

Colorado Springs Chapter, CO Article for Officer Review Magazine

TITLE: Colorado Springs Chapter presents ROTC/JROTC Awards of Merit

The Colorado Springs (COS), Colorado Chapter of MOWW was honored to provide MOWW ROTC/JROTC Award of Merit Medals, Ribbons, and Citations to 21 outstanding cadets throughout the Pikes Peak region. After a two year hiatus on in-person award ceremonies due to COVID restrictions, seven MOWW representatives were able to attend and present awards at 13 recognition ceremonies in Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Widefield, and Canon City, Colorado.

While MOWW typically provides a single award to an exemplary cadet, another 15-20 Service organizations, most of them Military focused, participate in each High School JROTC awards ceremony as well. This allows the Military Department Head at each school to reward a significant number of their dedicated, hard-working cadets with medals that they proudly wear on their Army, Navy, and Air Force cadet uniforms. Our COS MOWW presenters were impressed with the quality and standards of the cadets we saw at these events and are proud to report that our nation will be in good hands for years to come.

At a most memorable JROTC awards ceremony at Canon City, Colorado, both the female cadet battalion commander and the male cadet executive officer wept openly as they thanked and bid farewell to their Senior Army instructors. Sergeant First Class Paul Vertrees, US Army retired, was described as a ‘living legend’ at Canon City High School, having spent over two decades managing the JROTC program and mentoring over 1,000 young citizen students including his own three children. The cadet battalion executive officer admitted that he was “not a good kid” but Chief Warrant Officer 2 Steven Klein, US Army retired, saw something in him and challenged him to join JROTC and become a leader. He personally thanked CW2 Klein for mentoring him over four years, helping him to achieve a HAM radio license, and applauded him as “a second father to me and a man to whom I owe my success in life”.



Colonel Jim Taylor presents award to Cadet Brianna Phillips, Sand Creek HS, CO



Lt Colonel Ulysses Swift presents award to Cadet Mercedes Krennek, Air Academy HS, CO

The incredible value of our ROTC/JROTC programs in training, mentoring, teaching citizenship, and molding the next generation of leaders for our nation cannot be overstated! As MOWW members, we provide the support and encouragement to dedicated retirees from our Armed Services that have stepped up and volunteered to continue to mentor and teach our nation's high school and college students to be better leaders, citizens, and hopefully, take our place in military service to the nation.