

Good afternoon, Bobcats!

Earlier today I had the privilege of attending the honorific naming ceremony of the **Captain James A. Graham Veterans Center**. Capt. Graham, USMC, was a 1963 graduate of Frostburg who was killed in the Quang Tri Province of South Vietnam during the war. He posthumously received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroic service to our nation in Vietnam. Today's ceremony was truly a fitting tribute to Capt. Graham's ultimate sacrifice.



Thank you to **Dr. Jeff Graham D'15** and **Dr. Clarissa Lang '06** for planning and organizing the event. We were fortunate to have several special guests in attendance, including Acting Secretary Ross Cohen of the Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families, and three officers from the United States Marine Corps - **Lt. Col. George Simpson '73**, **Capt. Jim Richardson '66** and **Sgt. John Bambacus '70**.

We were especially honored to have Capt. Graham's son and proud FSU alumni, **Col. John Graham '85**, with us today as well.

It was most fitting that we honored Capt. Graham's service and sacrifice at this time of the year, as Memorial Day is just two weeks away. I, like many of you, have had a family member or known someone who has served our country. I am grateful for observances such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day to celebrate those individuals who gave the ultimate sacrifice to protect our country and our freedoms.

Today's honorific naming ceremony was profoundly significant and served as a powerful tribute to Capt. Graham's dedication, bravery and sacrifice to our country. Naming our Veterans Center after Capt. Graham honors his memory, ensuring that his legacy is preserved and respected. The ceremony was also an opportunity to bring our community together in unity and with a shared purpose of honoring those who have served.

As you know, Frostburg State University is committed to supporting its veterans and military community. For the 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, we have received the Military Friendly School designation for going above and beyond to ensure our service members, veterans, dependents and spouses are successful. FSU is also home to a chapter of SALUTE, which is the first national higher education honor society for student veterans and military service members.

**Ty DeMartino '90** wrote a powerful story about Capt. Graham in the 2003 edition of *Profile* magazine titled [Homegrown Hero](#). I hope that you take a moment to read more about his life and service, and please share it with others in the hope that it might inspire future generations to appreciate the values of courage, duty and patriotism.

With FSU pride,

Darlene Brannigan Smith, PhD