

LtCol Glenn Johnson attended Officers Candidate School in 1986 and was commissioned as a 2nd Lt in the Marine Corps. He was promoted to the rank of LtCol during his service years, which spanned from 1986 to 2015. To become an officer requires getting a college degree, then going to OCS rather than boot camp.

“My first assignment was at 29 Palms, California, where I spent my stint on active duty as a Logistics Officer for a combat service support unit. Our unit did the maintenance to keep the assets of 1st Marine Division up and running, my job was to monitor and take actions to improve turn-around time once the asset entered our facility. I was also the safety officer and environmental officer. After leaving active duty I spent another 23 years in the Reserves, serving as the Logistics Officer for 14th Marines, an artillery unit out of Fort Worth JRB, and also was the Logistics Officer for MAG-41, and air unit out of Fort Worth JRB. I also served as Commanding Officer for a unit out of Waco, Texas that was a combat service support unit. After that, I spent several years in various roles as an Inspector who traveled to various Reserve units to improve their training and readiness to deploy. My last stint was serving as the Deputy Inspector General for Marine Forces Europe, where I worked at Stuttgart, Germany to prepare them for inspections so they were inspection and deployment ready.”

Specialized training for jobs in the Marine Corps is important. “All Marine Officers are trained first to be Infantry Officers because they want everyone to think alike and know what the front-line troops are dealing with. We spent 6 months learning that,” said Johnson. He said specialized training included, “OCS, TBS, Logistics Officers Training, and Command and Staff School. The training started with Officers Candidates School (OCS), which is 10 weeks, and only about 50% make it through. Then 6 months of training to be an Officer at The Basic School, TBS, which we nicknamed The Big Suck...lol. It was hard training and we were there during the winter, and every field exercise it snowed or we had bad weather. Then I went to Logistics Officer training at Little Creek, Virginia which was 12 weeks of learning all aspects of working in logistics. Every Marine unit has a S4 or Logistics Section and you have to learn how to process every type of equipment on every mode of travel, such as by rail, ship, or truck. The art of logistics was a perfect fit for my degree in business management, as well as my personality, because I enjoy the planning process.” Prior to OCS, Johnson had graduated from OU. He received his MBA through night school while stationed at 29 Palms, California.

The hardest part of training was being put under pressure, sleeping only 4-5 hours a night for 10 weeks, and then having to perform in challenging situations.

Johnson said military service experiences had a positive impact on his life. “I was a quiet, introverted kid who needed to be developed as a leader, and the Marines gave me that training and grew me into someone who was confident to lead and who could function as an extrovert when needed. A core motto of the Marines is “adapt and overcome.” I have adopted that and still use it to this day. Life comes at you fast and things rarely go as planned, so you have to constantly be adapting and overcoming. Because of this philosophy I am always looking ahead, and figuring out how to improve the situation, rather than complaining and being negative. It’s made a huge difference in how I respond to things.

“I would like to send a message to young Choctaws that they can serve as Officers in the military. We need young Choctaws in leadership roles, and to see that it is possible to become a Lieutenant and to get promoted through the system. I encourage Choctaws in college to consider a career as an officer in the military” said Johnson.

Places Johnson was able to travel included Morocco, Japan, Australia, & Germany. When asked if there was a point during service that he decided the military was, or was not, the right career choice, Johnson responded, “I went in with the plan to do one tour, then focus on other goals. But I enjoyed it so much more than I anticipated, I stayed in the Reserves after my tour on active duty.

“One of the hardest aspects of the military is they are in control of decisions that impact your life, specifically where you are stationed and how often you move. Most people in the military move to a different unit every 2-3 years, which can be hard, especially if you are sent to a place you might not be

excited about. My advice is to factor this in your decision as to whether military life is for you, or not, but once you decide it is, to embrace each move as an opportunity to see different parts of the world and to learn new skills. The nice thing is you get 30 days leave a year, so no matter where you are, you can get home for 30 days a year.

