

The Summit Salutes Military Alumni



Louise Zhou '14 gives new meaning to the term "aerial shot" with this picture from the cockpit. She graduated at the top of her class in the Naval Academy where she learned to fly helicopters and is now on active duty.

By Tanya Bricking Leach

Nicholas "Nick" Ragland III SBS '58 is a Vietnam Marines veteran whose military service inspired him to write novels about military heroism. Brian Daniel '91 served in the Army during the Bosnian War with a diverse group of people from all over the world who became a second family for him. Louise Zhou '14 graduated at the top of her class in the Naval Academy where she learned to fly helicopters and is now on active duty.

The personal stories of Nick, Brian and Louise are among many that can be told about Summit alumni who developed a passion for the kind of character-based leadership that has long been a hallmark of a Summit education. Here, by way of a salute to all who have served in the military, we share a few of their stories.

Lt. Joseph Clasgens II SBS '37

Joseph "Jay" Clasgens II went from The Summit Boys School to Walnut Hills High School, Cornell University and then to Annapolis to join the Naval Academy.

After graduation, he became an ensign and was assigned to the USS Carpellotti, where he was a requisition officer in charge of supplies for the ship. He went on to earn the rank of lieutenant.

After his tour of duty, he joined his father in the family business, The J & H Clasgens Co., a woolen manufacturing company. Through the years, the company helped the Army by making the wool for "trigger finger mittens" and green Army blankets, says **Truka Clasgens Fisk '68**, Jay's daughter.

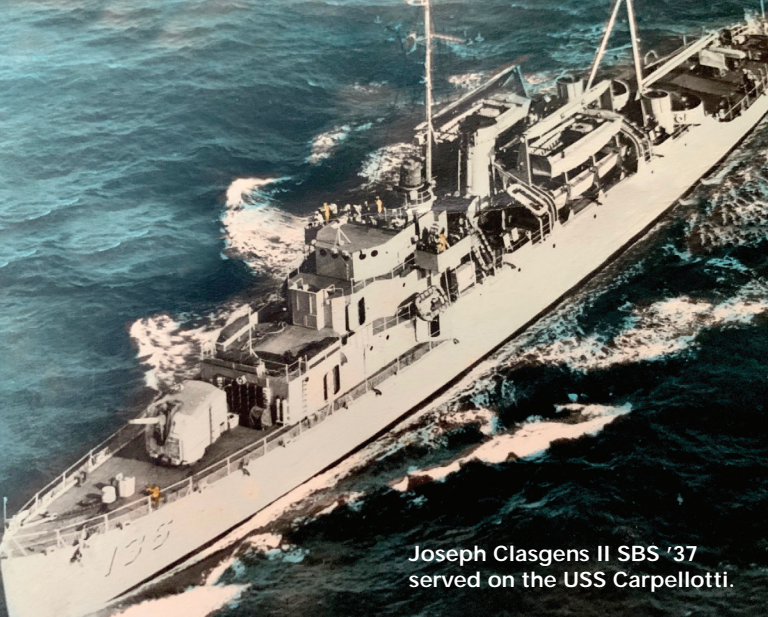
Jay loved boating, the stock market, real estate, farming and traveling with his wife, Patsy. They visited 139 countries on six continents. He died in 2017 at the age of 94.



Vietnam Marines veteran Nicholas "Nick" Ragland III SBS '58 has written two historical fiction books about Marine Corps heroes.



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Joseph Clasgens II SBS '37
served on the USS Carpellotti.

"Dad was a quiet man and never talked much about his accomplishments," his daughter says. "I am sure, if he were here today, he would say that from the Navy, he learned discipline, a sense of order — he was always giving our rooms at home the 'white glove test' — and leadership."

Sgt. Charles "Charlie" Rentschler SBS '53 and Capt. Fred Rentschler II SBS '53

Twins Charlie and Fred Rentschler graduated from Summit Boys School in 1953, went to a college-preparatory high school and graduated from college in 1961 — Charlie from Princeton University and Fred from Vanderbilt University.

