NMMI Institutional Advancement | ALUMNIOFFICE@NMMI.EDU

From the Director's Desk

## ATTENTION IN THE AREA, ATTENTION *OFF* POST

### Gone Huntin', Back to Bronco Business

Our Executive Director has traded his desk for the great outdoors. See November Issue for his latest update!

**Kris Ward**
**Executive Director of Institutional Advancement**

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Executive Director of Institutional Advancement

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# Meet the Institutional Advancement Team

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## Office of Institutional Advancement

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# NMMI CENTURION DRILL TEAM: BUILDING TRADITION, INSPIRING PRIDE, AND DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION

The New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI) Centurion Drill Team serves as a proud ambassador for the Institute, demonstrating the discipline, precision, teamwork, and leadership that define the NMMI experience. Throughout the fall semester, the team embodied NMMI's core values of DUTY, HONOR, and ACHIEVEMENT. Through performances at Homecoming, Silver Taps, and the Intermediate Preparatory Academy (IPA), the Centurions do more than execute a drill routine. They preserve tradition, strengthen connections with alumni, represent the Institute to the broader community, and inspire the next generation of leaders.

**Celebrating Tradition and Strengthening Alumni Pride**

NMMI Homecoming brings together alumni, families, and friends to celebrate the traditions and relationships that unite generations of graduates. The Centurion Drill Team embodies the discipline, pride, and excellence that define the Institute and continue to thrive in today's Corps of Cadets.

For alumni, the Centurions rekindle memories of their time on the Old Post and reinforce the shared identity that connects generations. Their precision, professionalism, and commitment demonstrate that NMMI's standards endure long after graduation. The performances also give prospective cadets and visitors a firsthand look at how NMMI develops confidence, discipline, accountability, teamwork, and leadership beyond the classroom. The Institute's legacy lives not only in its history, but in the cadets who carry its traditions forward.

**Honoring Fallen Alumni Through Silver Taps**

The Centurion Drill Team's performance during Silver Taps was dedicated to the fallen alumni whose lives and legacies remain an enduring part of NMMI's history. Performed in advance of this solemn ceremony, the presentation served as a tribute to those being remembered and reflected the respect, gratitude, and reverence they deserve. The Centurions honored members of the NMMI family whose connections to the Institute endure beyond their years on the Old Post.

For the cadets, participating in Silver Taps was more than a ceremonial responsibility. It was an opportunity to recognize their obligation to preserve the Institute's traditions and honor the alumni whose legacy they now carry forward. Their dedication affirmed that those remembered during Silver Taps are not merely names from the past, but valued members of the NMMI family whose impact continues to inspire future generations.

**Investing in the Next Generation at the Intermediate Preparatory Academy**

The Centurion Drill Team's engagement with the Intermediate Preparatory Academy (IPA) extends NMMI's influence beyond the Old Post, fostering mentorship, leadership development, and community engagement. Through drill demonstrations and hands-on leadership labs, the Centurions introduce younger students to the discipline, teamwork, accountability, and professionalism that define NMMI. These activities give students practical opportunities to strengthen communication, problem-solving, and personal responsibility while learning to work toward a common goal.