Johnson's youth was in Pushmataha County. "I was born at the old Talihina Indian Hospital and raised at Snow, Oklahoma and went to school at Antlers. My mother was Margaret Watson Frazier, and my stepdad was Johnny Frazier, who worked as a police officer in Antlers for many years, and had served in the US Army. I had 2 brothers who served in the Army and their positive experiences helped my decision. My Mom was heavily involved in her church, as was her Mom. My Grandma was involved at Big Lick United Indian Methodist Church, and my Mom helped there as well as Old Cedar United Methodist church. I learned the value of church involvement. The second thing was my Mom loved our home being the center of family activities. She loved having everyone over for Christmas or Easter. She loved going to school events and watching her kids and grandkids. After she passed, I felt responsible to keep this going and our family continues to gather for those holidays as well as summer family events and our immediate and extended family has stayed connected. I learned the importance of faith and family from my Mom!

Johnson believes all people are born with gifts and talents that God wants used to help others. "I am most satisfied when I am helping others. I have been fortunate to travel the world and do a lot of things, but the things I cherish are family time and helping others in need.

Johnson said he counts his blessings and thinks about the ways God would want him to use the talents given him. "I have always been someone who picked themselves up by their bootstraps. I can remember when I was very young, before we had an Indian home, we lived in a small house that had an outhouse in the woods. I remember when I was four, moving into our Indian home. When I was older, my parents had divorced, and my mother had six kids. I wanted to take care of the place. I remember as a young kid, I was responsible for the yard. If we were going to have company, I didn't want the house to look overgrown! We couldn't afford landscaping so I would go into the woods and transplant a tree and some plants like yucca. I transported those to the front of the house just to improve our landscaping. It was little things, but I wanted to improve things.

"One of my core philosophies is "Maximizing Every Opportunity" whenever I do something, even simple things. For example, at Christmas I was having my whole family in, so in planning it, I thought, "How can I make this a memorable event and do things they will remember as 'Dallas Christmas', because we did X, Y and Z?"

Johnson is now in pharmaceutical sales, specializing in helping patients with cancer. In addition to maximizing opportunities, a key lesson Johnson learned is that all success evolves through relationships. "I am a firm believer that the better you are at connecting with people and building relationships, the more success you are going to have. I am in sales and I know that for me to be successful, I can't just be the typical sales rep. I have to figure out how to bond with people." He wrote an article called 'Using the skills of a private investigator as a sales rep' that was published in a pharmaceutical magazine. He said, "The key concept of that is if I am calling on a doctor, I look around the office, notice their personal things and find a connection.

He is mindful that everything done and said in life can be significant. "As a kid, we had a pond about a ¼ mile from the house. One of my favorite things was to see if I could skip a stone across it. What it makes me think of is the ripple effect. When that stone first hits the water, you see those waves ripple out across the pond and you know that you just threw that stone. Whether it be as a salesperson, or when I was a tribal councilman, it's that ripple effect. How can we have a ripple effect on the world?

"I take it as a responsibility. I don't think I was given certain gifts and talents for my own benefit. I was given those things to have an impact on the world – a ripple effect. Last year in my sales job, I had 130% sales growth. To me that represents ripple effect.

“Part of my mindset is how can I have that ripple effect – how can I impact others in a positive way? I love seeing that ripple effect and challenging people to have a ripple effect.”

Johnson is a former Choctaw Tribal Councilperson, serving from 1997 - 2001. “My mother had cancer. That started when I was a Junior in High School and went on for 17 years. I moved back to help take care of her, which led to me deciding to run for the Tribal Council. I wanted to make a difference and help Choctaw people. I saw several needs and wanted to fight for them. My favorite memories of serving on the Council, include seeing the birth of my daughter, Marissa, while I was on the Council and how everyone adored her. I particularly enjoyed listening to people’s needs and doing what I could to help. Since leaving the council I have been very fortunate to work in cancer care, and helping people as they battle cancer. “Hearing success stories of where treatment helped a patient extend their life are the best part of my job,” said Johnson. “I couldn’t ask for a better job unless it was working for the Choctaw people.”