

# Dean's Medalist lands prestigious role in US Army

By Megan Neely, ASU News  
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**Editor's note:** This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [spring 2025 graduates](#).

Andrew Napier joined [Arizona State University's Army Reserve Officers Training Corps](#) in 2023.

Since then, his exceptional leadership skills and commitment to service have been demonstrated through his role as the cadet battalion commander of the program this past academic year.

Between managing the intense demands of ASU's Army ROTC program and dedicating his time to younger cadets, Napier maintained a 3.82 GPA.

In honor of his academic achievement and commitment to service, he'll graduate as the [Department of Military Science's](#) spring 2025 Dean's Medalist with a bachelor's degree in liberal studies and a minor in military leadership.

"Andrew's greatest strength lies in his unwavering commitment to mentoring others. Drawing from his extensive experience in the U.S. Army prior to his academic career, Andrew continuously goes above and beyond to help others improve," said Lt. Col. [Ryan Whipple](#), professor of military science. "He devotes significant time to guiding younger cadets, offering valuable mentorship in both mission planning and leadership development. His ability to impart his knowledge to others has made a profound impact on those he leads."

Napier has been involved with the U.S. Army since 2016, serving in roles at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and working as the executive assistant to the command sergeant major on Alaska's Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. He came to ASU while searching for a degree program that would offer him flexibility.

"At first, I chose ASU because it had strong academic programs and a good track record for graduates finding jobs. But over time, it's really been about how well the school has supported me. Over the course of 10 years and five different locations, ASU has been there to help me along the whole way," Napier said.

This May, Napier received his commission as a second lieutenant and will head to the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence at Fort Novosel, Alabama, after graduation to learn how to fly helicopters as an aviation officer.

**Q: What's something you learned while at ASU — in the classroom or otherwise — that surprised you or changed your perspective?**

**A:** I think the biggest thing that I learned this year was that peer leadership is really challenging! My whole military career, I've operated under a clear-cut rank system. But here, I've had to learn how to lead my classmates and peers.

**Q: Which professor taught you the most important lesson while at ASU?**

**A:** My professor of military science, Lt. Col. Whipple, has taught me a lot about work-life balance and how to maintain high standards and expectations while still being an empathetic leader.

**Q: What's the best piece of advice you'd give to those still in school?**

**A:** Your journey is your own! Don't worry about what your friends are doing, what your parents expect or the setbacks you have. Just keep working hard and find your own path.

**Q: What was your favorite spot on campus, whether for studying, meeting friends or just thinking about life?**

**A:** My favorite spot on campus is the Sun Devil Fitness Complex. I've spent so much time there over the years, and every time I leave, I feel a little more prepared to do whatever comes next.

**Q: If someone gave you \$40 million to solve one problem on our planet, what would you tackle?**

**A:** If someone gave me \$40 million, I'd start a massive marketing campaign to overcome people's fears of nuclear energy. I believe mass sustainable energy in the form of nuclear power is a key first step in building a bright future for our planet.

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**Main image**



Andrew Napier. Photo by Meghan Finnerty/ASU