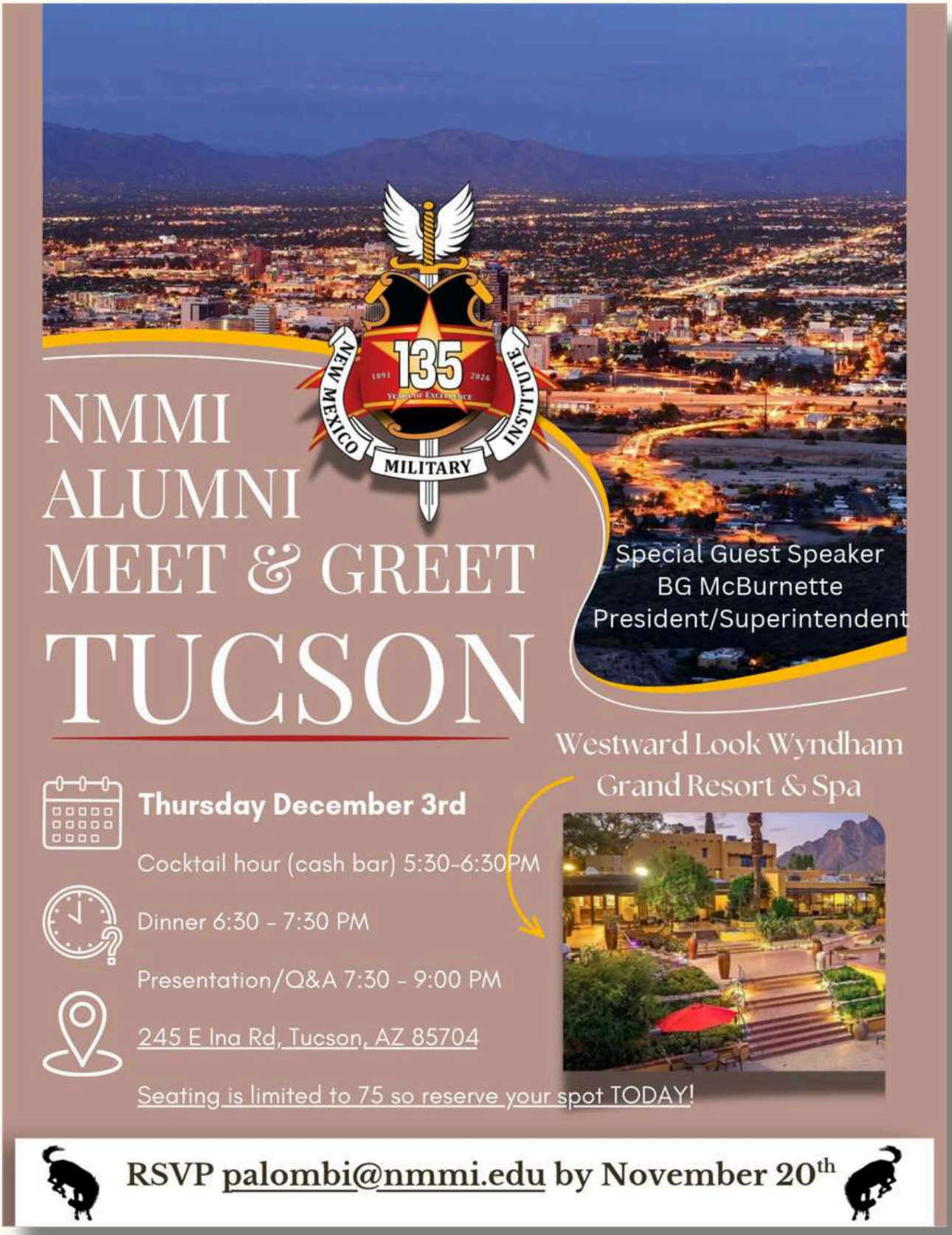
Effective leaders do more than set the standard; they help others reach it. Through their work at the IPA, the Centurions put this principle into action, strengthening the partnership between the institutions, inspiring younger students to recognize their potential, and introducing them to the leadership opportunities NMMI offers.

**A Lasting Impact on NMMI and Its Community**

The Centurion Drill Team's performances and leadership engagements showcase how NMMI traditions strengthen institutional recognition, alumni connections, and leadership development. From celebrating alumni at Homecoming to honoring fallen cadets at Silver Taps and mentoring younger students at the Intermediate Preparatory Academy, the Centurions extend NMMI's influence beyond the Old Post. Through visibility, service, and mentorship, they inspire others to pursue excellence, embrace responsibility, and contribute to something greater than themselves.

These experiences also reinforce that representing NMMI is both a privilege and a responsibility. The cadets serve as ambassadors of the Institute's legacy, stewards of its traditions, and mentors who positively influence the next generation. The Centurions do more than perform; they preserve a legacy, strengthen a community, and shape the future. Through their dedication and leadership, they bring NMMI's core values of **DUTY, HONOR, and ACHIEVEMENT** to life, ensuring these principles endure from one generation to the next.

