

## *RIA-JMTC internship prepares cadets as future Army leaders*



*Cadet Shamus Shields adjusts a vice in preparation to make a hammer during his month long internship with Rock Island Arsenal-Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center, Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois, July 26. Shields is completing a degree in business management at Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois. (Photo by Debralee Best, RIA-JMTC)*

Debralee Best  
RIA-JMTC

Ten solid dots are attached to their camouflaged chests. Their young faces seem attentive and eager. They are not just college students, but future Army officers taking part in a unique experience many of their peers will not.

Cadets from across the country applied for an internship with Rock Island Arsenal - Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center. The 10 selectees came from across the country: from California and New Mexico, to New York and Rhode Island and in between from Kentucky and Illinois.

The reasons the cadets applied for this internship varied for each future officer. Cadet Jermell Chester, Morgan State University, Baltimore, originally applied for a Congressional internship and was placed in cyber security. However, his Reserve Officer Training Corps leadership thought this internship would be a better fit because his major is Business Administration.

"I got here and they knew right away,

he's business administration so we'll put him here and he'll get an overview of what we do here and trickle down and do different things," said Chester. "I've enjoyed it. I'm kind of glad that I'm here. I've learned a lot since the first day so I'm enjoying myself."

Other cadets were interested based on what branch interests them in the Army.

"I chose this because I wanted to go transportation or ordnance. I want to go ordnance now so this worked out really well," said Cadet Shamus Shields, Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois. "It was nice because I wanted to do something Army related, see what the Army life was like outside of ROTC, rather than just being a cadet a couple days and a student full time. So that was a big factor in it. Also being so close to home I was hoping to catch some White Sox games, but haven't been able to do so yet. It's definitely a good thing to be here because this is the branch I want to get into."

Still other cadets heard about the opportunity from their peers.

"I was just looking for something to do over the summer. I had a friend who did it last year and had a really good time with it," said Cadet Ryan Distaso, University of California, Los Angeles. "They were with legal so I thought it was just limited to legal and engineering so I applied for legal, but ended up with safety instead. I really had no idea what to expect or what I was going to be doing here. I just kind of came in without any expectations really."

The cadets were placed in legal, public affairs, safety, engineering and a variety of other departments for their month-long experience. They were matched to departments coinciding with their majors.

Chester and Shields were placed in with the Apprenticeship program where they had an overview of how managers oversee logistics and how products and components are assembled. Both are majoring in business.

"I feel like we get an overview of the whole JMTC ... We got hands-on with a lot of people in small parts, in the apprenticeship, the program managers, we've seen (human resources) and we're going to see security and estimating," said Shields. "This internship has given us a chance to see what everybody does: an overview of the whole JMTC."

Distaso had applied for an internship with legal because he wants to become a staff judge advocate in the Army, but due to his major of Environmental Science, he was matched with safety.

"It's a lot of occupational health so I've been learning a lot about the differences between how civilian enterprises run versus the military and then just how occupational health works at a federal setting," he said. "The occupational health is the same kind of things I was learning about at UCLA, like how does OSHA work. I spent a day with an environmental officer here just talking about how to manage the emis-

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## Stencil brands RIA-JMTC products

Debralee Best  
RIA-JMTC

When shipping packages, companies ensure their name's right on the side of the box. While Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center ships their products all over the world, they were missing that brand. Until now.

Brad Barry, logistic operations director, RIA-JMTC, came up with the idea to use RIA-JMTC shipping containers as a method of branding and took the idea to his team. Pete Brautigam was the tool designer selected to create a means of marking the crates.

"I pitched ideas and sketches to a few members of management, ultimately deciding on one of my eight suggestions," said Brautigam. "Once a design was selected, I modeled the stencil."

After modeling the stencil, the design went to the weld and sheet metal division to be programed and cut with lasers, then handles were welded on the stencil.

The design isn't set in stone and a stamp is still being developed to test its feasibility.

"There may be a few modifications needed, but overall the emblem allows us to convey a message that we are a stand-alone, world-class manufacturer," said Steve Swanner, weld and sheet metal division chief, RIA-JMTC.

The first stencil was sprayed by Col. Kenneth W. Letcher, RIA-JMTC commander, and Sgt. Maj. Marvin Jones, RIA-JMTC sergeant major, July 7.

"The stencil afforded us the opportunity to put our mark on the readiness products we produce for the Warfighter," said Barry.



*Sgt. Maj. Marvin Jones, (left) RIA-JMTC sergeant major, and Col. Kenneth W. Letcher, RIA-JMTC commander stand by the first stencil after spraying it July 7 at Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center. RIA-JMTC now delivers its unparalleled readiness solutions to the Army with their name proudly displayed. (Photo by Richard Glancey, RIA-JMTC)*

"The crates our products are shipped and stored in will be seen all around the globe. When a crate is cracked opened in the future the Warfighter will come to understand that it represents the highest quality available to them as it was the RIA-JMTC Army Civilians that made it."

