Florida A&M University (FAMU) alumnus Brigadier General (Ret.) Leroy C. Bell was honored with the 2014 MEAC Distinguished Alumni Award during the 43rd Annual Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference Tournament held in Norfolk, Va. in March.

“I am definitely honored to represent the university this way,” said Bell, who donned his orange FAMU sports coat at the special on-court halftime ceremony. “Any recognition of Leroy Bell is also recognition of FAMU and that’s what being an alumnus is all about.”

Known to family and friends as the “Road Runner,” Bell came to the university as a track and field scholarship recipient in 1951. After graduating from FAMU in 1955, he accepted a commission as an officer in the United States Army. Thirty-two years later, after completing tours in Europe, Korea and Vietnam, he retired as a brigadier general – one of only five FAMU graduates to reach the flag officer rank in the history of FAMU’s Army ROTC program. While serving in the armed forces, Bell served on the personal staff of the first African American Secretary of the Army Clifford L. Alexander Jr.

Bell currently serves as vice president of the Northeast Region of the FAMU National Alumni Association and is a longtime contributor to the MEAC and FAMU Athletics. He is active in FAMU’s athletic support groups, the Rattler “F” Club and FAMU Boosters.

Carmen Cummings, director of the FAMU Office of Alumni Affairs, said Bell is the definition of an avid FAMU supporter:

“General Bell claims to be retired, but his tireless volunteer work as an executive officer for the FAMU National Alumni Association dictates otherwise,” said Cummings. “He has been an avid supporter of his alma mater for several decades and is a stickler for following rules and protocols. Many die-hard alums have called him the ‘Dean of the Northwest Region’ and the ‘governing conscience’ of the association. He always goes the extra mile to campaign for positive measures that guard the legacy of our alma mater. Therefore, it was no surprise that his nomination for the MEAC Distinguished Alumni Award was so readily accepted and confirmed.”

Award recipients are selected based on their post graduation contributions to society and their record of continued support to their alma mater. Previous FAMU honorees include Earl Holmes, FAMU football head; Quinn Gray, former quarterback and current FAMU football quarterbacks coach; former U.S. Congressmen Kendrick Meek and Irvin Clark, Radford University vice president of student affairs and dean of students.