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Hometown News Release

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Maryville Guardsman successfully balances college pursuits, business ownership and military service

DECATUR, Tenn. – Spc. Dalton Callahan, a mortarman with Newport’s O Troop, 4th Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, was a full-time student at The University of Phoenix majoring in Operations Management when the Tennessee National Guard’s Recruiting Command requested volunteers to help process new enlistees. Callahan decided to move from Johnson City to Knoxville in order to help.

Because he was only a year away from graduating, he also decided to continue his education while working with recruiting. Callahan was responsible for monitoring new enlistees for potential COVID-19 symptoms from May to September 2020.

When his orders with Recruiting Command ended in September, Callahan purchased a four-unit apartment complex in Maryville and became a property manager. Along with managing an apartment complex, Callahan continued to pursue his degree. In February, he volunteered for duty with the Tennessee National Guard’s COVID-19 task force.

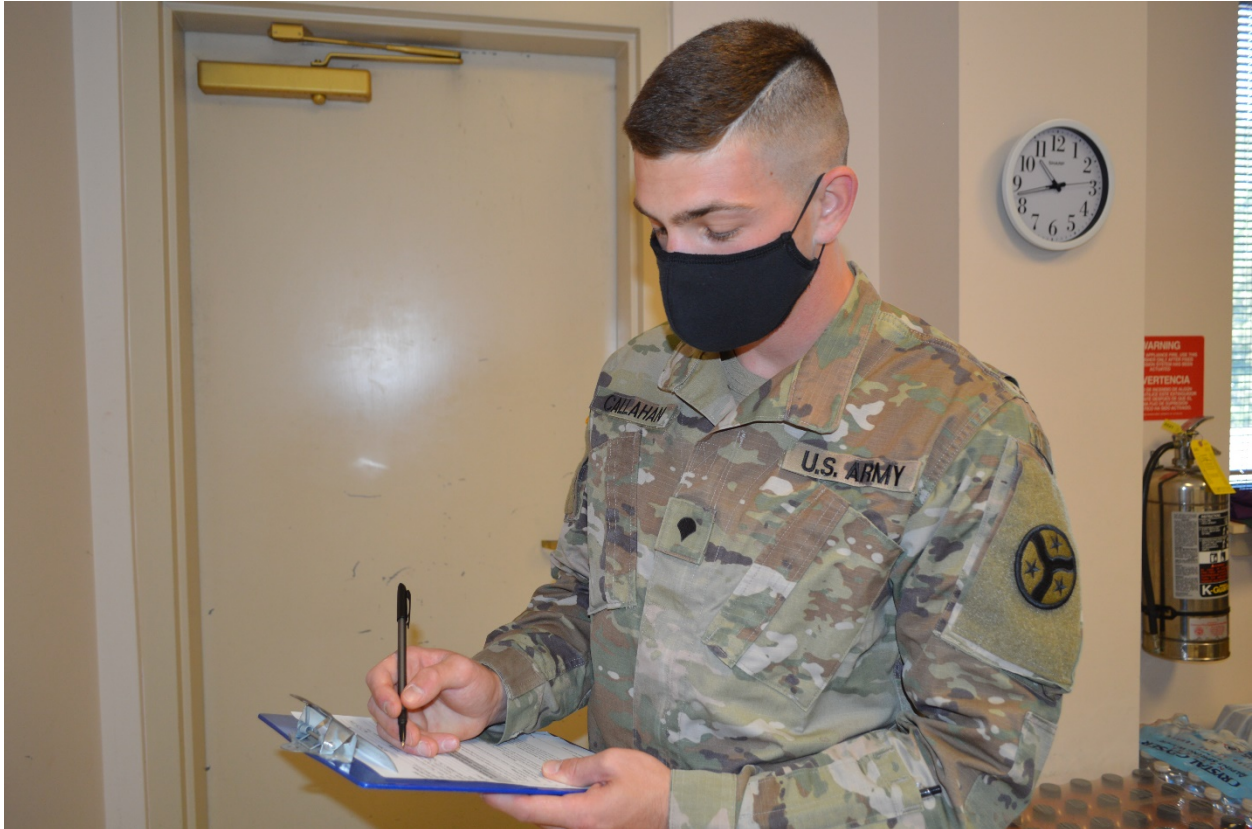
“Even though I was both a property manager and a full-time college student, I felt that the COVID-19 mission was too important to not take part in,” said Callahan. “Plus, I felt that my college classes had prepared me to take on several different roles at the same time. I was ready for the challenge.”

As a member of the COVID-19 task force, Callahan performs administrative tasks at the Meigs County Health Department. He checks in people who have come to receive their COVID-19 vaccinations, ensures that the information they provided is correct, observes them for potential adverse reactions after they have received their vaccination and maintains an orderly flow of vehicle traffic into and out of the vaccination site.

Callahan credited what he has learned while pursuing his degree with helping him to balance his multiple responsibilities successfully.

“A degree in Operations Management focuses on processes and managing production and supply chains,” Callahan said. “The things that I have learned at the University of Phoenix can translate into anything that has a process, even military tasks. These lessons have helped me juggle the multiple tasks that I have. They have helped me to be able to prioritize what I have to do.”

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Spc. Dalton Callahan, a mortarman with Newport's O Troop, 4th Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, reviews administrative paperwork at the Meigs County Health Department in Decatur. Callahan has been a member of the Tennessee National Guard's COVID-19 task force since February. (Photo by Sgt. Finis L. Dailey, III)

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