



## **Artillery OCS Hall of Fame**

**Colonel  
Earl R. Tatum  
Class R1A-61**

Colonel Tatum started his military path early by graduating from Lyman Military Academy in Camp Hill, Alabama in 1953. He enlisted in the Army from 1953-1959 and joined the Illinois Army National Guard as an operations sergeant. He was selected to attend the Special Reserve Artillery Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill in 1961 graduating on September 2, 1961.

His first assignment as a commissioned officer was as a Platoon Leader of a Nike Hercules missile unit. He later served in the position of Executive Officer for several different Nike Hercules batteries.

In 1968 Colonel Tatum assumed command of a Nike Hercules Battery and continued in that position until 1974 when it phased out. During 1972 he was one of four officers in NORAD (North American Aerospace Defense Command) selected as an Outstanding Company Grade Officer. During his time as the Battery Commander his unit was chosen as first runner-up for the best unit in the entire U.S. Army Air Defense Command.

From 1982-1985 he served as the Illinois Army National Guard state recruiting and retention officer. During his time in that position the strength of the Illinois Army National Guard rose from 82 to 99%.

Colonel Tatum retired in June 1990 as Chief of Staff of the Illinois Army National Guard.