**LTC Karl Harness**
JC 2000
ROTC Professor of Military Science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YEARS OF EXCELLENCE
Special Guest Speaker
BG McBurnette
President/Superintendent
Westward Look Wyndham
Grand Resort & Spa
Thursday December 3rd
Cocktail hour (cash bar) 5:30-6:30PM
Dinner 6:30 - 7:30 PM
Presentation/Q&A 7:30 - 9:00 PM
245 E Ina Rd, Tucson, AZ 85704
Seating is limited to 75 so reserve your spot TODAY!
RSVP palombi@nmmi.edu by November 20th

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# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

## ANTHONY "ERNIE" POPE 760085 NMMI 1976-79 AND 1985-87

My high school years at NMMI in the late 1970's was that of Mr. Average, but my rat year of 1976-77 was the last all male year at NMMI. It was open season on new cadets and that year often resembled the movie "Lords of Discipline." In my high school years I was on the Orienteering Team and the Martial Arts team under the direction of Sensei Ann Stacey.

I enlisted in the Marine Corps after leaving NMMI and I served six years. I returned to NMMI after those six years. Within a month I was on Regimental Staff with the position of Constabulary NCOIC. Because the Marine Corps instilled in me an all go, no stop, way of life I sought out additional activities to be involved in. I returned to the martial arts team under the direction of Sensei Ann Stacey. I also was NCOIC of Semester Cadre over the winter break.

Anthony “Ernie” Pope – Age 14

My sophomore year at NMMI I was promoted to Constabulary OIC. I joined the Speech Team and we went to the Nationals Competition in Odessa Texas. I also served as Executive Officer of Semester Cadre over the winter break. Also, I often did "ride alongs" with the Roswell Police Department over the weekends. I was a familiar face there as, in part of my position of Constabulary OIC, I went to Tuesday morning "coffee klatches" with the Roswell Police Chief, Chaves County Sheriff, a representative from the District Attorney's Office and whomever was lead officer of the New Mexico State Police in Chaves County that week. Sometimes, cadets that were in trouble was the subject of that morning's meeting.

Anthony “Ernie” Pope – Age 25

After NMMI, I went to Sam Houston State in Huntsville Texas. SHSU has an internationally renowned Criminal Justice Program. Soon after arriving at SHSU, I was asked to lead the Bearkat Patrol, which has a very similar mandate as Constabulary at NMMI. I also joined the Student Government Association, in the role as "Senator" on the Criminal Justice Caucus. I was able to apply the skills I learned on the NMMI Speech Team in SGA. My senior year, I won election as SGA President. A proud accomplishment was the building of a bonfire, over 100 feet tall, made of trees killed by a pine bark infestation.

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Anthony “Ernie” Pope – Age 30

Anthony “Ernie” Pope – Age 35

The fall semester of my senior year at SHSU, I did an internship with the Special Proson Prosecution Unit of the Texas Department of Corrections. The SPPU functions in a very similar way to a District Attorney's office, only, the SPPU deals with crimes committed in TDC, such as inmate on inmate violence or inmate on guard violence. In SPPU, I was often in Grand Jury presentations, or sitting in courtrooms during trials.

Six months after graduating from SHSU, I went to work for the police department in Los Lunas New Mexico. During my 18 months in LLPD, we were able to rid the village of a gang (all of them went to prison) and burglaries went from three a day to one a month.

I then returned to (a now defunct) Six Flags Park in Houston Texas where I served as Field Training Officer of the Security Department (I worked there for nine months before joining LLPD). I also spent much of the 1990's, as General Manager of a Marriott hotel (a franchise) in Houston Texas.

After the turn of the century, I managed a high rise complex (12 buildings) for ExxonMobil on the north side of Houston. I directed the maintenance, security and safety inspection staff in daily activities and also oversaw the "communications center" (a sort of 911 dispatch for ExxonMobil) that handled emergencies at ExxonMobil sites worldwide, including offshore oil platforms.

Before retirement, I spent five years working IT for ABEKA (a homeschool company).

