

ranking passing defense in the country. Asher Clark led the Nation's third-best rushing attack. Tim Jefferson will graduate as the winningest Air Force quarterback of all time and the first quarterback in service academy history to lead his team to four consecutive bowl games.

So these young men have a lot to be proud of. And if the past couple of seasons are any indication of what is to come, Coach Calhoun, we expect the Air Force will be back here this time next year. *[Laughter]* Now, I know Army and Navy will have something to say about that. *[Laughter]* But I know that the next year will take these young men from the Cadet Field House to pilot training, to air bases around the world, in defense of our country. Ultimately, these seniors understand that shut-outs and bowl games and trophies are not nearly as important as the solemn obligation, the solemn oath that they will take in just a few weeks as the newest officers in the world's finest Air Force.

So, gentlemen, I have no higher privilege and no greater honor than serving as your Commander in Chief, and I look forward to joining you for that important ceremony.

Today we honor the success that these outstanding young men had on the playing field. And we look forward to their continuing excellence on behalf of the Nation. And, cadets, as you look to trade the proud uniform of your team for the proud uniform of your country, I want you to know that this country will stand by you and do everything possible to help you succeed and come home safe.

So God bless all those who serve, and God bless the United States of America, and God bless Air Force.

Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:42 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jon Davis, defensive back, Alex Means, linebacker, Timothy Jefferson, Jr., quarterback, Brady Amack, linebacker, and Asher Clark, running back, U.S. Air Force Academy football team.

Statement on the Presidential Election in Timor-Leste *April 23, 2012*

I congratulate Taur Matan Ruak on his victory in Timor-Leste's Presidential election and the people of Timor-Leste for successfully participating in a peaceful, free, and transparent election. I also recognize with deep appreciation President Jose Ramos Horta for his close friendship with the United States during his Presidency and look forward to continuing that productive relationship with Taur Matan Ruak.

Our partnership with Timor-Leste is fundamental and enduring. It is based on shared values of democracy, freedom, and human rights. The United States remains steadfast in its support of Timor-Leste's efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and consolidate peace and security in the country.

NOTE: The statement referred to President-elect Jose Maria "Taur Matan Ruak" Vasconcelos of Timor-Leste.

Statement on Department of Defense Initiatives To Combat Sexual Assault in the Military *April 23, 2012*

I applaud the initiatives that Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta and General Martin Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff, have announced to further combat sexual assault in the military. The men and women of the United States military deserve an