



Middle Tennessee Chapter
A 2021 5-Star Level of Excellence Award Chapter
Military Officers Association of America



Web: <https://www.mtcmoaa.org>

August 2022

Editor: Doug Minton

MOAA Monthly Meeting

23 August 2022; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting
“Davidson County Veteran’s Court”

Judge Melissa Blackburn

Davidson County General Sessions Court,
Div. II
Presiding Judge, Veterans Specialty Treatment Court

Old Natchez Country Club

115 Gardengate Drive, Franklin, TN 37069

Melissa Blackburn was elected to serve as Judge of the Division II General Sessions Court on August 7, 2014 and re-elected by the voters of Nashville on August 4, 2022.

A Nashville native, Judge Blackburn is a graduate of David Lipscomb High School and Lipscomb University. She attended the Nashville School of Law to earn her law degree. Following graduation, she decided to practice law in the General Sessions courts across Tennessee and extensively in Nashville.

In addition to her duties in General Sessions Court, Judge Blackburn serves as judge of the Mental Health and Veterans Courts. She works through the court program to provide assistance to the mentally challenged and works with Nashville’s Veterans who have encountered legal difficulties resulting from trauma suffered in the service of the United States Military. Since taking the bench, Judge Blackburn has established the Davidson County Mental Health and Veterans Court Assistance Foundation. She successfully led the effort to secure funding to support the work of Veterans Courts in the Tennessee Legislature, making Tennessee the first state to provide such funding. In 2022, she successfully worked with the Legislature to enact Tennessee’s first funding of Mental Health Courts. In December of 2017, she was elected by her colleagues to serve as Presiding Judge of the Davidson County General Sessions Courts. She was re-elected to the post in August of 2018 and will serve again in 2022/23.

Among the civic leadership positions Judge Blackburn has held are:

- Member of the Tennessee Bar Association.
 - Member of the Nashville Bar Association.
 - Elected to the Nashville Bar Association Board of Directors for 2019-2023.
 - Nashville Bar Association First Vice President, 2022
 - Leadership Nashville, Class of 2023.
- (Her credits consume far more room than is available - please check the website for a complete list!)

Officers

President

Lt. Col. (ret) Karon Uzzell-Baggett, USAF

1st Vice President (Vacant)

2nd Vice President (Vacant)

Secretary and Membership Chair

COL (Ret) Doug Minton, USA

Treasurer

LCDR (Ret) Bea Henderson, USN

Directors

Mrs. Patricia Bergquist
CDR (Ret) John Ohlinger, USN
LTC (Ret) Wanda Bruce Graham, USA
CAPT (Ret) Larry Cotton, USN
CAPT (Ret) Dale Lewelling, USN
LTC (Ret) Michael Patenaude, USA
CDR (Ret) Ted Edwards, USN

Surviving Spouse Liaison

Mrs. Patricia Bergquist

Chaplain & Legislative Liaison

CDR (Ret) Ted Edwards, USN

Transition Services Coordinator

Lt. Col. (Ret) Arlie Haddix, USAF

President’s Letter

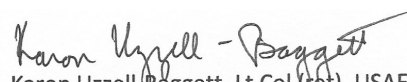
July saw outstanding membership attendance at our luncheon! Almost 40 chapter members came to hear Mrs. Traci Holton, Vice President, Deputy Chief Operating Officer and Chief Engineer of the Nashville International Airport (BNA). She discussed how airport passenger throughput at BNA has consistently outpaced the national average at 18.8 million and the \$1.5 billion dollar revitalization and expansion taking place to keep pace with that growth.

For the August meeting, the chapter will again gather at the ONCC to hear a Nashville leader making a difference. Judge Melissa Blackburn will be our guest speaker and discuss the Davidson County Veterans’ Court. This alternative sentencing initiative started in 2014 and has a success rate of more than 85%. This promises to be an impactful meeting.

Shortly before our July luncheon, the chapter’s Vice President, Colleen Vetere, notified board members that she is stepping down as a board member to concentrate on her expanded work responsibilities. This leaves the board with no First or Second Vice Presidents in the line of succession. The chapter’s succession plan was created over a decade ago and functioned well until this post-pandemic period. Currently, we are fortunate that we have a slew of dedicated past presidents and other chapter members who regularly perform critical duties. In one case, a past president has selflessly performed myriad critical duties for almost a decade and in another case, a chapter member admirably juggles three key duties simultaneously.

Optimally, we need to fill at least one Vice President position by the end of this year or start of next year. The present board is working on updates to the chapter bylaws and creation of appendices which will delineate the responsibilities and resources needed for the various board positions. We are also archiving key documentation into a centralized storage area to allow improved transitions when new members join the board. I am confident that the right people are in the chapter who believe in the MOAA mission and want to keep the Middle Tennessee Chapter growing and remaining a top performer as evidenced by our string of 5-star Levels of Excellence Awards.

