

## **SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY NAMES SZYMANSKI CADET COLONEL**

### ***Five Additional Seniors Promoted to Cadet Lieutenant Colonel***

**MENDOTA HEIGHTS, Minn., Nov. 26, 2008** – J. Szymanski, of Rosemount, Minn., was named the 101st cadet colonel of Saint Thomas Academy in a ceremony earlier today. Surrounded by fellow cadets, administrators and faculty, previous cadet colonels, parents and community members, Szymanski was handed the Fleming Saber by Headmaster Dr. Thomas Mich to signify his selection as head of the Corps of Cadets.

“[He] is an outstanding young man who will lead the Corps of Cadets with excellence and honor,” said Commandant of Cadets LTC Michael DePuglio (ret.), U.S. Army. “He is well respected among his peers, as well as the faculty and administration. He has earned their respect through discipline in his academics, community service, co-curriculars, and most importantly, his level of integrity in dealing with others.”

Szymanski, son of Brian and Cathy, has attended Saint Thomas Academy for six years. He attended St. Joseph’s School in Rosemount through sixth grade. Prior to being named cadet colonel, he had served as commander of A Company. In the fall 2008 season, he was named All Conference and All State in soccer, and the Academy’s Most Valuable Offensive Soccer player. He also captained the Academy’s team. In addition, he is captain of the 2008-09 basketball team. He has earned two Eagle Awards and two Torch Awards for his academic achievement.

“Saint Thomas Academy has given me the confidence to perform better in all aspects of my life,” Szymanski said. “I have gained many lifelong relationships that I will never forget. Because of the lessons learned through the curriculum, leadership, and athletics at Saint Thomas Academy, I am confident in my abilities to address new challenges in the future.”

His role as cadet colonel will prepare Szymanski for leadership roles in college and throughout his life. The cadet colonel works closely with the Academy’s administrators and military leaders to implement a wide variety of events at the Academy, including the formal JROTC military reviews, the Brigade Formal Inspection, and numerous other school activities. The cadet colonel also acts as liaison between the cadets and the faculty and administration, often influencing or handling disciplinary matters.

The cadet colonel is chosen based on his academic performance, co-curricular involvement, merits and demerits, military performance and leadership abilities. A board including the headmaster, commandant of cadets, the assistant headmaster, the dean of students, the dean of academics, a faculty representative and a student representative choose the cadet colonel from the 16 senior officers.

The traditional symbol of the cadet colonel’s authority, the Fleming Saber, is named in honor of U.S. Marine Corps Reserve **Capt. Richard E. Fleming ’35**, who served as a flight officer in Marine Scout-Bombing Squadron 241 during World War II. He was posthumously awarded the highest decoration for heroism, the Medal of Honor, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt for his “dauntless perseverance and unyielding devotion to duty.” Fleming died in the line of duty on June 5, 1942, during the Battle of Midway. For additional background, visit: <http://www.cadets.com/page/288>.

Five additional seniors were promoted from cadet captain to cadet lieutenant colonel. They are:

- T. Caturia of Hastings, brigade executive officer
- R. Muellerleile of Saint Paul, brigade chief of staff
- R. Robinson of Edina, white battalion commander
- A. Ayotte of Mendota Heights, blue battalion commander
- M. Baer of Edina, gold battalion commander