"We took separate routes, which was interesting," Charlie says. "The Vietnam War was starting to heat up. There was no question at that time that we had to do service. If you didn't enlist, you were going to get drafted. We both chose the Marine Corps." Charlie went the non-officer route and eventually became a sergeant, E-5. Fred went the officer route and became a captain.

When they returned to private life, they both went to Harvard Business School for MBAs. Charlie worked on Wall Street and then got into industrial manufacturing in the Midwest.

Fred went to work for Dial soap and eventually became president of Armour



Sgt. Charles "Charlie" Rentschler SBS '53



Capt. Fred Rentschler II SBS '53

Dial as well as other food companies and later Northwest Airlines. He was a trustee at Vanderbilt for many years. He died in 2010 at age 70.

"The service is just a slice of humanity," Charlie says. "It had a big influence on me. My service gave me a tremendous respect for the military and the role that they provide. I would recommend it to anybody."

Capt. Howard Nicholas "Nick" Ragland III SBS '58

Nick Ragland spent eight years at The Summit in the 1950s, graduating from The Summit Boys School in the days when the high school was still girls only. He considers those years the most influential in his life — years when he forged lifelong friendships and values that have carried him through a remarkable career.

"Of all my education, The Summit was my favorite," says Nick, a Vietnam veteran who has reinvented himself over the years as a banker, farmer, businessman and school trustee. "I can remember the name of just about every one of my teachers."

After The Summit, he went on to Cranwell Preparatory School in Lenox, Mass., and then to Georgetown University, where he earned a B.S./B.A. in Science and Business Administration in 1966.

Ten days after graduation, he joined the Marine Corps to serve in the Vietnam War, where he worked in helicopter landing zones. For his combat service, he received the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V," the Combat Action Ribbon and the Presidential Unit Citation. He got married three weeks after his return from Vietnam.

He worked for Cincinnati's Central Trust Bank for five years. Then, he took some courses at Purdue about agriculture and bought a farm in Enochsburg, Ind. He and his wife, Marty, farmed for five years. After that, he bought a small fence company. Then, in the early 1980s, he bought Lutz File and Tool Co., and that evolved into the Gorilla Glue Co., which his sons still run.

He served as a trustee for The Summit from 1987 to 1993 and received The Summit's McKenzie-Sargent Distinguished Alumni Award in 2007.

Since his retirement, he has written two historical fiction books about Marine Corps heroes. He and his wife have five boys and 17 grandchildren, live in Cincinnati and still like to relax at their Enochsburg home. He enjoys fishing and hunting quail and pheasant.

"Service is important because there are no free lunches," he says. "We'd be a better country today if people had to serve – maybe not in the military but in a Peace Corps or teaching corps or a medical corps – some kind of two-year service to the country."

Capt. Kathleen Fischer, M.D., M.Ph. '72

Now working in healthcare at the University of California in San Diego, Dr. Kathleen Fischer entered the Navy on a scholarship to pay for medical school. "My first assignment was as a general medical officer in the Philippines, which gave me a number of unique experiences in tropical medicine, military medicine and caring for refugees leaving Vietnam," she says.

"My husband was also a physician in the Navy and deployed multiple times with the Marines. During those deployments, I also fully experienced the role of the spouse of a deployed service member, caring for our four children."

Graduating in 1972, Dr. Fischer was in the last graduating class before the Upper School became co-educational. "There was a strong emphasis on the development of young women," she says. "In my four years, I went from shy and tentative to being a confident student council president. I had numerous experiences over 26 years, in different places around the world. Some of these experiences could easily be chapters in books. My biggest satisfaction was to work for and with people of such high integrity."

From her service in the Navy to a career in medicine, Dr. Fischer believes people are happiest when serving others.

"Albert Schweitzer said, 'The only ones among you who will truly be happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.' The military is one path to that service."



