

TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE COMMISSIONER DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

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PRESS RELEASE

Voices of Veterans: Brig. Gen. Robin Akin Shares Her Story of Service on Women's Veterans Day

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Austin — Today, Texas Land Commissioner and Veterans Land Board (VLB) Chairwoman Dawn Buckingham, M.D., is proud to introduce the next installment of the series highlighting the VLB's Voices of Veterans oral history program. In this episode, we hear the story of Brig. Gen. Veteran Robin Akin of the U.S. Army.

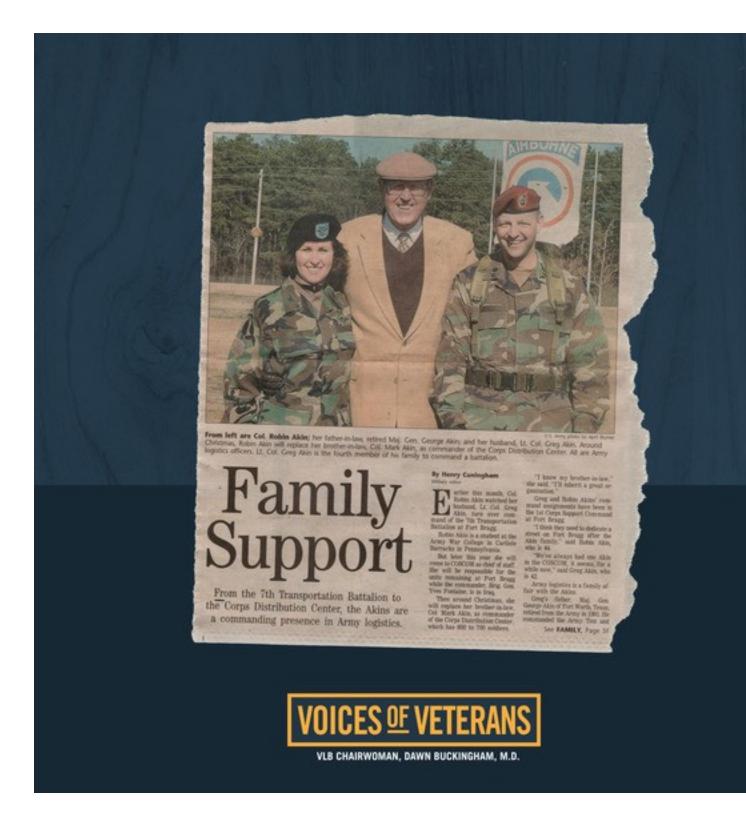
Akin was born in Nashville, Tennessee and grew up in a single-parent household with three brothers. Akin said she is proud of how things turned out for her, as the only high school and college graduate in her immediate family.

"I just decided to stick with it and I was the only one who finished high school and college, so it was a weird bringing up but in respect to how I grew up and what I became, I was very happy," Akin said.

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| Akin, Robin | | | | |
| | military branch Army | rank Brig Gen | conflict Gulf War, Iraq/Afghanistan | |
| | date interviewed 08/04/2023 | | interview available on voicesofveterans.org | |
| Robin Akin attended commissioned as a March 1982. She Parachutist class of served worldwide, if Iraqi Freedom, and the Joint Logistics during Operation Un the Deputy Chief Korea-U.S. Combine father-in-law held General Akin was Tennessee's Army R | second lieutena was the only of 1986, with including in De Operation Endu Commander for ified Response of Staff for L ed Forces Com 25 years earli inducted in | ant in the female in 155 jump esert Shie or Human in Haiti a ogistics a mand, a er. In 20 to the U | U.S. Army in the Master s. Mrs. Akin eld, Operation dom. She was itarian Relief and served as at the South position her 16, Brigadier | |

Akin's military career in the United States Army is rife with accomplishments. How her military career began, however, was a story she had to tell after graduating early from the University of Tennessee.

"Funny story, after graduating early from college in 1982, I went to Airborne School and I got my first and only ticket trying to get from the University of Tennessee to Fort Benning, Georgia," Akin shared with a subtle laugh. "I was speeding like no tomorrow so I could get there and sign in. In the end, the cop did let me go and told me I was going the right direction, just to slow it down a little." Akin was commissioned as a second lieutenant in March 1982 and spent the first seven months in classes before reporting to Fort Bragg, North Carolina and immediately went on jump status there. She said her experience there, as only one of two females in her unit, was unique and eye-opening.

