



GOVS WHO LEAD THROUGH MILITARY SERVICE AWARD

RETIRED LT. COL. THOMAS MERCER

Austin Peay State University alumnus retired Lt. Col. Thomas Mercer ('84) received the 2020 Govs Who Lead Through Military Service Award. Mercer serves as manager of the Small Business Program Office for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Memphis District.

In this capacity, his primary responsibilities are executing the mission of the Small Business Program Office and taking appropriate actions to facilitate, preserve and strengthen small business enterprises and ensure the full participation of Small, Small Disadvantaged, HUBZone, SDVOSB, WOSB business concerns and HBCUs in federally sponsored programs.

Mercer began his acquisition career in 1994 as a captain in the U.S. Army. From 1994 to 1997, he served in various acquisition positions with the Aviation and Troop Command in St. Louis, Missouri. Upon completion of the Command and General Staff College residence course at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1998, he was assigned to the USACE St. Louis District where he served as assistant division chief and chief of the contracting division.

After his military retirement in 2000 as a lieutenant colonel in the Army Acquisition Corps, Mercer joined his wife in owning and operating their Captain D's Seafood Restaurant franchise in St. Peters, Missouri. After 10 years of operations, they sold their restaurant ownership and returned to the workforce as federal employees in the St. Louis area with Mercer as a contract specialist and branch chief with USACE St. Louis and his wife as an IRS tax return auditor. In 2014, both were transferred to the Tennessee area, Mercer with the USACE Memphis District and his wife with the IRS Division in West Tennessee. Mercer is a native of Tennessee and received his bachelor's degree in finance from Austin Peay in 1984 and his master's degree in material acquisition management from the Florida Institute of Technology in 1993. He went on to become the first president of the APSU Military Alumni Chapter. He and his wife live in Arlington, Tennessee, and have two children. His awards and honors include the Bronze Star for Desert Storm, the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Commander's Award for Civilian Service and a Master Certificate in contract management.