

Why I Want to be an Army Aviator

Since joining the military, I knew that I wanted to become an Officer. This has been inspired to me by many Officers that I've had the privilege to work with in my career. As a seasoned NCO, I've seen firsthand what great Officers can do for our organization and I aspire to be that type of leader in the aviation.

I will never forget my first ride in a UH-60 Blackhawk. I was awarded the opportunity while being a PFC in the Artillery for my hard work during an annual training event. This is what ultimately sparked my passion to want to fly for the Army. Knowing that this is one of the more challenging paths to take in becoming an Officer intrigues me not only because it's challenging but also because I believe it is one of the most rewarding positions in the Army. To me, it would mean getting to positively influence soldiers and their careers through leadership, while also getting to fly some of the most advanced aircraft in the world.

Thus far, I have had a successful military career and look forward to continuing that in the many years to come. I attended an Advanced Leadership Course where I graduated on the Commandant's list (limited to top 20%) with a GPA of 3.85 and a far exceeds standards in leads/communication & engagement. This past year I also attended the Aviation Flight Operations Specialist course (15P) where I obtained an overall GPA of 96.81%. Before being selected for an AGR position with 2-211th, I worked in the G3 as the Assistant Quota Source Manager where I was awarded an AAM for successfully and meticulously managing the State's schools' budget of \$14.9 million.

I feel that a few things that set me apart from other applicants is my dedication to being the best leader to soldiers, my aviation experience, and my willingness to sacrifice. I've continued to demonstrate my dedication to being the best leader by putting my soldier's careers and training first. I do this by utilizing my technical expertise in military schools ensuring that they attend NCOES schools, complete their DLC and present them with other opportunities outside of their MOS that enables them to have a rewarding military career. My aviation experience continues to grow as I joined 2-211th GSAB as an S3 Operations NCO. As a subject matter expert in schools, I was able to manage the Battalion schools' program and send 173 Aviation Soldiers to schools without issue. Since having had the opportunity to re-class as an Aviation Operations Specialist (15P) I was shortly after trusted to be the TAC NCOIC during the 2021 XCTC operation "Orchard Thunder" while supporting the 65th Fires Brigade with aviation assets. While I can recognize that I still have much to learn before I could say "I'm qualified to be an Aviation Officer", I know that I have built a solid foundation that I can continue to build upon. For me, being selected as an Aviation Officer Candidate doesn't come without sacrifice as I would need to resign my current AGR position that I worked especially hard to obtain. To me, it's worth the opportunity to fly and lead within this organization.

Letter of Introduction

For as long as I can remember, it has been my aspiration to be a US military Aviator. I have always had a passion for military aviation and regularly attended airshows with my family as a child. Although military service was not a large part of my immediate family history, I felt a call to it that I eventually answered in my adulthood. In fact, it was my desire to be an Aviator that led me into the Army.

Upon graduating with Honors from the University of Utah in 2018, I put together a packet to attend Army OCS with the intention of branching active-duty Aviation upon commission. After a successful OCS board, I attended Basic Combat Training in 2019 and then OCS, where I submitted my Aviation packet. Ultimately, a more qualified candidate was selected to fill the singular allocated Aviation slot for our class, but I was determined nonetheless to execute my duties to the best of my ability in my next-preferred choice of Engineer Officer. I attended Engineer Basic Officer Leader Course in 2020, exceeding academic course standards and being awarded Commandant's List. After graduation from EBOLC, I took my first unit of assignment to the 16th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, TX.

During my time with 1st Armored Division, I operated in a number of different roles. Notably, as a Combat Engineer Platoon Leader I had the opportunity to attend the National Training Center in 2021 with my platoon to support 1 ABCT maneuver elements. The preparation leading up to NTC included Bradley Crew Gunnery, in which I had the opportunity to learn how to effectively fight utilizing a military weapons platform. Armored vehicle combat and maneuver tactics were not part of the EBOLC course of instruction, but I was determined to become proficient with my platoon's assigned weapon systems in order to enable the greater success of the unit's mission. When we attended NTC, we did so as a platoon of qualified crews who had demonstrated our lethality at home station. At NTC we operated and fought alongside our armored/mechanized maneuver battalion counterparts, with all of my platoon track crews scoring multiple kills of OPFOR vehicles and dismounts alike. In our primary capacity to provide Engineer Support in the form of obstacle reduction, we conducted two combined-arms breaches, both successful. The latter breach made use of a D7 dozer as our primary breaching asset. When we initiated movement to the breach site, a miscommunication on the fires net led to obscuration being ineffective on our approach, leaving us exposed to enemy fire. In order to protect our breach asset, I directed my section Bradleys to provide physical cover for the dozer by placing ourselves between it and the incoming enemy fire as we continued our advance until effective obscuration was emplaced on the breach site. As a result, both my section crews as well as the dozer survived the mission and ensured successful breach.

