

Lesson 4

The Signs of Success



Key Terms

academic awards
athletic awards
commitment
decorations
individual awards
initiative
military awards
miscellaneous awards
motivation
responsibility
unit awards

What You Will Learn to Do

- Determine which signs of success you plan to accomplish within JROTC

Linked Core Abilities

- Build your capacity for life-long learning
- Take responsibility for your actions and choices

Skills and Knowledge You Will Gain Along the Way

- Compare the three types of unit decorations
- Identify the components of individual award categories
- Identify the four institutional award categories
- Define award criteria
- Define the key words contained in this lesson

Introduction

This lesson covers the various types of award programs you can work toward while in JROTC. You learn about unit awards as well as individual awards, and you are also introduced to the four types of institutional awards. This lesson also examines the criteria you need to meet to be eligible for awards, and how these awards can further your educational and career opportunities.

JROTC Awards Program

The JROTC Awards Program is for *any* JROTC cadet who excels. It recognizes high levels of performance, excellence, and achievement. Because the JROTC program recognizes that not all cadets have the same abilities and skills, the Army designed its awards program to recognize as many personal traits as possible in cadets. There are two kinds of awards: **unit awards** that recognize unit excellence, and **individual awards** that recognize personal achievement. Both of these types of awards are covered in this lesson.

The Army rewards cadets for extracurricular activities, excellence in competition, contributions to unit goals, and outstanding service. Also, you may receive national recognition from patriotic and civic organizations for outstanding academic and military achievements. To achieve any of these awards, however, you must prepare yourself for success. You learn those preparation skills in this lesson.

Strive for Success

Success is a process in motion, not a fixed mark. A successful person is one who is consistently learning, growing, and working toward a goal. When people perceive success as an end point to a process instead of the process itself, they often wonder why they feel unsatisfied when they get there. If you don't continually grow and add new goals, you may feel dissatisfied, empty, aimless, or "stuck."

Striving for success takes effort. It requires motivation, commitment, initiative, responsibility, and a willingness to face your fears. In combination, these strategies will help you father and retain knowledge as well as create new knowledge.

Getting Motivated

Motivation is the energy that fuels your drive to achieve, and a motivator is anything that moves you forward. There are at least as many motivators as there are people, and what motivates any given person can change from situation to situation. For example, some potential motivators for attending school could be learning a marketable skill, supporting a family, or improving yourself.

It's human to lose your motivation from time to time. For reasons ranging from a stressful life change to simply a period of low energy, sometimes you might not feel like accomplishing anything. The following can help you build or renew motivation.

Key Note Terms

unit awards – recognition given to a JROTC unit for being an honor unit or an honor unit with distinction

individual awards – recognition given to an individual for outstanding academic, athletic, or military achievement or for excellence in competition, contribution to unit goals, or outstanding service

Key Note Term

motivation – a force that moves a person to action; often inspired by an idea, fact, event, or goal

- Spend time reflecting on why your goal is meaningful to you.
- Make a decision to take one step toward your goal, rather than feeling overwhelmed by the “big picture.”
- Reward yourself for a job well done.
- Examine and deal with obstacles.
- Begin or begin again.

Making a Commitment

So, how do you focus the energy of motivation? Make a **commitment**.

Commitment means that you do what you say you will do. When you honor a commitment, you prove to yourself and others that your intentions can be trusted.

Commitment requires that you focus your energy on something specific. A decision to change your life or make a million dollars might intimidate you into staying motionless on the couch. Instead, break any goal into manageable pieces, naming the steps you will use to achieve it.

To make and keep a commitment, consider the following:

- State your commitment concretely.
- Get started and note your progress.
- Renew your commitment on a regular basis.
- Keep track of each commitment.

Making and keeping commitments help you maintain a steady focus on your most important goals. You feel a sense of accomplishment as you experience gradual change.

Showing Initiative

When you show **initiative**, you push yourself to take the first difficult step toward achieving your goal. Initiative jump-starts your journey and helps to renew motivation.

Initiative requires you to keep on top of your goals and to listen to your instincts. You may discover that you want to do more than what is expected of you, which can be positive at school, in JROTC, and in the workplace.

Being Responsible

Being responsible is all about living up to your obligations, both those that are imposed on you as well as those that you impose on yourself. Through action, you prove that you are responsible. When something needs to be done, responsible people do the work as efficiently as possible and to the best of their ability.

Responsibility can take enormous effort. Throughout your life, you will have moments when you just don't want to respond. In those moments, you need to weigh the positive and negative effects and decide what to do. Being responsible has definite benefits, such as making a crucial impression on others and earning the trust and respect of your instructors, supervisors, relatives, friends, and family. When people trust you, they may give you increasing power and opportunities for growth because you have shown you are capable of making the best of both.

Key Note Term

commitment – a pledge or promise to do something; dedication to a long-term course of action

Key Note Term

initiative – the power to begin or follow through energetically with a plan or task; determination

Key Note Term

responsibility – the quality of being reliable, trustworthy, and accountable for your actions

Facing Your Fears

Everyone experiences fear at some point in their lives. New experiences are often frightening and exciting at the same time. The changes involved in pursuing an education can incite fear. You may wonder if you can handle the work, if you will get along with your instructors, or if you have chosen the right school or program. You may worry that family and friends expect too much or might stand in your way. You may also have fears about the future: Will your education prepare you to find a job that you like and that pays well?

