

When Duty Called

Colonel Jack H. Jacobs RC'66, GSNB'72

How did Rutgers and the ROTC prepare you for a 20-year military career?

Rutgers gave me a liberal arts education and taught me how to think. The standards for academic excellence were extremely high; the faculty didn't mess around. The ROTC faculty officers were also first-class; they taught me about objectives, resources, and so many other things.

What does receiving the Medal of Honor mean to you?

You change the way you deport yourself. You're representing millions of people who sacrificed for their country.

In your new book *If Not Now, When?: Duty and Sacrifice in America's Time of Need* (Berkley Publishing), you say that young people should make a sacrifice for the nation. How?

I believe in universal service, but that doesn't mean you have to fix bayonets and charge the bad guys. Too many people, though, feel they can just write a check for their taxes and they've done enough.

As a soldier, finance executive, or political analyst, you convey no shortage of self-confidence and irreverence. What accounts for the attitude?

Rutgers, my parents, and growing up on the streets of New York City. I know what I believe in.

Why should people read your new book?

The book is a Vietnam War memoir and hopefully insightful. But it's also funny. Life is too short not to laugh.

Visit ur.rutgers.edu/magazine for an expanded interview with Jacobs.

