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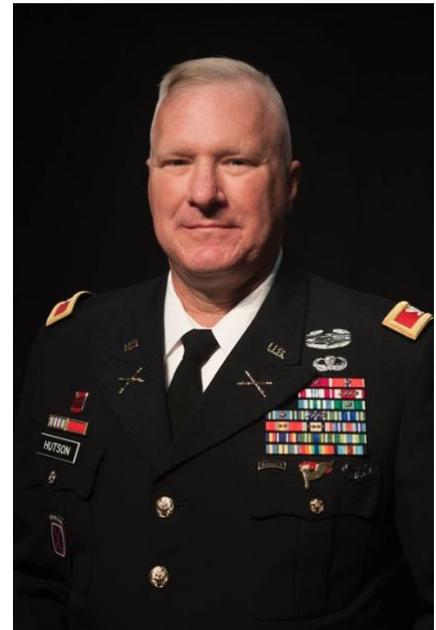
Dr. Maxwell

Advanced Comp

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Col. Heyward G. Hutson, III

I had the privilege to conduct an interview with Colonel Heyward Hutson, USA (Ret.). Col. Hutson was born in Charleston, South Carolina, and, due to having a father in the military, his family moved around the United States and the world every two to three years. Col. Hutson has lived or been stationed in: New York, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas, South Carolina, Virginia, Kansas, Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea, and Ukraine. Col. Hutson is married to Julie Hutson and has five children: Emilee, Allison, Heyward IV, Seth, and David. Col. Hutson has one son who is a freshman at The Citadel and another son that is a pleb at West Point. His father and uncle were West Point graduates and Col. Hutson knew it was the route he wanted to take at a young age. He also knew he wanted to pursue artilleryman, just like all the men in his family did before him. After all, Hutson says, "It is the family business." After his first couple days as a pleb at West Point, he knew he was in the right place.



Col. Heyward G. Hutson III, USA (Ret.)

Graduating from West Point was just the first of many successful milestones for Col. Hutson, who would later receive his Master's in Education from Northwestern State University.

He is also a graduate of the Field Artillery Officer (basic and advanced courses), the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the Joint and Combined Warfighting School, and the U.S. Army War College. Col. Hutson served in the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), the 10th Mountain Division, the Joint Readiness Training Center, the 2nd Infantry Division, and the Joint Center for Operational Analysis (United States Joint Forces Command.)

Col. Hutson graduated with a Bachelor of Science only a month before he reported to Fort Sill in Oklahoma for his Officer Basic Training, which he completed in December of 1990 and then reported to U.S. Army Ranger school.

Ranger school was the most difficult task Hutson endured in his 30 years of training. According to Col. Hutson, “it was absolutely the hardest thing anyone can endure.” Hutson elaborates describing it, “as a battle between mind and body, when you are cold, wet, hungry and miserable with energy off one meal a day and carrying a hundred-pound ruck sack 10 to 15 miles a night for four months.” Col. Hutson continues, “You drop so much body weight, and it is so hard to just get yourself through it. You need to be mentally tough for yourself, yet still turn around and lead 30 Rangers enduring the same challenges. However, I knew after that, nothing I faced ahead of me would be that hard.”

Col. Hutson was 25 when he completed Ranger training in April of 1991 and received his “Joint Readiness Deployment” in 1992 as a company fire support officer with the 101st Airborne Division. His first deployment overseas in 2001-2002 was in Korea, when he was ranked a Major and serving as an operations officer. His Battalion’s motto was, “First to fire.” Their mission, according to Col. Hutson was to “destroy a series of 44 targets. We would shoot missiles and rockets to be able to get our jets in safely. We took out the North Korean radio and fuel systems so our jets could penetrate for deep attacks.” He was the planner on his first

deployment and not “down in the trenches with the soldiers.” Col. Hutson wanted to be in those trenches because he says, “I have a true love for soldiers and people that raise their right hand and swearing an oath to their country, putting on a uniform for their country, and making the ultimate sacrifice.”

Col. Hutson truly enjoyed his time when he was ranked a Captain due to the close interaction he had with the soldiers. He explains, “You are up close and [in] person with the soldiers, you are under HUMVS with them on the gun line. It is such a great experience hearing each soldier’s individual story, it was an incredible experience!”

Col. Hutson’s favorite rank would be when he was a Lieutenant Colonel because, as



he states, “I had so much more of an impact on my soldiers. As a Captain I was limited to what I could do, but as a Lt. Colonel, I pretty much had unlimited powers. I really felt that I had a huge impact not only on the soldiers but their families as well. I put 500 soldiers on an airplane to fly them overseas and it’s my responsibility to bring those soldiers home to their families and loved ones safely. I really care and love very deeply every one of my soldiers.”

Col. Hutson faced many challenges along his career. One of the main things he had to do when making a decision was to think about what the end results would have on everyone around him. “You have to take care of your Privates,” explains Hutson, “and always listen to them, they are just as important as anyone else out there in the field.”

