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The UNL-NROTC Mission

To develop Midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically, and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty in order to commission graduates as officers who possess a basic professional background, are motivated toward careers in the naval service, and have a potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government.
Greetings to all of our shipmates, alumni, family, and friends,

As the 2015-2016 academic year spools up, we can reflect on a very successful past year, and look forward to a very promising 2015-2016.

We wished MSGT Adam Criswell, USMC (ret), and his family fair winds and following seas in December. He retired after 23 years of service. We wish him and his family all the best in the next chapter of their lives. We also recently welcomed our new Assistant Marine Officer Instructor, Gunnery Sergeant Shane Sink, USMC, to our NROTC team. We are pleased to have him and his family here in Lincoln.

We commissioned 2nd Lt James Brown in December, and we wished him the best as he headed off to The Basic School in May 2015. This spring, 2nd Lt Seth Meharg, Ensign Alexander Klein, and Ensign Tyler Sheets were commissioned by Rear Admiral Mike Franken, USN, and joined the fleet. At the end of the summer we commissioned the Navy’s newest SWO, Ensign Reece Berg and the Navy’s newest NFO, Ensign Alyssa Selberg! Ensign Berg will be headed off to join the crew of the USS BAINBRIDGE (DDG 96) which will be deployed in the Fifth Fleet AOR. Ensign Selberg will head to NAS Pensacola to begin flight training. We wish all of our newest officers the very best as they start their careers!

I hope you all had a very safe and enjoyable summer. We had some of our Midshipmen deployed on ships, submarines, and attending training around the globe. We look forward to hearing their sea stories.

Our class of 2019 is shaping up to be a fairly large one. We welcomed them and their families in August!

Until next time, Fair Winds and Following Seas! Go Big Red!

R.E.THOMAS
CAPTAIN, USN
A Message from the Executive Officer

This is not a job
By Commander Mark O. Stearns

It’s hard to believe, the 2014/15 school year has ended. The academic year absolutely flew by. Congratulations to all our graduating Seniors! They are off to the Fleet in various capacities and will represent our unit in fine, BIG RED fashion! For the remainder of the unit, the summer offered the promise of some down time.

I hope all of you took advantage of the summer and maximized the training opportunities available. You must be proactive! What you “get out” of your day to day experiences depends directly upon what you “put into” it. Whether participating in one of the summer training cruises / programs or at home with friends and family. Consciously work to continue your professional development. Take advantage of the down time to read and analyze the leadership examples around you. Leadership lessons abound, even for those just working a summer job. Be observant and critically think about the leadership examples you see. Take note of good practices and bad. Watch how those around you react to different situations. If you “put in” a conscious effort, then I am confident that it will result in a rewarding professional and personal growth experience.

Remember, serving in our Nation’s military is a lifestyle – it doesn’t change over the weekend, when you are on Summer Break, in a leave status, or enjoying a foreign port. We are all representatives of the United States Navy and our Nation every single day, no exceptions. Be proud, be professional, stay engaged and enjoy your summer!
A Message from the Naval Officer Instructors

Discipline

By Lieutenants John Oldenkamp
and Robert Berry

One of the most important aspects of the military is good order and discipline. Discipline is not and should not be viewed as a synonym for punishment or only as a repercussion of a poor decision. Discipline is a lifestyle and one that everyone who serves must learn to adopt. Discipline can come in many forms. Ensuring you come in for counseling twice a month, meeting academic and physical goals, and following the chain of command is just the start of ensuring you are well disciplined.

Timeliness of action is critical to unit performance. When tasked with an objective, that person puts his or her trust in you to accomplish that task on time. You may have no idea why the deadline is set the way it is or what the grander purpose of the job is, but that does not matter. What may seem like minutiae to you, when combined with the other pieces of the puzzle, a whole operation can either succeed or fail. Proper reporting procedures are equally important. It does not matter that you accomplished your task early or went above and beyond what was asked. If you do not report the completion to the one who tasked you or did not complete the job on time, the job is not complete. Finishing the job, the whole job, is what is important, 98% complete is still incomplete.

