

Former Texas Guardsman Named a Leading Global Entrepreneur and Innovator


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Robert Brevelle: Entrepreneur During the Week and Soldier by Weekend.


Washington D.C. — Guardsmen are our country’s modern militia serving in our local communities during natural disasters as well as deploying abroad to conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Little is known about the civilian lives of these “weekend warriors”, but one former guardsman has made international headlines. Robert Brevelle of the Texas Guard and a life member of the National Guard Association is being recognized as a Top 100 Entrepreneur and Innovator for his accomplishments in and out of uniform.

The history of the Guard predates the Revolutionary War. Citizens were called up to protect their local towns and later to fight for independence. They were ordinary members of the community such as farmers, teachers, blacksmiths, and politicians. When called upon, they quickly set aside their civilian occupation, bid farewell to

Feature News



NGAUS Life Member, Robert Brevelle (left), named as a leading global entrepreneur and innovator.



their families, and were the first to arrive for battle. Their ability to quickly transition from citizen to soldier earned them the name “minutemen”. The minuteman figure is still found on the official seal and emblem of the National and State Guards.

Robert joined the Texas Guard following the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. “I remember it like it was yesterday,” said Robert. “I was working at a really hip software startup in the telecom corridor of Dallas. I was your typical developer wearing shorts and flip-flops while punching away on a keyboard in between company-sponsored ping-pong tournaments and happy hours patiently waiting for our billion-dollar exit. 9/11 occurred on a Tuesday. By Friday, I contacted the US Army and Texas Military Department Headquarters requesting my recommission. I volunteered to fight in the Global War on Terrorism. I was in my early 20’s, in good physical condition, and knew that with my prior military training and experience, I could still be of service. I took my oath and was recommissioned the following week as an officer in the Military Police Corps. I traded my flip-flops for combat boots.”

Upon completion of refresher training at the Texas Military Academy, he was assigned to the 3rd Battalion

“Parson’s Brigade” of the 19th Military Police Brigade headquartered in Greenville, Texas. Robert was promoted quickly from company-level command to battalion staff serving as the S1 Administration Officer and S3 Operations Officer. His last duty assignment was as Battalion Commander with an area of operations spanning over 24 counties covering northeast Texas (roughly the size of Vermont and Connecticut). According to Colonel Valentine Belfiglio of the Texas Military Forces Museum, Robert was the youngest Battalion Commander in the history of Texas.

“Robert was a great commander and an even better friend,” said Bill Patman, retired Texas Guardsman. “He was almost young enough to be my son, but he was my boss. That took some getting used to, but his loyalty and work ethic won me over. He always placed his soldiers first, and he worked harder and longer than anyone else in the unit. I’ve never met a smarter or harder-working officer in my life. These same qualities are what made him a successful entrepreneur and innovator.”

Deployments included hurricane relief, security at President George W. Bush’s ranch and Governor Rick Perry’s inauguration, protection of Native American cultural sites, and humanitarian missions. He completed military, medical, and Texas Commission on Law Enforcement training. Robert received multiple awards for his service. He is most proud of being awarded Officer of the Year by his soldiers; a recognition he received as a lieutenant and then again as captain.

“It’s been an amazing journey,” said Robert. “It was an honor to serve my country and local community. My journey began at Leesville High School in their Army JROTC program. I learned about civic virtues and duty. It prepared me for life. As graduation approached, I was awarded full Army, Air Force, and Navy ROTC scholarships to any university (valued at over \$700,000). According to cadet command, I was the only student in the country to receive full scholarships from each branch including the coveted Tier 1 scholarship. This is a testament to the care and instruction of Leesville’s JROTC staff.” Robert graduated from the US Army College ROTC program, Advanced Camp, Air Assault, and other military schools. Robert is an outspoken supporter of expanding JROTC programs in high schools.

In civilian life, Robert is an engineer turned entrepreneur. He developed new systems for the US, UK, Canadian, and New Zealand military. He worked on Air Force One and on aircraft for royal families. He developed airborne and satellite systems for counter-narco, counter-IED, and to stop the deforestation of the Amazon rainforest. His innovative products were used to improve the yields of marginal farmland in developing countries and to protect national fisheries. He led some of the largest border security programs in South America and the Middle East. He worked for the global invention company, Intellectual Ventures, as their Entrepreneur in Residence capitalizing their portfolio of over 90,000 patents. Lately, he has been cultivating early-stage technologies in e-commerce and energy.

“Robert was extremely helpful, thoughtful, and personable,” said Justin White, Founder of Selery Fulfillment, a multi-channel e-commerce order fulfillment solution provider. “He helped us immensely getting the business off the ground and scaling it to a multi-million dollar company.” Robert mentored Justin and later served on Selery’s Board of Directors.

“His passion and innovation helped a lot in building the Dallas startup ecosystem,” said Sugandan Barathy, formerly of Tech Wildcatters. “There are many good startups that have come from Tech Wildcatters. I will always be proud to have served the startup community and working with Robert was an important part of my experience.” Robert was the Managing Director and remains an owner of Tech Wildcatters, the first business-to-business accelerator in the world.

In the past year, 2 startups Robert mentored and invested in exited for over \$200M. His other startups have raised over \$80M in new investment during the same period. He has worked in startups since 1997. His largest exit-to-date tips the scales at over \$700M. His name appears in the list of top angel investors in Dallas, Silicon Valley, and London. The founders, employees, and interns he mentored have become CEOs, Investment Bankers, Venture Capitalists, Professors, and Serial Entrepreneurs. More importantly, there are 2 small encased items in his office denoting how his innovations saved lives. -- "Once a guardsman, always a guardsman."