

# IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY: UH CONNECTIONS

By Aimee L. Bachari and Debbie Z. Harwell

From the University of Houston's first U. S. Navy Reserve Vocational School to the thousands of service men and women who have attended UH under the G.I. Bill for the past seventy years, UH has a proud tradition of students, faculty, and staff who have served in the armed forces. Today the university works to ease the transition for veterans returning to school with Veterans Services Programs such as the Military Entrepreneurship Program and the Camo to Classroom to Career Program. Though we could never adequately cover all of the veterans with UH connections and their heroic efforts, we want to express our appreciation for their service by highlighting members from each branch of the military.

## ARMY: MAJOR GENERAL BARRYE PRICE, GIVING TIME

"Time is the one asset, the only resource that we all have to give," Major General Barrye Price said at the annual Bauer Alumni Association meeting. "We all get to invest twenty-four hours of a day." Having graduated in 1985 from the University of Houston's College of Business Administration, Price earned his M.A. in history from Texas A&M University in 1994, and in 1997 he became the first African American to obtain a Ph.D. in history in the 136-year history of A&M. In 2004, he earned an M.S. in national security strategy from the National Defense University. When speaking at a C. T. Bauer College of Business leadership class about important but underrepresented African American figures in history, Price said, "Education continues to be the great equalizer."



Major General Barrye Price with his son William, his wife Tracy, and retired astronaut Bonnie Dunbar, head of the UH STEM Center at the 2013 Freedom Foundation Awards luncheon.

Photo courtesy of Nancy Clark.

Price received his commission as brigadier general at Fort Knox, where he began his military journey along with his best friend right out of high school ROTC. Price's military career included assignments at U.S. bases, the Pentagon, and the White House, as well as postings in Kuwait and Germany. Some of Price's military awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, five Meritorious Service Medals, Joint Commendation Medal, two Army Commendation Medals, two Army Achievement Medals, National Defense Service Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, and Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

From 1999 to 2000, Price served on President Clinton's "Mississippi Delta Task Force" to revitalize the 207-county, seven-state region that comprises the Mississippi River flood plain and on the President and First Lady's Task Force on "Raising Responsible and Resourceful Teenagers." Price also published *Against All Enemies Foreign and Domestic: A Study of Urban Unrest and Federal Intervention within the United States* (2001).

A former professor of military history at West Point, Price has a passion for education, saying, the "greatest compliment is to call your professor 'teacher.' Every time I meet with students I am blown away." Price endowed the Elaine Yvonne Cook-Price Memorial Scholarship within the Bauer College of Business at UH. He received the 2007 Distinguished African American Alumnus Award from the UH African American Alumni Association and the 2008 Distinguished Alumnus Award from the UH Alumni Association.

Price is married to the former Tracy Benford, a medical doctor and fellow native of Gary. They have a son, William Garrison Price. On April 5, 2013, the Army announced the nomination of Brigadier General Price for the rank of Major General, which was recently confirmed. He currently serves as the Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, Army Forces Command, in Ft. Bragg, North Carolina.<sup>1</sup>

## ARMY: KELI CHEVALIER, TRAUMA TO TRIUMPH

Houstonian Keli Chevalier was looking for a way to pay for college when an Army recruiter happened to call her. She wanted to go to France and agreed to be a linguist—until she found out it meant jumping out of planes. Instead she signed on to repair biomedical equipment, leading to an al-



*Keli Chevalier has taken her experience with PTSD and turned it into a strength to help others. Still a “girlie girl,” she says, “I curate fashion ... my motto is ‘buy the damn shoes!’”*

*Photo courtesy of Keli Chevalier.*

most twenty-year military career during which she achieved the rank of major. Today she operates a non-profit directed at helping women like her cope with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Chevalier’s first assignment took her to Fort Sam Houston where she became a spokesperson for new biomedical equipment. She so impressed her colonel that he enrolled her in the Green to Gold Scholarship Program, which enabled her to complete her B.A. in English at the University of Houston. In 2000, she went to Kosovo where she ran a transition center that brought troops in and out of the region. Just a few months later, 9/11 changed U.S. military priorities.