Hard work is just as important to timeliness. Being able to properly plan an evolution, whether it is a Western Pacific Deployment or passing Calculus, being able to develop a plan of action and stick to it will take you far. Putting down the video games and turning off Netflix to accomplish a job can be hard, but if you cannot lead yourself, do not expect to lead others. The world is filled with distractions; some are avoidable and some are not. Prioritizing what is
important is key to your success. Whether you have to prepare for a reactor startup or a final exam, some things may have to be put on the back burner. There may be multiple important things, part of being an effective officer is being able to conduct triage and decide what is critical and what can wait. It is not an easy task, but one that you must master if you desire to lead.

Lastly, military discipline is rooted in a rigid chain of command. One must understand the difference between positional authority and rank. In the fleet, you may be a young Ensign, but when you are standing OOD, you have the authority of the Captain. Likewise, it does not matter if you graduate in one week or four years, if your company commander gives an order, that is your order to follow. Often, I hear complaining from the battalion. While some things we do are difficult, nothing erodes discipline faster than seeing a senior member complain about policies. Think before you speak, understand that when you open your mouth as a leader, you are being judged from above and below. There is a difference between constructive criticism and whining. The next time you think to make a derisive comment, think about whether what you are saying will either improve the overall effectiveness of the battalion or selfishly spread your own misery.
A Message from the Marine Officer Instructor

Excellence is not Immediate

By Major Adam Trout

One of the greatest advancements of the digital age is the immediacy that can be achieved. If I wanted to, I could order a box of widgets right now and have them at my house by some time tomorrow. When a question arises these days Google or Siri is surely the first resource most of us seek out. Board games or games of strategy like chess have been largely replaced by fast paced video games that allow their players to immerse themselves in a realistic environment as quickly as they can turn on their gaming system.

The merits and flaws of digital knowledge, online shopping or digital gaming can and will be debated by users, industry officials and sociologists for years to come but is not the subject to debate here. What all these developments have done, undoubtedly, is to foster a culture where every day we demand that things in our life happen faster and in a way that is more personally tailored toward us. There are few digital natives (those born since the widespread adoption of the internet) that would consider playing a game that they could not tailor to their interests or wading through add after add or an entire catalog to find that special thing you want to give or get at Christmas. In today’s world it has to be available now and it has to be just right for me. However, all of us that are in or are going to soon join the Navy/Marine Corps team have to be ready for a system that is not available now and is not tailored specifically to you.

There are several reasons why this is the case and I believe will continue to be the case for some time. First, we do not have jobs you can master quickly. Hard work and perseverance are still required to master the instruments of war. Secondly it is impossible due to the bureaucratic nature of the armed services to outright change the systems that are in place. Yes these systems should and will be updated but it is not possible to do it overnight so military members will continue to deal with change at the speed of bureaucracy for some time to
come.

We as a unit are at a challenging and opportune time. None of our staff are digital natives and all our students are. We may not always speak the same language but by working together we can all achieve a higher level of excellence. In order to do so we must exercise hard work, discipline perseverance and communicate effectively. The lessons on both sides may take time and will not always be enjoyable but as long as we are willing to continue to work together we will preserve and emerge as stronger military officers.
Welcome to NROTC!
By Midshipman 4/C John Hunt

I still clearly remember sitting in the dim classroom that early August morning, 0545 to be exact. About twenty new hopeful midshipmen nervously sat silent in the room. Each with new haircuts, and the same empty minds about what the next three days, or even the next semester, would hold. From the moment Master Sergeant Criswell began to speak, each and every one of us knew that this experience would be like no other we had ever experienced.

From the very beginning our new freshmen class was eager to begin this journey into the military world and to try to excel at whatever tasks we were given. Our first challenge would be new student orientation: three days of classroom briefs over uniform regulations, academic guidelines, and military regulations. Along with classroom work, the freshman class was put through various physical training exercises, swim qualifications, and drill practices. With each new lesson of the NROTC lifestyle, the freshmen class worked to achieve to the best of our abilities. Along with all of these military priorities, the freshmen class also had to figure out how to fit in other college activities. Classes, clubs, and social activities are all part of a normal college life. The challenge is, “How will you work your schedule and manage your time effectively?” This is one of the biggest skills the class had to learn, and learn quickly. Besides weekly activities such as physical training, drill, and lab, the class also was given a set amount of study hours and the responsibility of working football security for games. Juggling normal college life with military activities is not easily done, but somehow the class has been able to succeed.