Capt. Kathleen Fischer, M.D., M.Ph. '72 gained a number of unique medical experiences during her time in the Navy. She now works in healthcare at the University of California- San Diego.

**U.S. Navy Reserve Cmdr. Amy Rohs, M.D.
'90**

After graduating from The Summit, Amy Rohs went on to the University of Notre Dame as an undergraduate and then to the Medical College of Ohio to earn her medical degree. She completed her residency at the University of Cincinnati and joined the Veterans Health Administration in 2007. She is a pulmonologist and U.S. Navy Reserve Commander.

Spc. Brian Daniel '91

"My military experience was the best the thing that ever happened to me," says Brian Daniel. "I saw a lot, as far as going to countries I never would have even dreamed that I would be able to visit. I spent two years in Germany and traveled through Europe on weekends. And Bosnia (during the Bosnian War in the mid-1990s) was an eye-opening experience. It made me appreciate what I have, mainly family, seeing kids without knowing where their families were or if they were alive. Seeing some of their living conditions, it was pretty wild."

Joining the Army was going against the grain in the Daniel family. Brian's father, uncles and grandfathers had served in the Navy. "I was used to the idea of service, but The Summit influenced me, too," he says.

Brian developed a tight bond in every unit with which he served. "Everybody was from all different backgrounds, different religions, races, even countries. I had people from the Philippines in my unit, a guy from Panama, Bahamas, a couple countries in Africa. I mean it was just one big family. We all had each other's backs and learned from each other's cultures and upbringing."

Most of his time in the service, Brian was in charge of the motor pool, ordering parts for Humvees, five-tons, and Deuce and a Halfs. He ensured the vehicles received scheduled maintenance and that people



**Spc. Brian Daniel '91 said his experience in the military
"was the best the thing that ever happened to me."**

were qualified to drive them. After the Army, he worked for Ford Motor Company and now co-owns a trucking company.

"I never would have had the experiences I've had if I didn't go through the military," he says.

Lt. Col. Ryan Chmielewski '96

Ryan Chmielewski applied to the Air Force Academy with hopes of flying airplanes, seeing the world and having college paid for. "From day one, after qualifying in my first aircraft, the mission, the people and the ability to really have impact have kept me in over 20 years now," he says.

"The Summit taught me it is essential for leaders to stand up and say, 'Here I am, send me.' It was also evident in clubs, sports, charitable endeavors at The Summit, that when the leader stepped forward, others were eager to join in the effort. We had more success as a team than individuals. That's an important lesson I took with me."

Over the years, he has flown many different planes and filled many roles. Currently, he is stationed at Barksdale Air Force Base in



Lt. Col. Ryan Chmielewski '96 stands with his family.

Louisiana and is a member of the Air Force Global Strike Command staff, leading a big-data project.

"There is nothing like the camaraderie and shared sense of purpose," he says. "Each person's service is its own story. I don't know anyone who took the same path as me. It's definitely a way to make a difference. If you are in certain career fields (like airlifter), you see the amazing amount of work our country does around the world that doesn't involve bombs and bullets. The military will also challenge you to be more than you thought. I wanted to fly planes, but it's the leading of people and solving complex problems that I've enjoyed the most."

Maj. Michael Ann "Micki" Glotfelter '97

"My experiences at The Summit transformed the way I viewed myself

in relationship to the world," says Micki Glotfelter, now stationed at Eielson Air Force Base at the North Pole in Alaska. "I had little self-confidence when I started middle school, and by the end of my time there (The Summit), I had a budding sense that I could accomplish things if I worked hard."

Drawn to the Air Force by the training opportunities, she says service was an added bonus she did not anticipate would be such a gift.

"I applied to the Air Force psychology residency program to complete my doctoral degree, and I matched with my first choice at Malcolm Grow Medical Center, where I spent a year as a psychology resident in Washington, D.C. My first duty location was to a Global Strike Command base in Shreveport, La., where I began to practice as a licensed



Maj. Michael Ann "Micki" Glotfelter '97, when she was deployed in 2017, was the only behavioral health provider for thousands of service members. Currently, she is stationed at Eielson Air Force Base at the North Pole in Alaska.

psychologist and a leader in the Air Force. It was a humbling and eye-opening experience into how little I really knew in either area but how much service members and military leaders valued my position."

