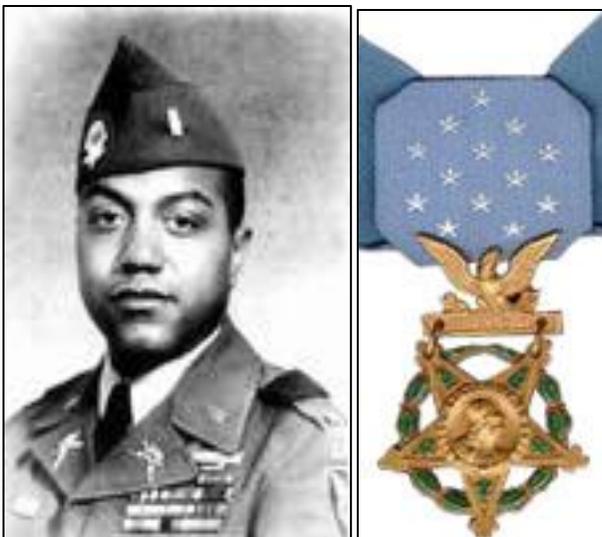




very wise, as OCS became the leading source of commissioned officers during the war. It was also absolutely necessary to provide enough leaders for the rapidly expanding army of 8.3 million soldiers by late 1945. Between July 1941 and May 1947, over 100,000 candidates were enrolled in 448 Infantry OCS classes, of these approximately 67 percent were commissioned. If you are familiar with Band of Brothers, virtually all the young leaders, including Dick Winters, were OCS grads. In fact, of the 800,000 or so officers who served in the Army during WWII more than half were OCS graduates and well over half the combat leaders were products of that system.



1 LT. Vernon Baker, Medal of Honor Awardee, WWII Veteran and OCS Graduate

At the end of World War II, the 8 million troops of the Army's was reduced to less than 20 percent of that strength in one year and down to seven percent in three years. Commensurate with that reduction, by the end of 1946 all OCS training was transferred to the Army Ground General School at Fort Riley, Kansas. All other Officer Candidate Schools were discontinued. Officer production slowed to a trickle until 1950.

The officer requirements of the Korean War resulted in the reactivation of six branch OCS programs in 1951: Infantry, Artillery, Signal, Engineer, Ordnance, and Antiaircraft. By the end of 1952, a combined total of 16,800 candidates had graduated from the six schools. Korea didn't require as many new combat leaders because so many were available with WWII experience (Dick Winters of Band of Brothers was called back as a trainer but didn't see combat again). All the reactivated schools except Infantry, Artillery and Engineer were closed by the end of 1952. The Engineer OCS closed in June 1954.

The Army was expanded in 1965 from 1 million to 1.5 million to fight in Vietnam. A decision was made not to recall reserves or National Guard and the Johnson administration resorted to

the draft. As the Army needed 40-50,000 new junior officers and with ROTC enrollments dropping (before 1964, ROTC was producing about 7,500 officers per year and West Point another 1000, OCS produced about 1500 - mostly Infantry and Artillery). But beginning in 1964, ROTC production dropped off and West Point was slow, so 6 new OCS schools were opened (making 8 in total), to produce the numbers needed for the Vietnam War. In fact, a majority of the junior combat leaders in Vietnam were citizen soldiers, turned combat leaders. Reappearing were the Engineer, Signal Corps, and Armor programs, and something unique was added: Armor OCS would give the initial 13 weeks of training to candidates in Ordnance, Quartermaster, and Transportation branches. Candidates in those branches would go on to complete the final weeks of OCS at their branch schools. Concurrently, Infantry OCS would give an initial 13 weeks of training to candidates in AG, Army Intelligence and Security, Chemical Warfare Corps, Finance Corps, and Military Police. Likewise, these candidates would attend their assigned branch service school to complete the course. Within two years, all schools except Infantry, Artillery, Engineer, and the Women's Army Corps (WAC) OCS were deactivated.



LTC (Ret) Charles Kettles, Medal of Honor Awardee, Vietnam Veteran & OCS Graduate

During the height of the Vietnam conflict, Infantry OCS produced about 7,000 officers annually from three battalions at Fort Benning. It is estimated that more than 50% of the company grade officers who fought in Vietnam were OCS graduates. The program was reduced to two battalions toward the close of the conflict and presently maintains a single battalion. Finally, in April 1973 the Branch Immaterial Officer Candidate Course was created at Fort Benning to replace all other OCS courses except the WAC OCS which remained at Fort McClellan until 1976, when it too merged with the course at Ft. Benning.

In the decades since the OCS branch immaterial program was implemented in 1973, OCS continues to provide commissioned officers to the total force for all basic branches of the Army. The demand for well-trained junior officers has expanded and contracted, which included major conflicts such as the 1991 Gulf War, peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, the Iraq War, continuing operations in Afghanistan. The War on Terror is still underway as U.S. forces continue to be a vital part of the intervention against the Islamic State.



Captain (Ret) Forent Groberg, Medal of Honor Awardee,  
Afghanistan Veteran & OCS Graduate

Since its inception 75 years ago, through major wars, the Cold War, and participation in numerous operations and conflicts all over the world, the Officer Candidate School continues to demonstrate uncommon flexibility, professionalism, and the unmatched ability to provide the U.S. Army with competent, well trained, and fearless officers in the shortest and most responsive time. They continue to meet the **"standards with no compromise."**

OCS has produced more officers than West Point and not far off what has been produced by ROTC, at a lower cost (A Time magazine quote from 1967 was reported as stating a West Point Officer cost \$25,000 to produce, an ROTC Officer about half that amount and an Officer candidate about 1 Tenth).