One of the first logistics units deployed to Iraq, Chevalier’s unit set up the infrastructure that laid the groundwork for the 2009 surge. Under attack from the moment their plane touched the ground, she found herself at their first campsite running from bunker to bunker seeking shelter and finding each one full of people who looked back at her but did not make room for one more.

Battling enemy fire and sandstorms, they reached their base in April 2003, and life was just beginning to have a sense of normalcy when a non-commissioned officer came into her tent one night and raped her. She made the difficult decision to submit to a medical examination and report him. Questioned repeatedly about the assault, she was forced to relive it again and again. The assailant, a “good soldier,” received a demotion and dishonorable discharge, but she was shunned nonetheless. Unlike many women, she

luckily found “some-one” who took her complaint seriously.

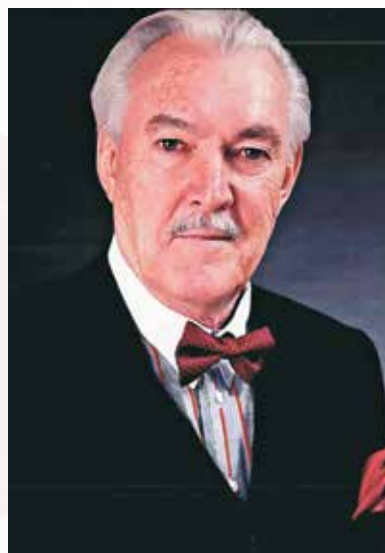
Chevalier entered the captain’s career course and served in Japan, where she met her husband and put her UH degree to use, starting the first Army newspaper in Okinawa, called the *Island Knight*, in 2005. She spent time in the Reserves before being called for a second tour in Iraq in 2009.

She recalls how much Iraq had changed since her first tour. The biggest danger was the threat of suicide bombers, unheard of in 2003, with enough explosives to take out a bus or a whole block. While in Iraq, Chevalier was injured and, at the end of her deployment, had to have surgery to fuse her spine, ending her military career.

Chevalier is deeply concerned about the ravages of PTSD, which claims a life every hour from suicide in this country. Her personal difficulties with PTSD led Chevalier to create Trauma to Triumph, a non-profit serving the needs of returning women soldiers, particularly those who do not have the support from family and friends that she received. In 2012, the overburdened Veteran’s Administration processed 6,000 PTSD claims in Houston, but only one percent of those people received compensation. Trauma to Triumph gives them a sense of security, the chance to talk to other women who understand where they have been, and helps transition them to civilian life before they run out of money and leave. It assists with counseling, housing, job training, job placement, and living expenses.

The Trauma to Triumph website shows a photograph of a woman’s muscular bare back, with a scar running top to bottom. It is Chevalier’s scar. It represents her victory over the PTSD she experienced from being raped and from combat. She wants women to know, “You can be scarred, you can be wounded, you can have scars that you can’t see, but you can still be strong, and you can still be beautiful, and you can still be proud of who you are.”<sup>22</sup>

Visit <http://traumatotriumphinc.org>. To read the full text and hear excerpts from Keli Chevalier’s interview, visit [www.houstonhistorymagazine.org](http://www.houstonhistorymagazine.org).



*Today, Clem Beard, who was first inspired to become a Marine by images he saw in the movies, is an actor himself.*

*Photo courtesy of Clem Beard.*

### **MARINES: CLEM BEARD, FROM FOOTBALL FIELD TO BATTLEFIELD**

Clem Beard’s inspiration to become a Marine came in 1949 at age seven when he watched *The Sands of Iwo Jima* at the El Lasso Theater in his hometown of Uvalde, Texas. His real heroes, though, were “the boys” who had come home from World War II to tell their stories, and those like his uncle who was killed by a sniper in Okinawa. In 1955, at age thirteen he again found himself at the El Lasso Theater watching

a group of Marines going from boot camp to the precarious battle for Guadalcanal and on to Tarawa in *Battle Cry*. “I wanted to be a Marine,” he recalls.

UH recruited Beard to play football in 1960 and he played in the 1961 Tangerine Bowl. In the summer of 1962, he joined the Marine Corps Reserve. The following year under the leadership of West Pointer Bill Yeoman, Beard was football captain. He received his journalism degree in 1965 before leaving for Officer Candidate School at Quantico, Virginia. After completing his Infantry Officer Training in May 1966, Beard was sent to Vietnam, First Marine Division, as a platoon commander.