Education presents challenges that demand a willingness to push your limits and face your fears. The following can help you face your fears with courage.

- **Acknowledge and examine your fears.**
- **Develop a plan of attack to overcome your fears.**
- **Move ahead with your plan.**

As you work through your fears, talk about them with people you trust. Often, the ideas other people have about gaining control of fear can help you. When you acknowledge and evaluate your fears, it can provide valuable clues as to what blocks your success. Facing your fears and taking action promote healthy self-esteem.

Unit Awards

Key Note Term

decorations – an indication of honor, such as a badge, medal, or ribbon

JROTC enables you to succeed in a variety of ways. One way to show your success is to strive for unit awards. The JROTC Awards Program offers three types of unit **decorations**: Merit Unit, Honor Unit, and Honor Unit with Distinction. The Merit Unit, Honor Unit, and the Honor Unit with Distinction awards are chosen based on results of a formal inspection and on exceptionally high standards of training and discipline throughout the school year. All service academies reserve 20 appointments for honor graduates of schools that have been designated Honor Units with Distinction. These cadets may apply for appointment to one of these service academies.

The Department of the Army adopted the Merit Unit insignia for Army JROTC cadets in units designated as Merit Units. The Merit Unit insignia is a small white enamel five-pointed star. You wear this insignia above the right pocket of Class A or B uniforms.

The Honor Unit insignia for Army JROTC cadets in units designated as Honor Units. It is a small blue enamel five-pointed star. This insignia is worn in the same manner as the Merit Unit insignia.

The Honor Unit with Distinction insignia is similar to the Honor Unit insignia, except that it is yellow. The Department of the Army also adopted this device for all Army JROTC cadets in units designated as Honor Units with Distinction. This insignia is worn in the same manner as the Honor Unit insignia, which is above the right pocket of Class A or B uniforms..

Individual Awards

Each Army JROTC unit can award various types of individual awards to its cadets for recognition of excellence, outstanding achievement, or superior performance. There are two main categories of individual awards: institutional and national awards.

Institutional Awards

Superintendents, principals, and Army instructors can present institutional awards to individual JROTC cadets for reasons of academic excellence, military and athletic achievement or performance, participation in community parades, excelling in recruiting programs, and other reasons determined by instructors. Each cadet has an opportunity to earn these awards.

The following is the order of merit (or importance) for these awards along with the number of ribbons available for each type. Within each category, these awards (or ribbons) are worn in their numerical order.

1. **Academic Awards—10 ribbons**
2. **Military Awards—15 ribbons**
3. **Athletic Awards—5 ribbons**
4. **Miscellaneous Awards—5 ribbons**

National Awards

National awards recognize individual JROTC cadets for heroic, distinguished, meritorious, and other commendable acts and achievements.

Army JROTC Awards

JROTC offers numerous awards to those who are willing to go above and beyond the minimum effort asked of them. These categories include academic, military, athletic, and miscellaneous awards as well as national awards. The following sections offer you more detail on each award and what it takes to earn them.

Academic Awards

Table 1.4.1 shows the various types of **academic awards** that you can earn.

Key Note Term

academic awards – recognition given to individual cadets for scholastic achievement or excellence

Table 1.4.1: Academic Awards

Award	Awarded By	Criteria
Distinguished Cadet Award for Scholastic Excellence (N-1-1)	Superintendent	Awarded annually to one cadet who exhibits the highest degree of excellence in scholastics
Academic Excellence Award (N-1-2)	Principal	Awarded annually to one cadet in each LET level for maintaining highest school academic grades
Academic Achievement Ribbon (N-1-3)	DAI/SAI (awarded by the DAI, except for in single units; then awarded by the SAI)	Awarded annually to those cadets who maintain a grade of A in all academic subjects
Perfect Attendance Ribbon (N-1-4)	SAI	Awarded to cadets with no unexcused absences during each quarter/semester
Student Government Ribbon (N-1-5)	Principal	Awarded to cadets elected to student government offices
LET Service Ribbon (N-1-6)	SAI	Awarded to cadets successfully completing first quarter/semester of training of each LET year
N-1-7 through N-1-10	DAI/SAI	Awarded based on criteria developed locally and approved by region commanders

Military Awards

Table 1.4.2 shows the various types of **military awards** that are available to you through hard work and effort.