After NTC, my unit prepared for a 2022 training rotation to Korea. I was selected as the Deployment Ready Reaction Facility OIC for the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, charged with ensuring the final deployment readiness and movement preparation for over 1000 pieces of rolling stock deploying forward to Korea. In this capacity I was given the opportunity to demonstrate my administrative capabilities, completing operations one day ahead of schedule. After my arrival in-country and subsequent move to 4-70 Armor Battalion, I was once again given challenging administrative opportunities. As their Task Force Engineer, I operated as the lead planner for the battalion validation exercise, a combined US-Republic of Korea wet gap crossing of the Imjin River, as well as Korea Combat Training Center Rotation 22-06 (a force-on-force exercise US-ROK Army training center). I was also selected as Liaison/Plans Officer for 4-70 AR BN support to Camp Casey/Hovey Base Defense O-Plan. In

each of these roles, I coordinated US planning efforts directly with ROK Army host-nation partners and fostered relationships at multiple echelons of command. At the close of our rotation to Korea, I served as the acting BN-S3 during RIPTOA operations with our replacing unit of 1-17 IN. This involved the transition of footprint from supporting an armored tank battalion to a Stryker Rifle battalion. Despite the changeover of equipment and personnel, we maintained a "fight tonight" posture until transfer of authority. After returning to home station and my separation from active duty to move back to Utah, I was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for meritorious service to the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team.

In summary, I still maintain the aspiration of being a Rotary Wing Aviator and believe the performance of my military career to this point indicates an aptitude to excel in that role if given the opportunity. I am comfortable even in unfamiliar situations, and have demonstrated a propensity to learn quickly whether it be in an academic setting or leadership capacity. In multiple units and at multiple echelons of command, I have acted as representative and liaison with adjacent elements and developed working partner relationships. My platform qualification as a Bradley Fighting Vehicle commander, professional civilian driving experience, and exemplary academic performance at military and civilian schools demonstrates the caliber of technical proficiency and mental acuity required of an Aviation Officer. I am confident that I will meet and exceed the rigorous standards demanded of me while at Rotary Wing Training, and return to the unit to be a valuable asset in service of the Utah Army National Guard.

Letter of Introduction

While as a successful leader in the office environment, I desire to be an Army officer to be a part of missions that have a larger greater impact on the community I live in and abroad. Being an Army officer provides the unique opportunity to lead a group consisting of individuals from a variety of backgrounds while accomplishing a task that only most can dream of all the while developing personal skills and continuing to grow as an individual. Furthermore, the National Guard aviation unit's additional unique mission of protecting life and property domestically during times of crisis is a mission I wish to join.

My interaction with the military and the aviation world has been long and varied since high school. During my high school years my interest in aviation drove me to become a student pilot and successfully soloed in a small Cessna 152. Unfortunately, due to financial restrictions I never received my private pilot's license. Due to my work in the defense industry writing aircraft flight releases for the Army in Huntsville, Alabama, I was able to fly in the crew chief seat of UH-60s leading experimental pilots in flight test. As a flight test engineer, I gained a greater appreciation of Army airframes and aviation as they were literally pushed outside the flight envelope. In addition to this I was able to fly in the front seat of a Blackhawk, Bell 206 Trainer, and MH-6 Little Bird for familiarity training. In addition to this, due to a lot of my colleagues being private aviators themselves, I have had the opportunity to copilot private aircraft in the local flight area.

In the pursuit of and since earning my Aerospace degree I have always been working hand in hand with the military on various programs. This led me to develop a strong sense of leadership and the ability to come up with solutions under high pressure situations. A notable example was when I was placed in charge of a flight test of an experimental asset attached to a Blackhawk helicopter. My duties involved interfacing with the on base commander, flight crew and stakeholders with regular updates on the progress of the project. Additionally, during the day of flight, I oversaw briefing and debriefing of air and ground crews of the day's mission. During the flight as part of the flight crew, I was the liaison between the pilots and the engineering team to ensure mission success. All the while during the project aviation officers regularly inspired me to push myself further in my work. At the conclusion of the program to be able to look back on the team and know what we completed helped secure a better future felt fulfilling. Experiencing the fulfilling nature of that type of work while in a leadership and technical role while interacting with Army aviation officers I worked with is one of the reasons I want to become one.

Overcoming obstacles both professionally and personally is a skill Army aviation officers require to be successful, and a skill set I possess but wish to improve by becoming an aviation officer. In the engineering field setbacks are almost a daily occurrence and being able to handle them is paramount to be successful. Recently a setback for a project required leading a collaboration with other engineering teams while operating with limited resources. While handling the stress of the program I made sure to keep a clear head by exercising often. While in the end the program concluded successfully, I know I can become better. To grow my skills of leading a team and grow my technical ability to overcome obstacles at a higher level only available as an aviation officer is another reason for me wanting to join.

The reason for me wanting to be an Army aviation officer in the National Guard is complex and has no one singular reason. The inspirational people I will get to work with, the idea of being able to continue my civilian career while serving, being able to support missions in the local community and more are contributing reasons why I want to join. I believe the skillset and knowledge I developed throughout my civilian career can be a useful asset as an Army aviation officer and I am looking forward to developing it further if selected as a candidate.

V/r,

Rank First Name MI Last Name