He received the Navy Commendation Medal for Valor in combat for his actions on December 14, 1966. He remembers, “We fought all night through and when the NVA/VC broke contact at first light, those who’d lost their lives littered the battlefield. Christmas wrappings, sent from home and shredded by incoming mortar fire that night, littered the defensive wire in an innocent, gay profusion. Poignant.” Recalling friends who lost their lives in Vietnam, he notes, “I have often said the Marine Corps is firstly a religion and secondly a fighting force. You have to believe. You have to have faith. Never can the faith falter when the chips are down.” These were men who believed.

Beard, who retired as a major, spent seventeen years in the active and reserve Marines Corps. He went on to become an attorney and is now an actor, doing film, stage, television, and voiceovers. Nevertheless, he is still a Marine and closes with an ancient Marine Corps officer’s mess night toast, “...the Marines Corps, where every day is a holiday and every meal a feast ... the Corps, the Corps ... I think I’ll ship for thirty more.”<sup>3</sup>



*Gene Tulich, a Vietnam veteran and chair of the Houston Military Affairs Committee, helped save Ellington Air Force Base from closure.*

*Photo courtesy of Nancy Clark.*

oped the Pacific Area Intelligence Center.

With Tulich’s assignment as the Coast Guard Coordinator for the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force in Houston and Operation Alliance headquartered in El Paso, he coordinated drug trafficking and smuggling investigations throughout Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and along the southwest border with federal, state, and

local law enforcement. After his retirement in 1988 through 2001, Tulich taught government and political science as an adjunct professor at the University of Houston, where he worked toward his doctorate (ABD). Governor Rick Perry appointed him Commissioner on the Texas Military Preparedness Commission in January 2006, and Tulich provided advice on military matters until he completed his service in 2011.

Among his many recognitions, Commander Tulich has received three Navy Commendation Medals with Combat Distinguishing Device, three Coast Guard Commendation Medals, Coast Guard Achievement Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation, and National Defense Service Medal. He was awarded the Coast Guard Swivel Shot Award for enhancing and enriching the lives of the Coast Guard Family and Community. The Texas Navy appointed him an admiral, and the 75th Mission Command Training Division of the U.S. Army made him an honorary colonel.

Tulich’s wife, Joan Swanson Tulich, also served and retired as a commander in the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps and was a commissioned a Yellow Rose of Texas for her service.

Tulich now serves the Houston community as chairman of the Houston Military Affairs Committee. As deputy director of the Ellington Field Task Force involved in the Base Realignment and Closure processes regarding the Texas Air National Guard’s 147th Fighter Wing, he saved Ellington from closure. Instead, it went from 1,500 active, reserve, and National Guard personnel to 6,000. He serves in several community organizations including the Greater Houston Partnership, Houston USO, Board of Military Officers Association of America Houston Area, and the City of Houston Veterans Park. After serving his country, Tulich continues to serve his community as an unpaid volunteer—demonstrating his commitment to Houston.<sup>4</sup>

#### **AIR FORCE: RICHARD JENNINGS, “DOING WHAT I LIKED TO DO”**

Born at the Jacksonville Naval Air Station after World War II, Richard Jennings moved to Houston when he was fourteen. Fortuitously, he enrolled at the University of Houston in 1964, setting the course for his life to come. A member of the Army ROTC at UH, Richard became discouraged when it revoked a promise to let him go to law school, so he joined the Air Force after graduation. At the beginning of his senior year in August 1968, he met Joan Matthews while helping with freshman orientation. Originally attracted to Jennings’s brother, Joan soon had a change of heart and married Richard in June 1969. One night the newlyweds sat in a theater watching the opening scene of *Midnight Cowboy* showing the dirt streets of Big Spring, Texas, and they agreed they hoped they would not be sent there; but that is exactly where they went.