Outside of military functions, the class was challenged by the upperclassmen to build camaraderie and friendships. With all of the challenges presented to the freshmen, this was more of a fun get-away than it was a task. To escape the stress the class has done many activities: football game watch parties, going out to eat, and just hanging our or going to the rec center for a game of football. It is with great pride that I personally say I have made friends out of every member of my class, and I believe every other fourth class can say the same.
Your freshman year in the unit is a great time for many things. As many upper-classmen have told me, your freshman year is the best year because there is very little responsibility other than for yourself, and you can learn from everyone. This is true and has surfaced many times in the first semester alone. Whether in a lab, in a class, or even in the wardroom as a freshman, if your ears are open, your access to information is limitless. Other than the ability to manage time wisely, the next biggest thing I have learned from being a fourth class midshipman is that there is never a moment where you cannot learn something new. Always remember to keep your ears open and eyes forward!

Top: Midshipmen stretching before Physical Training.

Left: MIDN Garcia receiving his first award as a NROTC Midshipman.
(above) Final scores from the 2014 JSFM.
(right) Battalion Commander, MIDN 1/C Klein Addresses the Battalion after winning the Joint Field Meet Trophy.

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Battalion Fitness Leaders See Great Improvement Throughout Semester

By MIDN 3/C Matthew R. Ostdiek

During the Fall 2014 semester, UNL midshipmen participated in tri-weekly physical fitness workouts to prepare for interscholastic endurance competitions, the UNL Joint Service Field Meet, and the end of the semester PRT and PFT. Throughout the semester, physical fitness routines included high intensity cardio, cross-fitness, and muscular strengthening. On one occasion, we were also able to have a pool-based workout in which midshipmen improved their cardiovascular strength by treading water and swimming laps.

The fitness training paid off in big ways throughout the semester, as we found higher levels of success in physical competitions. In October, the NROTC won the UNL Joint Service Field meet, a fitness competition between the ROTC programs of all three service branches. Midshipmen and cadets competed in events including pushups, pull-ups and log sit-ups, as well as a stretcher relay and a lighthearted favorite, the izzy-dizzy relay. The event concluded with a Navy victory, a feat that we hadn’t achieved in years. The UNL NROTC also recorded its most successful intramural flag football season in memory.

Midshipmen in the battalion also realized a huge improvement in their personal PRT/PFT scores from the beginning of the semester to the end. On average, Navy Option midshipmen saw an increase in their PRT scores of 30 points, while Marine option midshipmen improved by an average of 11 points on the PFT.

All in all, physical fitness training was a large part of weekly battalion activities during the Fall 2014 semester. Midshipmen participated successfully in competitions and saw great personal achievement physical readiness. UNL midshipmen are excited about continuing to excel physically and participate in more competitions in the future.
(above) Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, CA. (below) MIDN 2/C Lane completes a maximum set of pull-ups, a major part of USMC physical performance standards.
Mountain Warfare
By Midshipman 2/C Lane

This summer MIDN 2/C Washa and I qualified to attend the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center for the ten day MIDN Orientation to Mountain Warfare Training. We flew into Reno International Airport and drove the remaining two hours to the Lower Base Camp of the training center in Bridgeport, California. We were promptly issued ropes and carabiners as we began our assimilation to the mountains. Lower Base Camp sits at an elevation of just over 6,700 with portions of the training area reaching just less than 12,000 feet in elevation.

The first hike was a quick three mile jaunt up to 8,000 feet, finishing at the Lower Training Area. Here we learned how to climb and rappel a rock face and got some excellent hands on application, climbing the face that assault climbers traverse on the Assault Climbers Course (without combat loads of course which would have added close to 70lbs). We also learned how to wade through a river as a unit (very cold) and how to cross a stream on a rope bridge. The events, while not a great physical challenge, showed us how to work as a team to defeat an obstacle.