**Anthony "Ernie" Pope**

Class of HS 1979 and JC 1987

**Want to be featured in our alumni spotlight?**

contact Leslie Palombi
palombi@nmmi.edu

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# FOREVER A PART OF NMMI: A LASTING PLACE OF REMEMBRANCE

**HONORING A LIFETIME OF MEMORIES, FRIENDSHIPS, AND CONNECTIONS TO NEW MEXICO MILITARY INSTITUTE.**

New Mexico Military Institute has been more than a place of education. It has been a place where lifelong friendships were formed, traditions embraced, and bonds forged that extend far beyond the years spent on campus. For many alumni, faculty, staff, and families, NMMI will always hold a special place in their hearts.

The **NMMI Columbarium** offers a meaningful opportunity for those who wish to make the Institute part of their final resting place, providing a lasting connection to the Old Post and community that have meant so much throughout their lives.

Located next to the NMMI Chapel, the Columbarium provides a peaceful place of remembrance where loved ones, classmates, and future generations can reflect on the lives and legacies of those who helped shape the Institute's history.

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## A Meaningful Choice for You and Your Family

Planning for the future is a deeply personal decision. While conversations about final arrangements may not always be easy, making these decisions in advance can provide peace of mind, comfort, and clarity for loved ones when the time comes.

The NMMI Columbarium contains 216 niches, each accommodating up to two urns. Eligibility extends to NMMI alumni, former faculty and staff, and life members of the NMMI Foundation. Spouses, life partners, and immediate family members may also be inurned in the same niche as an eligible individual.

A one-time reservation fee of $1,500 provides the right to inurn up to two urns and includes ongoing care and maintenance of the Columbarium. Additional expenses include: cremation, urns, niche inscriptions, and memorial or inurnment services, are separate.

For those considering their future arrangements, reserving a niche offers an opportunity to make a thoughtful, personal choice while ensuring their wishes are known.

**To learn more about the NMMI Columbarium, discuss eligibility, or explore reservation options, please contact Janice Weed in the Office of Institutional Advancement.**

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**-Janice Weed, MA, CNP, 93HS**
Deputy Director of Institutional Advancement

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# Once a Bronco, Always a Bronco

Hello to all our Alumni and friends, we had an amazing homecoming. I was so grateful and honored to meet so many of you who were able to attend. Homecoming at the New Mexico Military Institute is always a special time to celebrate the traditions, connections, and community that make NMMI so extraordinary. This year's festivities provided a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with alumni honor our Institutes rich history and celebrate the lasting impact of the NMMI family.

We are incredibly grateful to our alumni, donors and supporters whose continued generosity and commitment help strengthen the Institute and support its mission. Your involvement plays an important role in preserving NMMI's legacy and ensuring future generations of cadets have opportunities to learn, lead, and succeed. Every contribution, act of service, and show of support makes a difference, and we sincerely appreciate all of those who continue to stand with and behind this Institute.

One of the highlights was the honored class dinner where we had the pleasure of recognizing and celebrating the classes being honored. The evening provided a wonderful opportunity to share memories, reconnect and reflect on the experiences and traditions.

Another deeply moving moment of Homecoming was Silver Taps, a beautiful and solemn tribute honoring the alumni cadets that have passed. This meaningful tradition offered the opportunity to pause, reflect, and remember those whose lives and legacies remain an important part of NMMI's rich history. In honoring those cadets, we are reminded that the bonds formed extend far beyond graduation and that those who have gone before us will always hold a place in the NMMI family. Their legacy lives on through traditions, they helped shape and the generations of cadets who continue to carry the Institute's values forward.

**-Ashley Escobal**
Adminstrative Specialist

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# Opening Doors, Creating Opportunities

For many young people, the opportunity to attend New Mexico Military Institute begins with financial assistance. A scholarship can make an NMMI education more accessible, opening the door to experiences that extend well beyond the classroom. It means the opportunity to become part of the Corps of Cadets, participate in athletics and extracurricular activities, develop leadership skills, and build friendships that may last a lifetime.

The **NMMI Annual Fund helps make these opportunities possible.** As one of the Institute's most flexible sources of support, the Annual Fund provides unrestricted funding for scholarships and needs across Post. Whether helping a student pursue an NMMI education or providing resources that enrich cadet life, gifts to the Annual Fund make a meaningful difference in the experiences available to today's cadets.