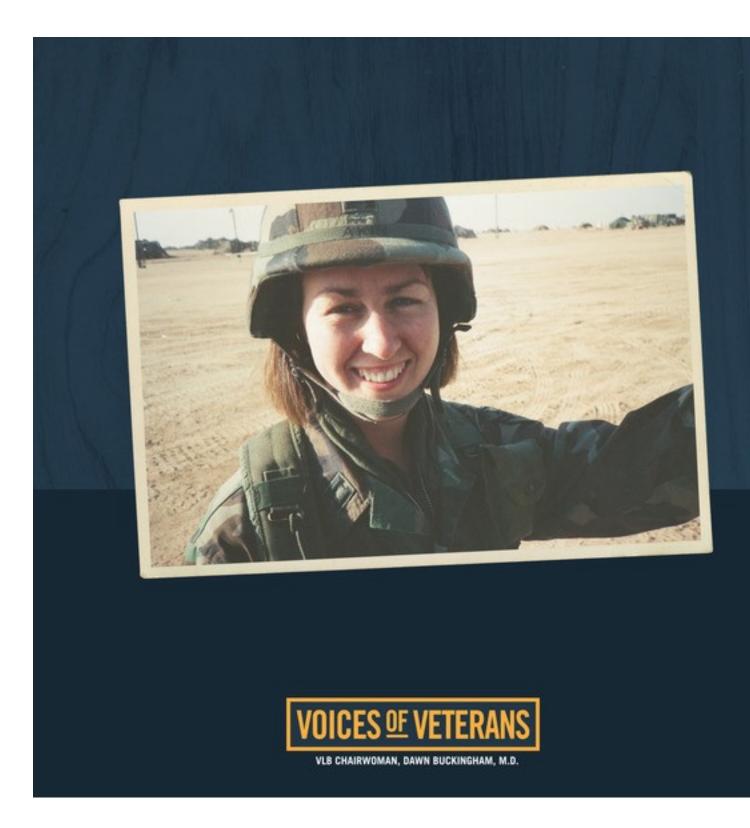


"My first run, I fell out of the run because I couldn't keep up with the men and my Company Commander said 'you're never going to make it in the military," Akin remembered with a laugh. "Come to find out, he got out of the military as a Lieutenant Colonel and I got out as a General, so I guess he didn't know what he was talking about."

Akin served worldwide and saw multiple conflicts, including Desert Shield, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom, and served as the Joint Logistics Commander in support of Humanitarian Relief during Operation Unified Response in Haiti. Akin was also the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics at South Korea-U.S Combined Forces Command (CFC), the same position her father-in-law served in twenty-five years before her.

While times have changed in the military since Akin's career began, she said she really had to learn how to make a difference along the way and while she wasn't afraid to do so, she learned from some of the best to ever serve.

"As a female leader, I had one female leader who mentored me, she became the first 4-Star General in the military, Ann Dunwoody, she would always say 'just look up and look out, don't look down because you're not going to make a difference if you're looking down," Akin recalled. "So, I just conquered every mission I could do, I would sometimes walk over men's backs to make it happen."



Today, Akin said she's making up for lost time with her family and spends a lot of her time volunteering for non-profits, including the Daughters of American Revolution, having found immense enjoyment in giving back and continuing to serve her country.

"It's enjoying to give back in a volunteer way. People look at you differently, they don't believe you did all that, but they admire that you did it," she explained. "I'm very driven, very honest when I say that more ladies, more women, are going to stand up for the cause and make a difference in our military and in our world. If I get a chance to be part of that, I'm all for it, I'm all in."

In 2016, Brigadier General Akin was inducted into the University of Tennessee's Army ROTC Hall of Fame. Mrs. Akin retired in 2013 after spending over thirty-one and a half years in the Army and now resides in Fort Worth, Texas.

To listen to Brig. Gen. Akins tell her story, click the button below.

Brig. Gen. Robin Akin's Story

Veterans can email <u>VoicesofVeterans@glo.texas.gov</u> to tell their stories. Please note that the Veteran must be a resident of Texas at the time of their interview.

Voices of Veterans is a state agency's first Veteran oral history program. It records the stories of Texas Veterans through their time in service and after returning home from combat.

The VLB records interviews with veterans over the phone or in person. Their interviews are then permanently archived in the Office of Veterans Records at the GLO, where they join the historical documents of other Texas heroes such as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Barret Travis.

Veterans' interviews are also available to researchers, historians, genealogists, and the public. These precious records inspire future generations and remind us of our Veterans' sacrifices.

To listen to the over 500 archived stories of Veterans documented through the GLO's Voices of Veterans oral history program, click the button below:

Voices of Veterans