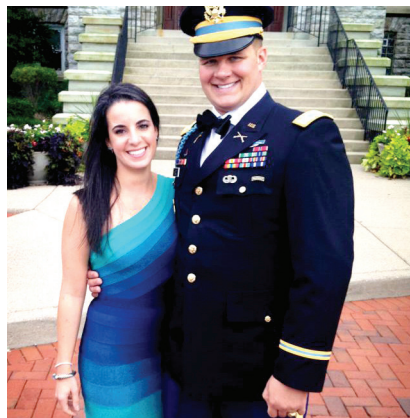
She ran programs such as Suicide Prevention and Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment and went on to serve in San Antonio, Texas, and Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton.

Deployed in 2017, she was the only behavioral health provider for thousands of service members. "It was at that time that I realized the reason I am a military psychologist and what responsibilities go along with the uniform," she says. "At Wright Patterson, I continued as faculty until I got to drive across the country to the most beautiful place I have lived: North Pole, Alaska."

Capt. Robert "Chip" Heidt III SMS '98

Robert "Chip" Heidt III graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and went on to serve as an Army officer in Alaska, Georgia and Kentucky. He held multiple positions as an Airborne Ranger qualified infantry officer, including platoon leader, executive officer, company commander and brigade plans officer.

He was a combat veteran who served in Afghanistan, where he led a 41-person paratrooper group in support of the combat operations.



Olga "Gigi" Duarte '02 and Capt. Robert "Chip" Heidt III SMS '98.

He returned to Cincinnati in 2014 and married his elementary school sweetheart, Olga "Gigi" Duarte '02, in The Summit's Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel. He joined the U.S. Bank Military Leadership Development team and in 2018 went on to pursue his own ventures

in commercial and residential real estate, antiques, distillery ownership and other investments.

Maj. Frank Albi '01

After serving as a captain in the Marine Corps on the ground side, including two tours in Iraq, Frank Albi is now a major in the Reserves and an attorney in Chicago.

"Sept. 11 happened while I was at the Naval Academy," he says. "It was a Tuesday morning, and I was in calculus class. And everything changed. There was a sense of urgency to everything we did from there on."

"Not only are there great job skills to learn and wonderful academic achievements to be had and ways to test yourself and your mettle, but there's also, perhaps, an obligation to understand how you got to where you are before you were even born," he says. "A friend of mine used to deftly summarize it as, 'If not me, then who?'"

"My service is part of my identity, but it's not the sum total of who I am. On a larger scale, military basically enjoys a pretty good reputation because people are out there struggling in some part of the world 24/7. And you miss a lot of sleep, miss a lot of meals, miss a lot of whatever – and that's executed by an all-volunteer force. It's wonderful to say, 'Thank you for your service.' But I think what would be more meaningful, perhaps, is if everybody found their own way to contribute."



Maj. Frank Albi '01



Capt. Luke Albi '05

Capt. Luke Albi '05

Frank's brother, Luke, also served in the Marine Corps. He graduated from the Naval Academy and became a Marine Corps helicopter pilot. He is now in his third year of law school at Georgetown University.

He says: "The Summit does a really good job of instilling in its students the idea of servant leadership and the idea of 'to whom much is given, much is expected.' The kind of people who go to The Summit are presented with a lot of great opportunities. I wanted to make sure that I earned that."

Military services makes a person better at whatever the person wants to accomplish in life, he says.

"What I thought I was going to do was do the military service thing, and that would sort of end my desire for public service," Luke says. "But that actually has not been the case. Since getting out, I realized that's all I want to do. So, my long-term goal going into law school is to become a federal prosecutor. It's not a switch that turns on and turns off. So, the surprising thing is realizing that I really care about this more than anything else: serving the country."