After returning to the Lower Base Camp and getting lots of the best chow in the Marine Corps, we headed up to Landing Zone penguin. This was a significantly more challenging 4.5-mile hike. Once we arrived at the top we staged our gear and began creating our survival shelters that we would be staying in for the next few days. While some of the MIDN decided to create large and cozy shelters, myself and three other MIDN created a very small, discreet, camouflaged shelter to protect us from the elements. We needed it too. Every afternoon it rained for almost an hour, and then on one of the nights it snowed. The temperature swings in the mountains were all part of the training and it forced us to be adept at adjusting to the situation.

Overall, Mountain Warfare was an excellent chance for MIDN Washa and myself to see one of the best training centers that the Marine Corps has to offer and get to better know our peers as we prepare to go to OCS next summer.
Operation Red Lightning
By Midshipman 2/C Washa

October 10th initiated the beginning of the fall training exercise for the Marine Options at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Exercise Red Lightning is a three-day field training exercise conducted just outside of Lincoln that allows the Marine Options from every college level to be able to test and apply what they’ve learned in the NROTC. For the freshmen, this is their first exposure to a field environment and gives them the opportunity to apply what they’ve learned over the first months of NROTC. Sophomores and juniors are given leadership positions that test them on their command presence and ability to lead their squad or fire team. Seniors are expected to assist in a supervisory role, critiquing the underclassmen and preparing them for Officer Candidate School (OCS), which Marine Options attend the summer before their senior year.

Before the exercise, midshipmen are taught various skills in Marine Corps Training Operations (MCTO). These skills include day and night land navigation in which midshipmen are given maps and a compass and have to plot and find various points. This knowledge exposes the freshman to how to lead Marines in the field. They also rehearse fire team in the offense, demonstrating the Marine Options’ ability to move as a team to assault and push through obstacles. All exercises, including a 6-mile hike with packs the last morning, test a Marine Option both mentally and physically. This fall, Exercise Red Lightning gave the midshipmen a good viewpoint of where they stand, and pointed out areas where they are both successful and where they need to improve.
(above) MIDN 2/C Lane prepares for Red Thunder in the Spring of 2014

(below) MIDN 1/C Selberg and Meharg prepare for Red Thunder in the Spring of 2014
Operation Red Thunder

By Midshipman 4/C Franken

Red Thunder was a weekend-long field training exercise that the Marine midshipmen were able to participate in during the spring semester. Over the course of the weekend, we were able to practice tactics, while also taking part in a physically challenging hike. We slept outside in the elements and experienced a very small taste of what an infantry officer has to do while deployed.

My experience as a freshman during Red Thunder was mainly as an observer of how the elder midshipmen lead. I was not the one being directly tested during much of the training. Instead, I was learning what to do in certain situations by watching other leadership styles.

We left on Friday afternoon and arrived at Camp Ashland around 1630. During this time, we learned how to make a military bunk and what was going to be expected of us throughout the weekend. The rest of the day was spent doing land navigation. We were taken to a bridge and given a map and told to find our position by only using our surroundings and the map. After we located ourselves on the map, we were given a coordinate location and multiple points. Having to find our starting position, we tried to navigate the gravel roads. We then had to find the rest of our points from our starting position using our compass. Later that night, we did the same thing, but had to deal with the extra challenges the darkness offered. After we had finished, we set up camp, set up firewatchers and went to bed for the night.

Saturday morning we left for our hike. After several hours and many miles, we were able to eat and rehydrate and then we started practicing tactics. Participating in SULEs, (Small Unit Leadership Evaluation) the older midshipmen were selected to lead various scenarios that included different objectives. Navy Option midshipmen volunteers acted as the enemy. For one scenario, I was “captured” and the rest of the Marine options had to complete the original objective while also having to liberate me from the enemy.
On Sunday, we continued practicing tactics, but this time armed with paint-ball guns instead of rubber rifles. The two fire teams were pitted against each other, with each one of us trying to out-maneuver the other and gain the victory. After several rounds of this type of scenario, we practiced ambush tactics and responses. Learning that the key to a good ambush is practice, we had to wait quite a while before the enemy was finally seen and we were able to actually fire. On the other hand, when being ambushed, we learned that speed is essential.

Overall, Red Thunder afforded the Marine Options the opportunity to learn valuable lessons. Most importantly, we learned that every second could be a matter of life and death.

