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THREE EASTSIDE JROTC CADETS PROMOTED TO HIGHER RANKS

Promotions were awarded at the end of the battalion's 9/11 ceremony

Photos attached: see end of release for captions.

PATERSON – The solemn 9/11 ceremony at Eastside High School this morning ended on an uplifting note as three cadets of the school's JROTC Mighty Ghost Battalion were promoted to higher ranks.

Natalie Marroquin, who serves as Battalion Commander, was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Yordi Ulloa received the rank of Command Sergeant Major, and Stephanie Guzman who serves as Executive Officer was promoted to the rank of Major. All three of the cadets are seniors and received their promotions from Senior Army Instructor and Department Chairman Major Luis Eduardo Barraza. They will be leading the battalion, which has 270 cadets, through the 2022-2023 school year.

District and school officials joined the battalion in the Eastside High School courtyard, where Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer spoke about the importance of never forgetting the lessons of 9/11.

“In our most uncertain moments, we must never forget who we are – strong, resilient, and willing to help one another – especially in times of crisis,” said Shafer. “As much as I wish that you will never have to experience a day like 9/11, the reality is that you will have challenges in the future. And remembering the lessons of 9/11 will help you overcome those challenges. Be strong. Be proud. Be someone that others can depend upon. Be someone who is willing to depend upon others. Seek to serve others before serving yourself. And, most of all, never lose sight of what it means to be an American.”

Major Barraza thanked the gathering of officials and cadets for their support of the JROTC program at Eastside and for attending the ceremony.

“9/11 is truly a day that will live in our minds and our hearts forever,” Barraza said. “It's a day that so many innocent lives were lost. It is a day when so many brave souls sacrificed their lives for others. A day that changed us all forever. May God bless the City of Paterson and the United States of America.”

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Photo 1: Major Barraza pins the rank of lieutenant colonel to the lapel of Eastside JROTC Cadet Natalie Marroquin.

Photo 2: from left, Assistant Superintendent David Cozart, Superintendent Eileen Shafer, Yordi Ulloa, Natalie Marroquin, Stephanie Guzman, Eastside Principal of Operations Edgard Nieves, Eastside Principal of Instruction Andre McCollum, Major Barraza.