (Torrijos International Airport, Panama, December 1989).
- Served 33 years active duty, with four combat assignments.
- Served two tours in Vietnam: First, as an advisor in the southern portion of the Mekong Delta and, later, as an Infantry battalion S3 with the 101st Airborne Division, operating in the Ruong Ruong Valley, south of the DMZ in Thua Thien Province.
- Commanded 3rd Brigade/505th Parachute Infantry Regiment for three years, longer than anyone in the history of the Regiment.
- Served two tours on the Department of the Army Staff in the Pentagon. During the period 1986-1987, was primary Army Staff point of contact for all Army special mission programs and special operations forces, to include the selection, assessment and enhancement of Army counterterrorism units.
- As Assistant Division Commander (Operations) of the 82nd Airborne Division, commanded all Army Forces during Operation GOLDEN PHEASANT, an operational deployment and show of force in Honduras in March 1988.
- As Commanding General of the 82nd Airborne Division, became the only modern-day Army division commander to lead a division in combat in two separate conflicts: First, as the initial division jumper during the night airborne assault of Panama in December 1989, known as Operation JUST CAUSE and, later, commanded the Division during Operation DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM in the Persian Gulf --- the first US Army division commander to deploy to Southwest Asia in August 1990.
- Culminated active duty service as Commanding General of the First US Army, responsible for 325,000 soldiers.

- Service medals awarded during active duty service include: two Distinguished Service Medals; two Legions of Merit; two Bronze Stars for Service; two Air Medals; three Meritorious Service Medals; and four Army Commendation Medals. Badges awarded during active duty service include: Ranger Tab; Combat Infantryman; Expert Infantryman; and Master Parachutist with Bronze Combat Star.
- In retirement, LTG Johnson continued service to the Nation as the US Secretary of Defense's personal representative for bilateral military engagement with the former Soviet Republics of Kazakstan and Uzbekistan. Quarterly visits with the two Defense Ministers during the period 1996-1998 resulted in the first productive US bilateral relationship with these two Central Asian countries. Multi-national collective training, leader development, English language training, adoption of a military justice system and the beginning of a professional Non-Commissioned Officer Corps were major achievements that led to their support of US combat operations in Afghanistan in 2002.
- From July 2000 to present, LTG Johnson has served as Honorary Colonel of the Regiment to the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, providing a role model for the Army's Warrior Ethos and an inspiration to generations of American paratroopers yet to come.

SERVICE TO WEST POINT

- Commanded Airborne Battalion Task Force at Camp Natural Bridge, in support of USMA Summer Training at Camp Buckner, 1977.
- Keynote Speaker at USMA Cadet Company Dining-ins in 1986 and 2011.
- Principal speaker at West Point Society of North Florida Founders Day Dinner in Jacksonville, FL, 1995.
- Participated in all 14 Battle Command Conferences for every senior USMA class since 1999. This program is designed to help graduating cadets prepare to lead soldiers in battle.
- Guest speaker on Army values, leadership and the professional military ethic to the entire USMA Class of 2002, at West Point, NY, October, 2000.
- In April 2005, the Superintendent, USMA appointed General Johnson to the position of Distinguished Visiting Fellow, William E. Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to USMA leadership development.
- Keynote speaker at the LTG James M. Gavin Memorial Service at the West Point Cemetery, June, 2005.
- Addressed the entire USMA Class of 2010 on their Branch Night at West Point, NY, November, 2009.
- Eldest son graduated with the USMA Class of 1986. Eldest grandson is a member of the USMA Class of 2014.

SERVICE TO HUMANITY

- In retirement, along with wife, serves as primary care giver for handicapped son, born with severe infantile autism. LTG Johnson's son suffers from periodic seizures.
- Keynote speaker at Fort Riley, KS and Fort Meade, MD symposiums for military families dealing with handicapped family members, while serving on active duty.
- Keynote speaker at various youth and young adult activities, to include the Sarasota Military Academy, Sarasota, FL; the Fayetteville Academy, Fayetteville, NC; the Empire State Military Academy, Camp Smith, NY; the University of South Florida ROTC, Tampa, FL; and the University of Tampa ROTC, Tampa, FL.
- Principal speaker at Memorial Day ceremonies in Sarasota, FL (twice) and Fort Bragg, NC (twice).
- Principal speaker at numerous Veterans' activities, to include the 505th RCT (WWII), the 517th RCT (WWII), the Golden Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division (Vietnam), the 3rd BCT/505th PIR All American Week reunions (annually) and the various Chapters of the 82nd Airborne Division Association in Fort Lauderdale, St Petersburg and Fort Myers, FL.

BUSINESS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- As consultant to Military Professional Resources Inc, served overseas at the Defense Minister/JCS level as Director of a Joint Military-Civil Training Program for Croatian Armed Forces during the Balkans conflict. Emphasis was on battle-focused training, leader development and the establishment of a professional Non-Commissioned Officer Corps.
- As consultant to Booz Allen Hamilton, served on two landmark National Defense studies dealing with the threat posed by the use of chemical and biological weapons by terrorists against US interests at home and abroad. Results were briefed to the DOD/JCS leadership, Service Chiefs and available Combatant Commanders.
- Served as a consultant to Burdeshaw Associates, Inc on several Army projects related to Army modernization, doctrine and force structure.

LTG Johnson has dedicated a lifetime to preparing soldiers, leading them in battle at the highest levels of command and inspiring emerging leaders to serve their Nation in war and peace. His contributions, tangible as well as intellectual, clearly demonstrate the spirit of West Point in word and deed. We trust that you will find this rendering of his extensive accomplishments as impressive as we do, and we hope that your decision will be to present the award of Distinguished Graduate to LTG James H. Johnson, Jr.

FOR THE CLASS OF 1960:

Kenneth R. Ludovici
Chairman
DGA Task Force