RIA-JMTC continues to be the Army's premier manufacturing facility, but now delivers its unparalleled readiness solutions to the Army with their name proudly displayed.

### Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing & Technology Center

Commander  
Col. Kenneth W. Letcher

SGM  
Sgt. Maj. Marvin Jones

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Submissions and suggestions can be forwarded to the RIA-JMTC Public Affairs Office at:

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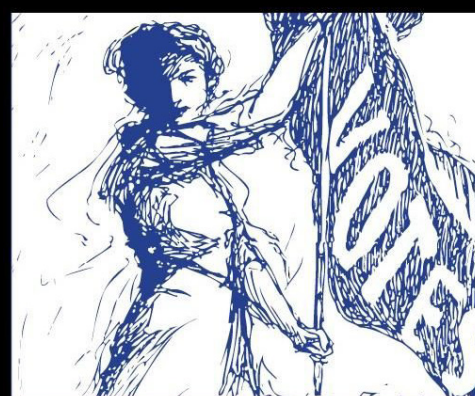
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## Antiterrorism Month

Terrorism remains an enduring, persistent, worldwide threat to our nation and our Army. Seeking current knowledge of the threats coupled with heightened antiterrorism awareness to detect terrorist activities is essential to sustaining vigilance and successfully providing a viable defense against the full range of terrorist tactics.

August is the Army's Antiterrorism Awareness Month. Members of our Army must seek knowledge of the threats and maintain heightened awareness to detect terrorist activities. These actions are critical to sustain vigilance and successfully provide the advance warning needed to defend against the full range of terrorist tactics.



**WOMEN'S  
Equality  
Day  
August 26**



# Around RIA-JMTC



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sions from this place, so it all kind of ties in.”

While he was originally really looking forward to working with legal, he’s made the most of his time here.

“I was (disappointed I didn’t get legal) at first, but I’ve honestly had a great time doing this,” he said. “It ties in regardless.”

In addition to exploring their own departments, all of the cadets also had the opportunity to tour the factory, John Deere and behind the scenes of the Rock Island Museum; watch a foundry pour; assist in the disassembly of a gun mount; observe process and testing of large and small calibers; meet with the First Army commander, Lt. Gen. Stephen Twitty; and meet individually with the RIA-JMTC commander, Col. Kenneth W. Letcher.

Meeting with high-level officers was one of the highlights for some of the cadets.

“(I’m leaving here with) just a better understanding how leadership works at the strategic level. We got to sit down with the colonel and a three-star general. That’s a unique experience because most of the officers you meet in ROTC are lieutenants, captains, sometimes a major or lieutenant colonel,” said Distaso. “Getting to talk to that high-level leadership and seeing what it’s like when you get up to those high levels of command, I feel like I understand that better now than I did before I came here.”

Networking was another key for the cadets during this internship.

“The biggest thing is all the people I’ve met. I’ve met a lot of retired military personnel that have given a lot of advice, not only on how to further my military career, but just how everything works in JMTC and what I want to do in the Army and how that can coincide with what I’m doing here,” said Chester. “It just gave me an insight and advice and they gave me their contact information for their help, if I need help. Just going along in my future, I feel like this really benefited me and it’s taken me to the next step of where I need to go.”

While the cadets agree this was a great opportunity for them,

Distaso wouldn’t recommend it to those cadets going into combat arms, but for all others, he sees it as a great opportunity.

“I would say it depends on what you are thinking about branching and your career prospects ... Most people I would tell to do it because most people are interested in combat support branches or going Reserve and pursuing a civilian career and for those people I would definitely tell them to



*Cadet Jermell Chester, places a vice in preparation to make a hammer during his month long internship with Rock Island Arsenal-Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center, Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois, July 26. Chester attends Morgan State University, Baltimore, while pursuing his degree in business administration. (Photo by Debralee Best, RIA-JMTC)*



*Cadets Shamus Shields (center) and Jermell Chester (near), watch as a machine is operated to measure levelness of a vice in preparation to make a hammer during their internship with Rock Island Arsenal-Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center, Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois, July 26. (Photo by Debralee Best, RIA-JMTC)*

do it,” he said. “It’s Army training that counts toward your whole ROTC experience, but it’s Army training that’s more focused on the civilian side.”

The cadets expressed thanks to all the RIA-JMTC staff for their support.

“Without all of them, this internship wouldn’t have been what it was,” said Chester. “So, thanks to all of them.”

This year’s cadets finish their internship Aug. 4, but next summer a new group will wander the halls of RIA-JMTC and learn about the Arsenal’s mission of manufacturing and delivering Army readiness to the Warfighter, likely including those cadets, in the near future.