Good morning. On behalf of Major General Steve Danner, the adjutant general, and nearly 12,000 Missouri Guardsmen, it’s an honor to be with you today for the induction ceremony of the Mizzou Hall of Fame.

Like many of today’s inductees, I look around campus and see so many changes since I was a student some 30+ years ago. Back in those days, our basketball team was amazing and our football team left A LOT to be desired. We would watch Coach Norm Stewart in Hearnes Arena lead Jon Sundvold, Steve Stipanovich, Ricky Frazier and the team to victory. Kim Anderson had just graduated when I was a freshman.

As an ROTC cadet, we were practicing close order drill on some old tennis courts out there. There was even a bowling alley in Brady Commons – the old student center. So many changes on campus.

Now we have Kim Anderson coaching in Mizzou Arena, a winning football team and Stankowsky Field - where you can PT 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Changes on the military side, as well.
When I was commissioning as a second lieutenant in 1983, the world was a different place. We were in the height of the Cold War nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union. They had invaded Afghanistan in 1979 and the U.S. boycotted the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. The Soviet Union then boycotted the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. As we learned military tactics, we practiced fighting large-scale operations against nation states.

The world is a much different place now.

We’ve been in combat for 13 years now. Our new normal is to fight terrorist organizations who do not follow the Rules of War of the Geneva Convention. Groups like the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, ISIS and Boko Haram spread fear and destruction throughout the world.

As our Hall of Fame inductees know well, CHANGE is the only constant in our world.

But there are three values I have learned through the years that never change.

I learned the importance of EXCELLENCE here at Mizzou. Pursuing excellence means being satisfied with no less than the highest goals we can envision. This institution at MIZZOU was founded on Excellence and that has never changed.

Striving for excellence has paid off in both my military and business careers. In every unit I served in; we as a team continue to raise the bar to be a better organization. It was the pride of excellence we took with us to our next assignments. Our family business has been around over 80 years, I am the third generation and the only way to survive that long is provide quality products and great customer service.

I learned the importance of SELFLESS SERVICE in the military. It's something that sets ROTC students apart from the other students here on campus. Someday soon, these cadets will raise their right hand and put their life on the line for others. The ultimate goal will be mission accomplishment and taking care of others before themselves. Many young people are only focused on their own careers and future. All who
serve in the military are dedicated to selfless service and make sacrifices for others.

Less than one percent of our nation serves in the military. The vast majority of people will never understand the selfless service it takes to be a military leader. Like the inductees have shown through their careers, selfless service makes a huge difference in both the military and the business world.

You all may not know, but our Mizzou football team went through a teambuilding course taught by the Missouri National Guard this summer. They did it two years ago and learned so much about leadership that the athletes requested to do it again.

The team changed up their formation after the camp based upon the selfless service attitude they learned from our Soldiers. Previously, the MU team would line up on the field for practice drills based upon seniority. Now they intersperse the upper classmen throughout out the ranks to help motivate and train the underclassmen. They even have the younger teammates leading drills, building their confidence and
developing future leaders. The team has said it has already helped their team cohesion. I hope we see it on the field today!

The third value is INTEGRITY I learned it from my father. I think of integrity as doing the right thing even when no one is watching. As a business owner, my dad always did the right thing – for his employees, for his customers and for his family. Integrity will make or break your career AND your life.

Integrity means not taking shortcuts or the easy way. Volkswagen is all over the news for falsifying emissions tests for air quality. They started taking shortcuts, they did not hold themselves accountable and they were not truthful in what they were doing.

Integrity means you are honest and truthful in all you say or do. As leaders we seek responsibility and take responsibility for our actions. We work with Facts and Truths to resolve any problem. We need to live with integrity 365 days a year. You need to be able to look yourself in the mirror and hold your head high knowing you did the right thing, even when no one was watching.
So, as we welcome the new inductees into the Hall of Fame, I see many examples of excellence, selfless service and integrity. Just read their bios and you’ll see many accomplishments throughout their careers. But the values that brought them success are those values that we adhere to in the military.

I’d like to be the first to welcome them to the Hall of Fame where their values have never changed.