On June 12, 1998 to further integrate the total force, the Army National Guard OCS Phase III candidates began training alongside their active duty counterparts at Fort Benning. Officer Candidates from the National Guard and Army Reserve conduct the final phase of training before commissioning during their two-week annual training period. Over 650 future officers were trained for the Army in the first year, with similar numbers being trained in subsequent years.

The mission of OCS remains; to train selected personnel in the fundamentals of leadership; basic military skills; instill professional ethics; evaluate leadership candidates potential; and commission those who qualify as second lieutenants in all seventeen branches of the Army. OCS is a rigorous 12-week course designed to train, assess, evaluate, and develop second lieutenants for all the Army branches. It is the only commissioning source that can be responsive to the U.S. Army's dynamic personnel requirements due to its short length, compared to other commissioning programs and their requirements.

Notable and distinguished OCS graduates include the Honorable Casper Weinberger, Secretary of Defense during the Reagan administration; Honorable Robert J. Dole, U.S. Senator from Kansas and presidential candidate; John O. Marsh, Jr., Secretary of the Army; Honorable William F. Buckley, Jr., political commentator; Honorable Winthrop Rockefeller, Governor of Arkansas; General John Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff;

General Tommy Franks, Commander of the U.S. Central Command; General Frederick Kroesen, Jr., Commander Seventh United States Army Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and Major Dick Winters, subject of the miniseries 'Band of Brothers'. Other distinguished and notable graduates include the Honorable Thomas B. Cotton, U.S. Senator for Arkansas; Ralph Peters, author and Fox News Strategic Analyst; many general officers; numerous corporate and public officials, and other celebrities. Three of the recent Medal of Honor recipients include Captain (Ret) Florent Groberg (Afghanistan), LTC (Ret) Charles Kettles (Vietnam) and Captain William D. Swenson (Afghanistan) are OCS graduates.



Senator Bob Dole, OCS graduate, with OCSAA President Col (Ret) John Ionoff, at the WWII Memorial on Veteran's Day 2016

Today all Army OCS is consolidated at Fort Benning under The U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence, 199th Infantry Brigade, 3d Battalion, 11th Infantry (Officer Candidate School). For more information see: <http://www.benning.army.mil/infantry/199th/ocs/>. This operational structure reflects OCS' ability to transform and execute its mission to meet the needs of a fast pace and changing Army.

The legacy of OCS is also being maintained by the United States Army Officer Candidate School Alumni Association (USAOCSAA). The Association is a non-profit, national organization, representing all Army officers commissioned through the Officer Candidate School, regardless of previous school locations and branches. The USAOCSAA contributes to the national security; promotes love of country, appreciation of the military, and better public understanding of the Army. It fosters fellowship, highlights the history of OCS and memorializes OCS graduates who have lost their lives in service of their country. The Association, at [www.ocsalumni.org](http://www.ocsalumni.org), is an advocate for the ongoing OCS program and a source of information for all related interests. The USAOCSAA invites new members and wants to hear from active, retired, veterans, and family members. It offers a great way to reconnect with OCS classmates and those affiliated with the program. Meetings, activities and reunions are conducted throughout the year at Fort Benning, GA. Concurrently, USAOCSAA partners with

the Officer Candidate Battalion to sponsor the Officer Candidate Schools Hall of Fame Induction and the OCS Patterson Award/OCS Alumni Reunion Banquet.



Former Secretary of the Army, John Marsh, an OCS graduate, with recent OCS candidates

The United States Army Officer Candidate School (USAOCS) is concluding its celebration of its 75th year and Diamond Anniversary 7-11 May 2017 in Columbus, GA. All OCS graduates from all previous Army OCS programs and affiliations and their families are invited to participate in the many scheduled events and activities. There will be demonstrations and briefings highlighting past, current, and future developments related to the OCS program. The itinerary includes the OCS Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, the Patterson Award Banquet and OCS Alumni Banquet at the National Infantry Museum, Little White House Tour, and Reunion Dinner. The 2017 reunion and celebration will also feature the dedication of the OCS Memorial Walk of Honor located within the OCS battalion area at Fort Benning. This memorial will independently honor the 49 OCS Medal of Honor recipients, members of the Hall of Fame, OCS classes, cadre and individual officer candidates, peace and wartime eras, and corporate and organizational sponsors. The reunion will be conducted at the Columbus Marriott Hotel, 800 Front Avenue, Columbus, Ga. 31901. 1-706-324-1800. Reservations for the "OCS Alumni Reunion" are being accepted at a special rate prior to 15 April 2017. For more information, contact Nancy Ionoff, (813) 917-4309 or <https://www.ocsalumni.org/events/cart.php?id=1> .

George Marshall's definition of leadership:

"You have to lead men in war by requiring more from the individual than he thinks he can do. You have to lead men in war by bringing them along to endure and to display qualities of fortitude that are beyond the average man's thought of what he should be expected to do. You have to inspire them when they are hungry and exhausted and desperately uncomfortable and in great danger; and only a man of positive characteristics of leadership, with the physical

stamina that goes with it, can function under those conditions.”—1940 to Senate Military Affairs Committee