Finally, the chapter has several events coming up which will allow us to fulfill MOAA’s commitment to “never stop serving.” Members can directly engage in three events supporting area charities this Fall and attend Operation Stand Down Tennessee’s inspirational annual breakfast. Please be on the lookout for more information about these events!


Karon Uzzell-Baggett, Lt Col (ret), USAF
Chapter President

Chapter Contact Information

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**Middle TN Chapter Awarded
2021 MOAA 5-Star
Levels of Excellence Award**

The Chapter was notified on 5 August that we have been awarded our 9th consecutive 5-Star LOE Award for the 2021 membership year. Congratulations to LTC Mike Patenaude, Chapter President in 2021, and his leadership team for their dedication to the Chapter; and a very appreciative congratulations to the members of our Chapter whose support and participation enable our success!



MIDDLE TENNESSEE CHAPTER
Military Officers Association of America
P. O. Box 50252
Nashville, TN 37205-0252



Happy 232nd Birthday
USCG
August 4, 1790

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Upcoming Programs & Events

23 August 2022; 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

“Davidson County Veteran’s Court”

Judge Melissa Blackburn

Davidson County General Sessions Court, Div. II

Presiding Judge, Veterans Specialty

Treatment Court

115 Gardengate Drive, Franklin, TN 37069

1 September 2022; 7 - 8:00 AM

“MTC Monthly Board Meeting”

Zoom Meeting

27 September 2022: 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

“Memories of a Presidential Aide”

Col. (Ret) Duffy White, USMC

MTC Member and Former Presidential Aide

Operation Stand Down TN

1125 12th Ave So, Nashville, TN 37203

30 September 2022; 12:00 PM-3:30 PM

MOAA Community Grant

“OSDTN Hunger Project”

Operation Stand Down TN

1125 12th Ave So, Nashville, TN 37203

1 September 2022; 7 - 8:00 AM

“MTC Monthly Board Meeting”

NGATN, Kenilwood Drive, Nashville, TN 37204

15 October 2022: 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

MOAA Community Grant

“Alzheimer’s Association Dementia

Awareness Project”

Operation Stand Down TN

1125 12th Ave So, Nashville, TN 37203

8 November 2022; 7:30 AM-9:30 AM

“OSDTN Heroes Breakfast”

Music City Center, Karl Dean Ballroom,

Nashville, TN

(Tables of 10 - \$100 per attendee)

Legislative Update

On 14 July, the House of Representatives passed its version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) with a vote of 329 to 101. Now the initiative goes to the Senate for action. The Senate Armed Services Committee passed its version in June, with committee leadership filing it to the Senate floor in mid-July. The full chamber has yet to vote on the bill. The House passage and Senate committee reporting out in July brings optimism for the defense package to come together and be signed by the President before the fiscal year ends. . Will it happen this year that the completed NDAA is enacted before the fiscal year ends on 30 September? Should Congress fail to pass those bills on time, they’ll have to pass a continuing resolution to keep the federal government open, a move that keeps spending levels frozen at the previous year’s levels.

Until then, the Congress will take their August vacation, so it may be a while getting the work done. After the August vacation period ends, Congress will have full plates of work and also need to work on their own reelections.

As usual, there are some important provisions included:

- * the 4.6% uniformed service pay raise was included, but also remember that the most recent inflation report was 9.1%, so the measure covers only half of the need.
- * Improvements in the Basic Allowance for Housing situation.
- * Expansion of the licensure reimbursement program for spouses resulting from PCS moves.

Left out were some other provisions relating to delays of hiring retirees into military health systems, spouse training for employment services, health care resources, and mental health services. Also left out were key provisions of the Major Richard Star Act.

All year there has been MOAA support for the Major Richard Star Act related to deliver concurrent receipt improvements for full military retirement pay and veterans’ disability compensation. MOAA Headquarters has invested heavily in the Star Act. Many of us retirees have some level of VA disability, and the provisions and actions could have impacts on us personally. Watch this space for more.

The PACT Act was signed into law this week, empowering the VA to presumptively provide care and benefits to Vets suffering from more than 20 toxic exposure-related conditions. Even with political maneuvering, Congress finally acted correctly on this bill.

Writing or visiting your own representatives is always important. The new districts relate to the November elections, but the existing legislators remain in office until Noon on 3 January, so keep their inboxes full and your priorities expressed.

Ted Edwards, CDR USN (Ret.), Legislative Affairs Liaison