

To Whom It May Concern:

This a testimony of how I knew Justin Sisson and the profound impact he had not only had on me, but anyone he came into contact with. Three years ago, I first met Justin Sisson in Ft. Benning, GA during the Infantry Basic Officer Leader Course (IBOLC). We were in the same class, but had different instructors. At first, any interactions I had with Justin was just in passing or if we ended up working out together in the mornings during our physical training. From early on, Justin's charisma, intelligence, and performance were excelling and others significantly noticed. As the course continued, having some of the same friends, Justin and I started hanging out. During the course, you find out what your first duty station will be and it ended up that Justin and I both received Ft. Campbell, KY. We started making plans of splitting an apartment after we finished our training. At the culmination of IBOLC, Justin was announced as the honor graduate of the course. This is not an easy task to achieve. Our IBOLC class consisting of roughly 150 Infantry Lieutenants is evaluated on physical assessments, examinations, briefings, and leading training missions during field exercises. From these continuous assessments, Justin had achieved the highest ratings, receiving honor grad.

After we graduated from IBOLC, Justin and I immediately entered into the U.S. Army Ranger School. For those that have been through this demanding school, you find out a lot about yourself and others under situations of extreme duress. People that you think are strong leaders end up breaking down and showing their true colors when they are challenged. Others selflessly focus their intent on helping others through so they can proudly receive the coveted Ranger Tab on graduation day. Justin and I ended up side by side during the 61-day school, traveling over 200 miles on foot with heavy combat loads from the mountains in Dahlenega to the swamps in Florida. Justin and I became pretty close during this school, as you can imagine. Nothing bonds friendships stronger than going through tremendous adversity. Justin was the backbone of our group, selflessly helping at every moment he could. Both Justin and I were able to graduate Ranger School together, going straight through without recycling any phases which only 30% of a class on average will.

As Justin and I moved to Ft. Campbell, we ventured into different units, mine deploying me to Afghanistan immediately. A few months into my deployment, Justin was sent overseas as well, making a stop where I was located, being able to see him one last time before he was Killed in Action on June 3, 2013.

For those that never met Justin, you will never fully understand the impact he had on everyone around him. He was one of the best leaders I have ever seen, and his men loved and respected him. He pursued a life that was nothing less than astonishing. His love for people and conviction for serving our great nation is something that should be memorialized; not to just remember the great man that Justin was, but the ideas and beliefs that he lived and fought for. Honoring Justin and his way of life by naming part of a highway after him will remind people who he was and all he stood for. I feel that there will never be enough that I could do to show my indebtedness for my brother and all he sacrificed, but I will continually try. Please seriously consider this naming for Justin, his family, and his friends. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ryan Cermely