

Painting depicting military, campus history unveiled

Roohi Choudhry Feb 9, 2000

Print sale proceeds to go towards cadet scholarships

When Gary Havard, a former cadet and 1953 graduate, was contacted to do a painting for the Military Science Department, he said he wasn't sure he wanted to do it.

"At first, I wasn't sure I was the right guy," he said. "Then I visualized the campus, and it brought out the nostalgia in me — I could smell the military here. That's what I eventually put in the painting."

His four-month effort was recognized Tuesday when the department unveiled his painting, "Cadet Echoes: The Spirit of the 20th Century Cadet." The department commissioned the painting to represent the last 100 years of the Army/Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps here. Attendees of the unveiling included cadets and alumni as well as university President Robert Witt, who was presented with the first print from a limited edition being offered for sale.

"This celebrates a century of tradition," Dr. Witt said. "These images reflect who we are and what we're proud of here."

Five hundred prints identical to the one presented to Witt are available to the general public. All proceeds from their sale will go into a permanent scholarship endowment being created for cadets. Lt. Col. Mark Martin, a military science professor, said the department hopes to raise funds for three full scholarships, which would be open to full-time students who are also cadets.

Lt. Col. (Ret) James Coughlin, who graduated from here in 1961, said he can't wait to get his print of the painting and become part of this venture.

"I want it because I feel like there's a part of me in it," he said. "I don't know any other work that brings together so many parts of UTA history on one canvas."

To reflect this history in the work, Havard said he drew upon his strongest memories of his days here. He included the oldest buildings on campus, Ransom Hall and College Hall, and the bridges over Cooper Street, as well as military traditions and insignias. Cadets were depicted as marching across the canvas, with the appearance changing on each figure, representing the metamorphosis of uniforms from 1902 to present.

Cadet Maj. Jason Rowe, an electrical engineering senior, said the historical nature of the painting is especially relevant at the start of a new millennium.

"It brings to UTA a closure of the old and beginning of the new," he said.

But he also said it is important to remember the past and recognize heritage here.

"Students come in and just think of their own four-year experience," he said. "When they see this painting, I think they will realize that generations of Mavericks have been here, and now that we have progressed into a modern institution, military science here is still going strong."