During the 2025–2026 academic year, **216 NMMI students received scholarships totaling $386,076 through the Annual Fund**. Behind those numbers are young people with different backgrounds, ambitions, and goals. For some, scholarship assistance can make the difference in their ability to attend NMMI. Once here, they have the opportunity to challenge themselves academically, discover new interests, take on leadership responsibilities, and grow in ways that prepare them for life beyond the Institute.

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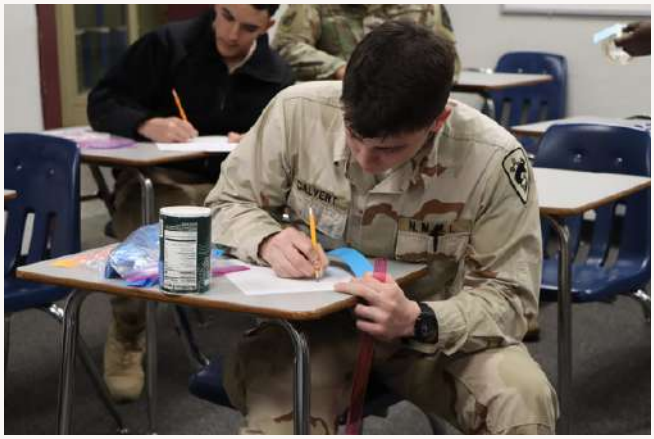

# SUPPORTING THE MISSION

The impact of an Annual Fund gift does not end with a scholarship or a single cadet activity. It carries forward through the confidence a cadet develops, the lessons learned from overcoming challenges, and the opportunities that help shape their future. These are the experiences that generations of NMMI alumni remember long after leaving Post.

As NMMI celebrates 135 years, the Annual Fund continues to play an important role in supporting today's cadets and preparing the way for those who will follow. Every gift, regardless of size, contributes to the opportunities, resources, and experiences that make an NMMI education possible.

**Support the NMMI Annual Fund. Help open doors for the next generation of cadets.**

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**-Natalie Perez**
Annual Fund Officer

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# LOOKING AHEAD: STRONGER CONNECTIONS, A LASTING BRONCO LEGACY

At New Mexico Military Institute, our impact extends far beyond the years spent at Post. The relationships built here, the lessons learned, and the traditions shared continue to shape the lives of our alumni and cadets long after their time at the Institute. As we look ahead, our goal is to continue strengthening those connections and ensuring that the NMMI community remains a place of support, opportunity, and belonging.

As the Event Coordinator and Alumni Engagement Coordinator, I am grateful for the opportunity to connect with our alumni, support Institute initiatives, and help create opportunities that bring the Bronco family together. Whether through events, communications, reunions, or individual conversations, every interaction is an opportunity to strengthen relationships and remind our alumni that their connection to NMMI remains important.

To our alumni, donors, families, and friends, thank you for the many ways you continue to support the Institute. Your time, generosity, encouragement, and willingness to stay involved contribute to the strength of our community and the opportunities available to future generations of cadets. We recognize that support takes many forms, and we are sincerely appreciative of everyone who continues to stand behind NMMI and its mission.

As we move forward, we look forward to finding new ways to connect with alumni, encourage participation, share Institute updates, and create meaningful opportunities to stay involved. We want our alumni to know that engagement does not have to mean attending every event or making a financial contribution. Sometimes it means sharing a memory, offering professional guidance, checking in with a fellow Bronco, or simply staying in touch. Every connection has value

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Just as importantly, the NMMI community is here for its people. To our alumni and current cadets, please know that you do not have to navigate every challenge alone. Whether you need assistance finding the right resource, have a question about staying connected, want to share an idea, or simply need someone willing to listen, we welcome the opportunity to help. While we may not always have every answer, we can listen, offer guidance where possible, and work to connect you with the appropriate support .