Key Note Term

military awards – recognition given to individuals for participating in JROTC-sponsored activities, or for leadership excellence

Table 1.4.2: Military Awards

Award	Awarded By	Criteria
DAI/SAI Leadership Ribbon (N-3-1)	SAI	Awarded annually to one cadet per LET level who displays the highest degree of leadership
Personal Appearance Ribbon (N-3-2)	SAI	Awarded annually to cadets who consistently present an outstanding appearance
Proficiency Ribbon (N-3-3)	DAI/SAI (awarded by the DAI, except for in single units where it is awarded by the SAI)	Awarded annually to those cadets who have demonstrated an exceptionally high degree of leadership, academic achievement, and performance of duty
Drill Team Ribbon (N-3-4)	SAI	Awarded annually to drill team members
Orienteering Ribbon (N-3-5)	SAI	Awarded annually to cadets who are members of orienteering teams
Color/Honor Guard Ribbon (N-3-6)	SAI	Awarded annually to members of the color/honor guards
Rifle Team Ribbon (N-3-7)	SAI	Awarded annually to members of the rifle team
Adventure Training Ribbon (N-3-8)	SAI	Awarded annually to cadets who are members of adventure training units
Commendation Ribbon (N-3-9)	SAI	Awarded to cadets whose performance of duty far exceeds that expected for grade and experience
Good Conduct Ribbon (N-3-10)	SAI	Awarded annually to the cadets who have demonstrated outstanding conduct and participation
Summer Camp Participation Ribbon (N-3-11)	SAI	Awarded to those cadets who participate in summer camp
N-3-12 through N-3-15	DAI/SAI	Awarded based on criteria developed locally and approved by region commanders

Key Note Term

athletic awards – recognition given to individuals for athletic participation or excellence

Athletic Awards

Athletic awards are achievable through JROTC. All you need is an attitude geared toward success.

Table 1.4.3: Athletic Awards

Award	Awarded By	Criteria
Varsity Athletic Ribbon (N-2-1)	Principal	Awarded annually to cadets who excel in varsity sports
Physical Fitness Award (N-2-2)	SAI	Awarded annually to cadets who maintain excellent physical fitness; male cadets must run one mile in 8:30 minutes or less and female cadets in 10:45 minutes or less
ROTC Athletic Ribbon (N-2-3)	SAI	Awarded annually to cadets who excel in ROTC athletics
N-2-4 through N-2-5	DAI/SAI (awarded by the DAI, except for in single units where it is awarded by the SAI)	Awarded based on criteria developed locally and approved by region commanders

Miscellaneous Awards

There are several **miscellaneous awards** that you can earn.

Key Note Term

miscellaneous awards – recognition given to individuals for participation in school or community service activities, or in activities that enhance the JROTC program

Table 1.4.3: Miscellaneous Awards

Award	Awarded By	Criteria
Parade Ribbon (N-4-1)	SAI	Awarded to cadets who have participated in local community parades (such as Veterans Day or Memorial Day parades)
Recruiting Ribbon (N-4-2)	SAI	Awarded to cadets who recruit students into the JROTC program.
N-4-3 through N-4-4	DAI/SAI (awarded by the DAI, except for in single units where it is awarded by the SAI)	Awarded based on criteria developed locally and approved by region commanders
Superior Cadet Award (N-4-5)	SAI	Awarded to cadet staff officers for outstanding performance
Service Learning Ribbon (N-4-6)	SAI	Awarded annually to cadets who participate in service learning projects

National Awards

With your eye on success, you can also earn national awards.

Table 1.4.5: National Awards

Award	Criteria
Medal for Heroism	Awarded to any JROTC/NDCC cadet who has been distinguished by an act of heroism
Superior Cadet Decoration	Awarded annually to the outstanding cadet of each LET level
Legion of Valor Bronze Cross for Achievement	Awarded annually to a LET 3 cadet for achievement of scholastic excellence in military and academic subjects and development of leadership
Sons of the American Revolution Award	Awarded to a cadet enrolled in ROTC for meritorious achievement
The Military Order of the World Wars Award	Awarded annually for overall improvement in military and scholastic studies
Daughters of the American Revolution Award	Awarded annually to a cadet at each institution for outstanding ability and achievement
Association of Military Colleges and Schools of the U.S. Award	Awarded annually to a full-time cadet who has completed at least two full years of JROTC
American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary Awards	Awarded annually to outstanding cadets at each institution for general military excellence and scholastic achievement
The National Sojourners Award	Awarded annually to an outstanding cadet at each installation who contributed the most to encourage and demonstrate Americanism
U.S. Army Recruiting Command Award for JROTC	Awarded annually to a cadet at each school in recognition of outstanding achievement and contributions to the JROTC program
Association of the U.S. Army Award	Presented at the discretion of the DAI/SAI and the local AUSA chapter according to criteria that best suit the school's program

Conclusion

The JROTC Awards Program has much to offer. It can give you the chance to be recognized either individually or as a member of a unit for your accomplishments and excellence. To earn these awards, you must be as competitive as your abilities and skills will allow, perhaps putting forth extra effort to be competitive. The result, however, is self-satisfaction and sometimes public recognition for your accomplishments.

In Lesson 5 you will learn what it takes to maintain your personal appearance and your uniform. You will learn how to keep your uniform and shoes in top-notch shape, and how you can present yourself in the most professional and flattering light at all times.

Lesson Review

1. Compare and contrast unit awards and individual awards.
2. Which type of award interests you the most?
3. How do you wear the unit awards?
4. Define the term *decoration*.