1st Lt. Dale Lakes '13

Now stationed in Fort Gordon, Ga., Dale Lakes is a first lieutenant in the Army. "During my four years at West Point, I discovered my passion for cybersecurity, information technology and software development," he says. "I majored in computer science and branched into Cyber, the Army's newest branch."



1st Lt. Dale Lakes '13

"The critical mission of national cyber defense is a major shift in emphasis for the Army. America desperately needs people with experience in fields like cybersecurity, data science and information technology to volunteer for service and contribute to the fight," he says. "We are entering a new era of military operations where those who wish to do us harm will do so almost purely through unconventional means and asymmetric warfare. We have seen over the past decade how the battlespace has moved from the ground to the Internet."

Dale says military service has made him more confident, competent and mature. "I wake up every morning with a clear sense of purpose," he says. "I am so thankful to The Summit for giving me the necessary foundation to be successful in the military."

Naval Flight Officer Louise Zhou '14

After graduating and commissioning from the Naval Academy, Louise Zhou went to flight school in Pensacola, Fla., where she graduated No. 1 in her class and got her "wings of gold." She was selected to be an E-2 Naval Flight Officer. Now stationed in Norfolk, Va., she is part of VAW-120, the fleet replacement squadron. She hopes to stay in Norfolk for her first sea tour.

"Service to others has always been very important to me" she says. "I grew up learning to always put others before myself, and that has been a very important rule to live by. I feel like God has called me to do a job that I'm passionate about and that I know has a direct role in protecting the people of a country that I grew up in and love."

"I stumbled on this path by total happenstance. I never thought I was cut out for it, but I ended up thriving in the military. I challenge students to keep an open mind and to challenge themselves to do something that is for a greater good and something that is out of their comfort zone."

Cadet Meghan O'Brien '17

Meghan O'Brien is a cadet at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn. She was a recruited athlete and captain of both her basketball and cross country teams. At The Summit, she was a member of the Senate and the student newspaper. She will graduate next year and then be a commissioned officer, serving a minimum of five years.

Todd Kinross '87 and Scott '18

Father and son airmen Todd Kinross '87 and Scott '18 both received appointments



Naval Flight Officer Louise Zhou '14 stands on the wing of a plane.



The Kinross family gathers at an Air Force Academy game
L to R: Derrick '20, Halle, Todd '87, Scott '18 and Karen.

to the U.S. Air Force Academy after graduation. Todd was a member of the Academy's intercollegiate parachute team, The Wings of Blue.

After graduating with a computer science degree, he cross-commissioned to the Navy and served six years including a tour in the Middle East as a navigator aboard the USS Mount Vernon and as part of Special Operations with 1st ANGLICO out of Camp Pendleton, Calif. He now works for Total Quality Logistics in Cincinnati. "The Summit really helped me define myself as an individual and gave me the drive to accomplish any goal. Starting mid-year in fourth grade was not easy at first but the teachers and classmates really helped. There were always amazing

instructors, great friends and tremendous role models that would push us to be the best person we could be." Scott is currently a member of the USAFA Triathlon team, on the Superintendent's list for military, academic and athletic honors and majoring in Ops Research. After graduating and receiving his commission as an officer in the Air Force in 2022, he will either continue with his education or go to pilot training.

Cadet Michael Stanis '20

Accepted by every military academy, Michael Stanis chose the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado where he becomes a cadet this fall.

"I hope to work with the operations research department within the Air Force," he says. "I am interested in efficiency and how to best use resources. But, ultimately, I will go wherever I am sent. I want to serve because I love my country. I have been given so many great gifts, and I want to serve for many of the same reasons other people do. With that said, my main desire to serve comes because I know that I will be able to make a positive impact on those around me and that I am committed to helping others."



Cadet Michael Stanis '20 was accepted by every military academy he applied to. He chose the U.S. Air Force Academy, wanting to work in the operations research department.