While in this position, Col. Hutson would be commanding the 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, where he deployed the battalion to Baghdad, Iraq, as a maneuver task force partnered with an Iraqi Federal Police brigade. “I owned the bottom third of Baghdad with 2.2 million people, I had all the universities, the embassies, all the political parties. I was in one of the most highly contested areas.”

Col. Hutson said he was “king of my castle, because nobody ever told me what to do or questioned me, because somebody couldn’t come in and say, ‘Hey, Hutson do this,’ because they didn’t know what was happening within my area.” While on this mission, Col. Hutson had to cover six incursion groups, while other battalions only had to deal with one or two. Col. Hutson and his soldiers were stationed there for nine months in a compound base the size of Summerall Field, and he describes their mission as “everything.” That was because they did everything including helping rebuild hospitals, schools, houses and even brought trash trucks and trash cans for all the residents of the village. They even gave power to people and the surrounding buildings.

One of the first things Col. Hutson did when arriving to Baghdad was communicate with the police, mayor and city council, so they would all be on the same page. This was a nine-month deployment for Col. Hutson and his soldiers there and they made a huge impact before they left. It was definitely one of Col. Hutson’s most challenging deployments, however a challenge never stood in his way.

Following command, Col. Hutson served as a National Security Fellow at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. He next served as the Chief of Joint and Lethal Fires for USARCENT / Third Army before assuming command of the 212th Fires Brigade with the 1st Armored Division. During command, Col. Hutson converted the brigade into the

Army's first Division Artillery (DIVARTY) and served his final year in command as the 1st Armored Division's DIVARTY commander. Col. Hutson has held the rights to every duty title: Assistant Field Artillery, Bridge Commander, Chief JT & Lethal Fires, Fellowship Harvard, BN Task Force Commander, Battalion Commander, Joint Team Leader, Operations Officer, C-IED Team Leader, Operations Officer, BCT Fire support (COORD), Battalion XO, BN Task force Commander, Battalion S3, TNG BTRY senior O/C, Battery Commander, Assistant S3, BN Fire Support Officer, and Executive Officer.

Col. Hutson's top achievements and highlights of his career would be two-time Battery Commander, Task Force Commander in Baghdad, Brigade & DIVARTY Commander, and lastly, one of the most meaningful jobs, Assistant Field Artillery Commandant, because artillery has always been Col. Hutson's "family business." He served in this position throughout his last three years in the Army before retiring on September 1, 2018. In this position, he made a profound impact in the United States artillery field by being able to get things done the right way.



After thirty years of active service in the United States Army, Col. Hutson's awards and decorations include: three Legions of Merit, two Bronze Star Medals, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, five Meritorious Service Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, two Army Commendation Medals, two Joint Service Achievement Medals, 10 Army Achievement Medals, the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, numerous campaign and service

medals, the Ranger Tab, the Parachutist's Badge, the Pathfinder Badge, the Air Assault Badge, and the Combat Action Badge. Col. Hutson served his last three years in the Army as the Assistant Commandant of the Field Artillery branch at Fort Sill before his retirement.

Reflecting on his 30 years of service, Col. Hutson says, "It makes you less emotional after seeing and doing the things it really makes you numb. I am very detached. My wife says I don't do drama, so that is one negative of 30 years. But one of positives is, as a Colonel, I see 360 degrees. I try to think of every outcome of every situation and how it can affect everyone and go with the best overall."

Col. Hutson then joined The Citadel to fulfill his role as the Assistant Commandant for Cadets. His main goal is to "prepare cadets for post-graduation." Col. Hutson explained on change he would make to the college if he could: "If I could snap my fingers for a day and change something at The Citadel, it would be treating upper class students like lieutenants instead of cadets. As a university, we say we are building leaders, but we are making seniors sign restrictions every hour, when they're going to be commissioned as a First Lieutenant in two months. That is what I expect from a kindergarten, so we have to find the appropriate balance." I could not agree more with Col. Hutson's mindset. Another thing Col. Hutson would change is "the way cadets look at subordinates; they look at knobs as toys, a good leader never degrades your subordinates, because your primary job is to protect them. I'm not saying go easy on them, but if you're too hard on their standard because it's fun or calling them nasty names in order to build yourself as a leader. That is definitely not the way you do it. Your base of power is how you lead by example. You meet the standard and ensure they meet the standard and if they can't meet the standard, then you show them how. Leadership is hard and leadership is time

consuming; leadership is not PR's. I hate PR's. It's easy to pull someone, but harder to pull them aside to teach and coach them. That's a true leader."

Col. Hutson believes that punishments and awards are not balanced for cadets and that cadets are not always rewarded for meeting or exceeding the standard. Col. Hutson wants to have an impact on each cadet because he cares about each one and wants them to be the best they can be. He knows that the cadets are the future and next generation of the United States military. He thinks that cadets should feel confident to go into the world after graduation and be able to lead in an impactful and positive way. I really enjoyed this opportunity to interview Col. Hutson and record his story of 30 years decorated service and to show how, even in retirement, he is still building leaders and impacting lives for the better.