Jennings served in the Air Force from June 1969 to August 1978 at bases in Texas and Florida. After training as a pilot on propeller planes and jets, he “blossomed” flying the supersonic jet (T-38). He went straight from student to instructor, later teaching pilots to become instructors themselves. He participated in Operation Homecoming for POWs returning from Vietnam in 1973 and requalified them as pilots. At that time when pilots flew one hundred missions,



*Richard and Joan Jennings first met at the University of Houston and married ten months later. After nine years in the Air Force, they decided to make the transition to civilian life.*

Photo courtesy of Richard Jennings.

a ceremony was held and they got to go home. Jennings worked to reenact the 100th Mission celebration for these pilots, providing the closure they missed as POWs.

Jennings later served as a wing operations officer and as a foreign training officer. In that capacity, he and Joan hosted Israeli, Jordanian, and Saudi Arabian pilots, the first time these pilots had met in peace.

Since leaving the Air Force, Jennings has spent his career serving Houston. He served as chair of the Ambassador's Program to retain membership for the Greater Houston Partnership, and as board member and chair of Leadership Houston. He worked for corporations and non-profits to maximize philanthropic giving. With the March of Dimes, he secured over \$24 million in eight years and pushed for legislation that expanded newborn screenings. At the Arthritis Foundation he increased fundraising, expanded adult programs, and created the Kids Get Arthritis Too program. Today Jennings runs JRJ Consulting, which helps other groups benefit from his skills in organizational development, non-profit management, and corporate philanthropy.<sup>5</sup>

### **NAVY: LAWRENCE SCHULZE, FULFILLING A LIFELONG DREAM**

As a young boy, Lawrence Schulze was filled with admiration for his father and uncles who each represented one of the three spears during D-Day operations. His father, Staff Sergeant John Schulze served in the Army's 38th Infantry Division (mechanized) going through North Africa and the Ardennes, fighting in the Battle of the Bulge, and liberating Paris. His uncle, Sergeant Bud Howes participated in the Normandy Invasion but never talked about his experiences. The other uncle, Corporal Francis Dresser, fought through Leyte and Okinawa with the 96th Infantry Division

(the Deadeyes) and was awarded the Bronze Star. Schulze's paternal grandfather also served his country as a captain. These great men of the Greatest Generations inspired Schulze to serve his country. He wanted to be a pilot, but the armed forces did not take pilots who wore glasses. So, he went to college and, as they say, life got in the way.

In 2010, Schulze, an associate professor of industrial engineering at the University of Houston, happened to read a note from the Engineering Dean's Office: Wanted – Navy Campus Liaison Officer. Schulze responded and LT Terry Turner of the Navy Recruiting District Houston contacted him. After the men talked, Schulze was given a choice of two capacities to affiliate with the U.S. Navy. He chose to become an active reservist in pay status (one weekend a month and two weeks of training), wearing the uniform at least once per week, and representing the U.S. Navy on campus, stating, "If I am going to recruit students to be officers in the U.S. Navy, I ought to know what it is like to be a U.S. Naval Officer." He called his Uncle Francis for advice, since his father and Uncle Bud had passed on, and asked "Do you think it is a good idea to affiliate with the Navy as a campus liaison officer?" Uncle Francis responded, "You're a fool if you don't."

LTJG Schulze was commissioned in the U.S. Navy on October 14, 2010, at the Cullen College of Engineering. Since his commissioning, he has brought over 250 contacts as potential officers to the Navy Recruiting District Houston, and all of the student applicants he recommended have matriculated to the Navy as officers. LTJG Schulze has participated in familiarity visits aboard the USS *Memphis* (LA Class Submarine SSN-691) and USS *Stennis* (CVN-71), Seal Base Coronado, and Naval Base San Diego; all required leadership courses; and the implementation of Six Sigma in the U.S. Navy's Lovell Federal Health Care Center in Great Lakes, Illinois. Mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2012 and returned in 2013, LTJG Schulze is currently the operational support officer, training officer and N7 (Training) department head for the Operational Support Unit, Naval Operational Support Center Houston. He represents the U.S. Navy at UH as the Navy Campus Liaison Officer. His door is always open to those interested in leadership opportunities with the Navy in either active or reservist capacity.<sup>6</sup>



*Lawrence Schulze, UH associate professor of industrial engineering, has fulfilled his dream to serve in the military as the UH Campus Liaison Officer for the U.S. Navy.*

Photo courtesy of Nancy Clark.

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