

PERSONNEL PROFILE

OFFICER



Col. Jonathon Hubbard, Surface Maintenance manager for the state of Mississippi, left, congratulates newly-promoted Maj. Annie Lee following her promotion. Lee's husband, LeBarron, was there to "pin" the new rank insignia.

Lee is promoted

By DANA ELISE SMITH
CSJFTC Public Affairs

Maj. Annie Merle Lee was promoted to her current rank during a promotion ceremony at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center March 22.

The Collins native has served 23 years in the Mississippi Army National Guard. She is a member of Joint Force Headquarters in Jackson. She deployed to Iraq with the 367th Maintenance Company, headquartered in Philadelphia, from 2003 to 2005 and to Afghanistan with the 298th Combat Support Sustainment Battalion, headquartered in Philadelphia, from 2011 to 2012.

Lee said she was influenced to join the Mississippi Army National Guard by her family members.

"My father served in the Mississippi Army National Guard and my oldest sister, Master Sgt. Stephanie Price, joined during her senior year of high school," said

Lee. "I decided to do the same."

She has been employed at the Mississippi Readiness Sustainment Maintenance Site at CSJFTC for more than 18 years. She currently serves as the assistant site manager. She is responsible for scheduling repair, maintenance and installation of machines, tools and equipment to ensure continuous production operations. In addition, she plans, develops and implements new methods and procedures designed to improve operations, minimize operating costs in order to gain greater utilization of labor and materials.

She earned her bachelor's degree in business in 2002 and a master's degree in business administration in 2006, both from William Carey University.

Lee is married to LaBarron Lee and together they have four children, Ravan, 17, Nia, 16, Dwayne, 4 and Haley, 13. As a family, they enjoy volunteering with the Salvation Army.



JCJC student Lewis Bateman, left, shakes hands with Maj. Gen. Augustus Collins.

Education, leadership stressed during forum

The states' Adjutant General, Major General Augustus Collins proudly shared with Jones County Junior College Honors Institute students that his junior college education opened the doors to leadership for him. As the commander of both the Army and Air National Guard, Collins emphasized not only the importance of an education but he also shared how it changed his future.

"I never would have gone to Ole Miss, Jackson State, the Army War College, the National Guard and I would not be here today in this career, if I had not been encouraged to attend and graduate from Northeast Community College," said one of the two inaugural inductees of NECC's Alumni Hall of Fame.

"Community/Junior Colleges are for people like me because it gave me, and a lot of us, opportunities we wouldn't normally have to get an academic degree, because of finances or the uncertainty about our educational future.

Two-year colleges play an important role in the state, too," said Collins.

The economical choice for education, Collins said, was the beginning of many leadership opportunities over his 30 years of military service. He began his career as a platoon leader in Company C, 1st Battalion of the 198th Armor Regiment in Iuka, and was inspired by a drill sergeant who saw leadership potential in him. Collins admitted he didn't think of himself as a leader at the time. He joined the National Guard to help pay for college.

"He encouraged me to sign up for Officer Candidate School which has led to various command and staff positions at every level of service in the traditional and Active Guard Reserve," said Collins. "It prepared me for today."

The highly decorated officer encouraged JCJC students to be open minded about their own futures as he listed other important leadership qualities he

has recognized over the years. Collins said he discovered his passion for serving in the military which drove him to giving his best effort in every task. One of the more challenging times in his military career was serving in Operation Desert Shield/Storm and commanding the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team during combat operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2004 through 2006.

"Losing Soldiers is very difficult and we lost 27 Soldiers in one year because of IED's," said Collins.

Taking responsibility in the good times and the difficult times is also a sign of a good leader. Collins shared how the actions of military leaders can often motivate Soldiers negatively.

"Generals can't publically criticize the administration without expecting to be relieved of duty. It influences the allegiance of the soldiers," Collins said. "That was the reason why General Stanley McChrystal was replaced."



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