

Huckabee putting military experience to good use at academy

BY TRAVIS GULBRANDSON

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Greg Huckabee served 27 years as a Judge Advocate in the United States Army, but a three-year teaching stint at West Point in the 1980s may have the biggest lasting impact on his life.

"I had so much fun teaching I thought, 'Wow, boy wouldn't this be a great second career, being able to use your experience in the teaching mode,'" he said.

When Huckabee's Army service came to an end, he did just that, and has been serving as an associate professor of business law at the Beacom School of Business since 2003.

Shortly after his arrival, Coyoteopoly was founded. One of the goals of the student-run corporation is to integrate what is learned in the classroom into projects that benefit the community.

"We're committed to that vision," Huckabee said. "Dean (Mike) Keller is committed to integrated business experiential learning, and it's working for us. I think in time, it'll really make us distinguished and stand out from other business schools in the country."

One event that should help the program – and the school – stand out is the Coyoteopoly-backed South Dakota Shakespeare Festival, which is set to take place at Prentis Park this summer.

Huckabee said a similar, albeit larger,

program run by the University of Oregon is "a \$21 million operation."

"It employs every student you ever thought of having. So, just even at a smaller level here, imagine economically what this could do for our students and the community," he said. "It's fundamentally a business activity. People wrongly think that movies and plays are theatrical productions. Well, they are, but they're really businesses."

"We demand that the students approach the tasks that they have to perform from a business perspective," he said.

This will provide the students with actual business experience, Huckabee said.

"No other school has got (a program like Coyoteopoly), so it's going to distinguish us from everybody else," he said.

Born in San Francisco, Huckabee lived many different places as a youth due to his father's service in the Air Force.

Huckabee's personal experience in the military began when he joined the ROTC as a student at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash.

"By the time I graduated in 1976, the war was over, but I still had an obligation because I had an ROTC scholarship that I had to pay back," he said. "I went onto active duty to pay back my scholarship thinking in three or four years I'd be done. But, by the time I finished experience in Europe, it was so much fun ... that I decided I wanted to stay."

The 27 years he spent as a Judge Advocate – nine of them overseas, including one as a Fulbright Scholar in Poland – have provided Huckabee with plenty of experience to share with his students.

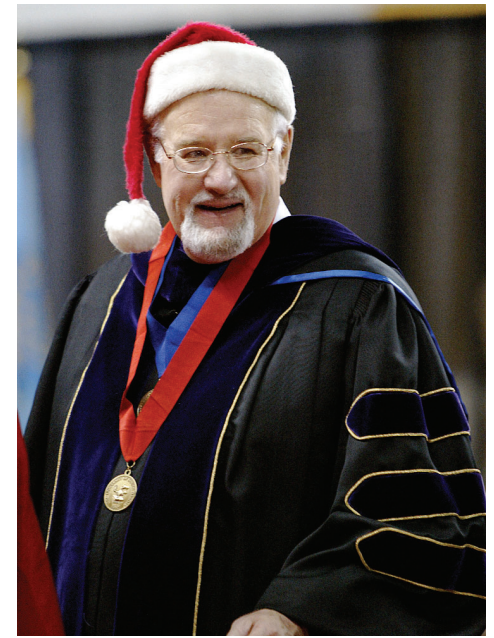
"I was involved in a lot of contracting, labor issues and business types of activities," he said. "I'm able to use those experiences to illustrate the different points that we're talking about in class."

This fall, Huckabee has begun teaching and sharing those experiences at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. He will return to USD after one year.

He said he has enjoyed his time in Vermillion, where he lives with his wife Susan and their two grandchildren, and he hopes to spend many more years here.

Huckabee said both he and the business school have a primary lesson they hope to impart.

"Business is fundamentally about serving," he said. "It's about serving other people ... and providing services, goods and whatnot, and if you really, really serve them well, you will be successful. If you don't serve them well, you won't be successful. That, I think, is the key to successful business. That's what we try and teach the students."



Instead of donning a traditional academic cap along with his robe, Greg Huckabee, associate professor of business law at the University of South Dakota, decided to wear headgear that fit the holiday season at the December 2011 winter commencement exercises in the DakotaDome.

(Photo by David Lias)

Bickett: We need to thank veterans every day

BY DAVID LIAS

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Dennis Bickett, a retired U.S. Army major, reminded Vermillion citizens that since the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorists' attacks, and the ensuing wars against terror in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States is seeing a new, younger generation of war veterans.

Bickett was keynote speaker at Vermillion's Veteran's Day ceremonies held Nov. 11, 2009. He is in charge of training and operations for the 153rd Engineer Battalion in Huron.

Bickett, who enlisted in the South Dakota National Guard when he was 17, received a direct commission in 2000 as an officer in the National Guard, and was activated to serve in Iraq from 2003 to 2005. He received the Gen. Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award in 2006 from Gen. George Casey in a ceremony held at the Pentagon.

"Many are still in the war zone, serving our country as we speak," he said.

Bickett noted that he has no illusions that what he saw in compares to what many of the veterans at Wednesday's ceremony experienced while at war.

"I'm pretty glad about that," he said. "I was with the 153rd Engineering Battalion headquarters during my deployment, and I didn't even fire my rifle except to make sure that it worked. I was pretty lucky."

All veterans, no matter their experiences, share something, Bickett said.

"Whether you deploy to the worst place on

earth, or function as a administration clerk in a rear area, you answer the call when your nation needed you," he said.

Some veterans, especially those who may not have seen combat, often describe their military experiences with less pride, downplaying the role they played.

"When we enlist in the military, we are giving of ourselves for the greater good for this fantastic nation and its people," Bickett said. "If in the execution of your mission, you are not deployed to an area where death is imminent doesn't mean you are less of a patriot."

Veterans are men and women who exemplify patriotism, commitment and service. "They are men and women who, out of love for this great country, offer themselves as shields to keep war from reaching our front door.

"These are men and women who at times have experienced trauma, endured pain and witnessed the worst horrors of man so that we here in the United States can live and work in peace," Bickett said. "Our veterans are the reason our children can live as children without being stripped of their innocence by extremist organizations. Our veterans are the torchbearers of freedom and democracy. Our veterans are our loved ones who have sworn to protect our nation against all enemies foreign and domestic."

Veteran's Day, he added, is also a time to honor the mothers and fathers, spouses, children and other family members of women and

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