

Retired Soldier wins first

By **DANA ELISE SMITH**
CSJFTC Public Affairs

Retired Chief Warrant Officer III Ginger Smith won first place in a student art show at the University of Southern Mississippi March 27.

In her retirement, Smith is now pursuing a degree in Specialist of Education in Elementary Education at USM. She submitted some artwork for the Department of Art and Design Annual Student Show and was fortunate to have one piece featured in it. The art show is a juried exhibition featuring work from studio courses in art foundations, drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, ceramics, sculpture and graphic design.

Smith's winning art piece was created for a two dimensional design class and is titled "Random Geometria."

Smith already holds a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in Special Education from USM. This is the second Art Show at USM that has featured her work. Last year, she won second place for her drawing titled "Chair Draped in Black and White."

Smith said that by taking art classes, she is fulfilling a lifelong dream.

"I always wanted to take art classes, but I had to make practical choices about the classes I took," said Smith. "I knew that I could do well in English, so I earned a degree



Retired Chief Warrant Officer III Ginger Smith stands by her First Place winning graphic design piece in the University of Southern Mississippi's department of Art and Design Annual Student Show on March 27. The work is titled "Random Geometria."

in teaching English while also earning a commission as a second lieutenant through the R.O.T.C. program. When I went back for a master's degree, I chose to study special education because that enabled me to increase my teacher's pay by obtaining an AA teacher's license."

Smith served nearly 30 years in the Mississippi Army National Guard and was mobilized at CSJFTC from 2004 through November 2010 when she retired.

"For 30 years, there always seemed to be some impediment to my taking art classes, usually time or money. I

would not change the path I took to get to this point. I am very proud of my Family, and I am proud of serving my country. Now that I can pursue my lifelong dream of taking art, I am enjoying the classes even more because I cannot take them for granted. I am grateful to the Lord above that he gave me a talent that I have not lost over time, and I will enjoy the journey," she said.

Smith will graduate in May. As a graduation present her Family is helping her fulfill another lifelong dream by taking her on a trip to Scotland and Ireland.

Free tax services offered

By **CAPT. RAYMOND EDWARDS**
Chief, Legal Assistance

The Camp Shelby Office of the Command Judge Advocate will offer free income tax services for the 2012 tax year with the opening of its Income Tax Assistance Center on Monday, February 4, 2013. This service provides free personal income tax return preparation to all active duty personnel and retirees. Due to reduced staffing levels, priority will be given to mobilizing, demobilizing and CSJFTC Soldiers.

The Income Tax Assistance Center will operate out of the legal offices in Building 1485 on Lee Avenue and will be open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 0900 to 1400. Due to the nature of the assistance, the Income Tax Assistance Center will operate on an "appointment-only" basis and will take appointments through April 11, 2013. The 2013 Federal Income Tax filing deadline is Monday, April 15, 2013.

The Income Tax Assistance Center is a satellite program of the IRS VITA program and is supervised by a judge advocate and staffed by military members and contract employees trained to the standards required by the IRS for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. The VITA program is controlled by the IRS therefore the individual filing the return is legally responsible for the return's content and accuracy once the return is signed. If filing a married-filing-joint tax return electronically, both spouses must be present to sign the required forms.

VITA training includes instruction to address military-specific tax issues. However, tax assistance will be limited to the 2012 tax year and will not include preparation of certain tax schedules, e.g., Schedule E (rental property) and Schedule C (capital gains/losses).

Please dial 601-558-2190 to schedule an

appointment. Initial appointments will be scheduled for an hour and include a review of the client's tax information. Typically, tax returns are projected to require 3-5 business days of processing time to be finalized. To properly complete each tax return, the following items must be presented at the initial appointment:

- Proof of identity (e.g. driver's license, military ID)
- Social Security Cards for you, your spouse, and all dependants
- Birth dates for you, your spouse, and all dependants
- Current year tax package if you received one
- Wage and earning statement(s) (Form W-2, W-2G, 1099-R) from all employers
- Interest and dividend statements from banks (Forms 1098, 1099)
- A copy of last year's federal and state returns if available
- Bank routing numbers and account numbers for direct deposit

NOTE: Military OneSource is once again offering a free, electronic tax filing service. If you are eligible under the Military OneSource program, you can complete, save, and file your 2011 federal and up to three state returns online free with the H&R Block At Home® tool.

To access this free version of H&R Block At Home®, you must start your return from the Military OneSource H&R Block At Home® link. Once you click the link you will be required to log in to Military OneSource. From the login page you will be directed to a site containing additional information on tax preparation, including the link to the Military OneSource free H&R Block At Home® service.

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