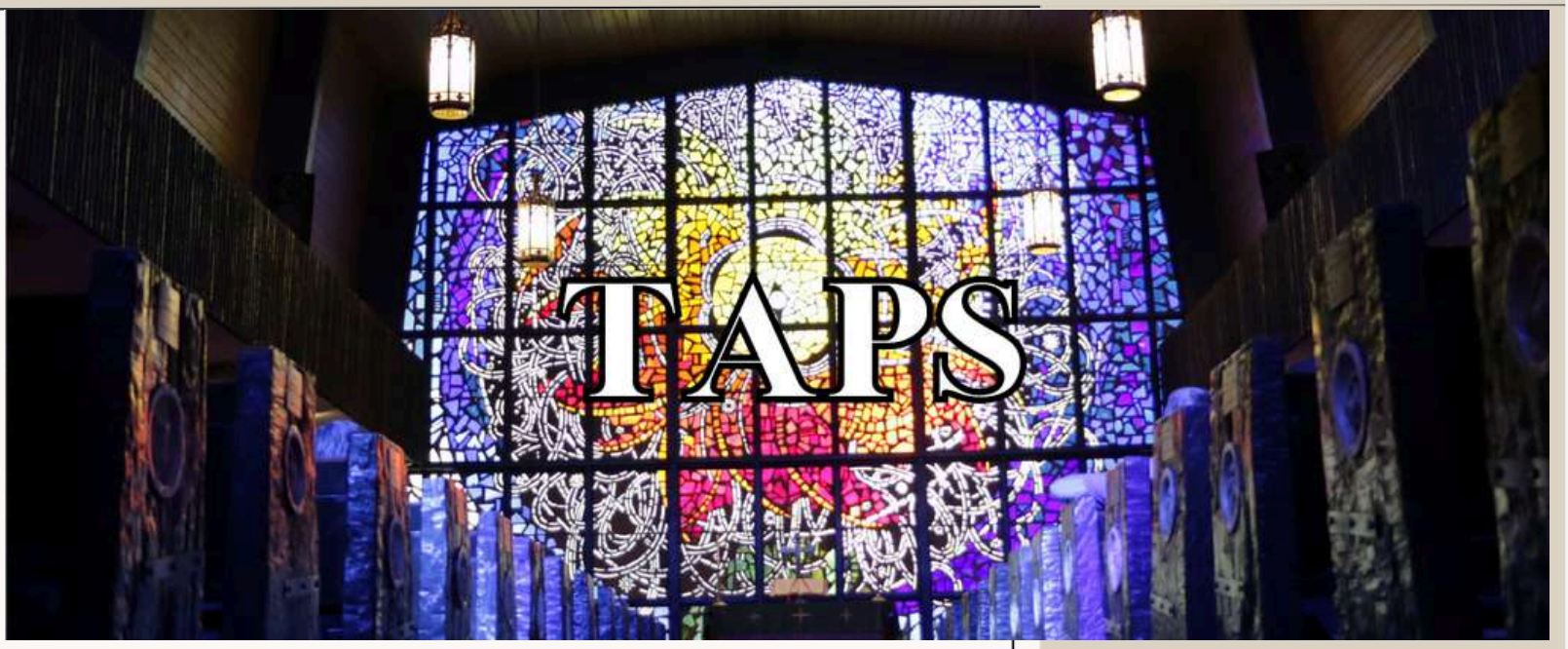
The strength of NMMI has always been rooted in its people. As we continue into the year ahead, I look forward to building relationships, supporting our community, and helping ensure that every Bronco knows there is a place for them within the NMMI family.

Thank you for your continued trust, support, and commitment to the Institute. Wherever life takes you, your connection to NMMI remains part of your story, and we look forward to staying connected with you.

## OUR TRADITIONS CONNECT US TO OUR PAST. OUR RELATIONSHIPS HELP SHAPE NMMI'S FUTURE.

**-Leslie Palombi**

Event and Alumni Engagement Coordinator

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| Vincente | Luna | Staff 2000-2018 | 10/04/2026 |
| tim | Daniel | 89 HS/91 JC | 5/19/2026 |

**Alumni Reported Deceased October 28, 2026**

A quote from the 1933 *Bronco* about cadet, George O. Speer 1933 JC, who was killed in a Polo Game-

**"BUT IF THEY ARE GONE FROM OUR RANKS, WE KEEP THEM ON OUR ROSTER AS VALUES ONCE INTIMATELY KNOWN AND AVAILABLE IN OUR RECOLLECTIONS, AND IN OUR HEARTS. THEY WILL REMAIN FOREVER YOUNG."**