Midshipmen taking part in the paintball portion of Red Thunder.
“Welcome Aboard”

By Midshipman 4/C Thomas Tevebaugh

Join the Navy, fly supersonic jets, and do it for all the right reasons. The United States Military is a community I have longed to join, and I am not alone. After many personal hurdles, 18 of us showed up on Thursday, August 21st, for Orientation weekend. This is where we would take our first step towards joining UNL’s NROTC Battalion and subsequently, the Navy.

Having been acclimated to sleeping in until 1000 most mornings during the summer, “O-Week” was quite literally a wakeup call for all of us. Showtime was 0545 on the first floor of the Pershing Military and Naval Science building and none of us knew exactly what was coming. We were immediately introduced to the position of attention while both sitting and standing, by our instructor for the weekend, Master Sergeant Criswell, USMC. We were then introduced to a few upperclassmen midshipmen in the program who would serve as miniature Drill Instructors. The rest of the day consisted of briefings on topics ranging from sexual harassment to how to wear the uniform. We were issued uniforms for the semester and told to keep them in our “day packs”. These packs turned into our worst nightmare as we were frequently instructed to fill them up with all of our gear (which was next to impossible) in about 15 seconds. If we didn’t fill and shut them in time, we would dump them back out and retry until everyone had everything loaded in a timely manner. The most hilarious thing that happened during O-Week was a result of our lack of urgency in packing our day packs. Master Sergeant stomped down the middle aisle in our classroom and in the process completely obliterated a bottle of Head and Shoulders shampoo that happened to be laying on the ground. The stuff went everywhere and trying not to laugh was nearly impossible.

The next two days were fairly similar. Showtime at 0545 (5:45 am) with our day packs loaded full of uniforms, MRE’s, and hygiene gear. Both breakfast and lunch consisted of some of the greatest tasting MRE’s known to man. (Proficiency in sarcasm is an unspoken prerequisite in NROTC.) Unfortunately we didn’t get to heat them up, because that would have taken too much time. Meals were a maximum of about ten minutes, so there was no messing around.
Orientation was much shorter than it seemed in the moment. After going through PT in the morning, hours of death by Power-Point, and marching everywhere from the Bob Devaney Center to the M&N building, it would still be 1000 (10:00am), and we would have hours of instruction ahead of us. It wasn’t a terrible weekend. I actually enjoyed it. We were thrown together from all parts of the country and expected to work together as a well-oiled machine. We enjoyed the challenge, and, for the most part, thrived under pressure. Our first step towards a career of selfless service to our nation has been taken, and we are all excited to see where the next steps will take us.

4/C Midshipmen are inspected for the first time.
(Right) MIDN 1/C Sheets poses with his ball date.

(Below) MIDN Brake, Love and Ostdiek pose for a picture with MIDN Brake’s Ball Date Katie Carron.

MIDN get inspected prior to the Ball
The University of Nebraska-Lincoln NROTC proudly celebrates the Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball each fall. This year, on November 7th, we celebrated the 239th Anniversary of our two services’ establishment. Our celebration combines the two ceremonies currently practiced annually in the fleet in remembrance of each of the services’ forefathers for their actions.

The evening began with Midshipmen that had rehearsed sword manual, color guard, and the cake cutting ceremony, and all supporting positions, carrying out the ceremony in a harmonious fashion. Birthday messages from the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps were played and afforded all those in attendance to reflect on their past and contemplate their future in service to our great country.

Master Sergeant Criswell, the Guest of Honor that evening, delivered a very inspiring message about service and about a young Marine that had given his life for his service, his country, and his brethren. Upon conclusion of the ceremony, the floor was opened for free discussion at their tables. Each table had assortments of active duty, veterans, and current midshipmen that were able to mix because of the commitment to service both past, present, and future. Everyone was able to enjoy a hearty meal, celebratory cake and eventually some outstanding music out on the lively dance floor.

Distinguished guests, military service members, and midshipmen all joined together for a wide range of dancing that included guided dance-offs as well as good old fashioned slow dances. All of this celebration was possible because of the sacrifices of the men and women before us, and the legacy we are to fill. Of course, the entire event had its fill of laughter and smiles, but most importantly, we were joined together with past, present, and future service members in celebration of the birthdays of our cherished branches of service, the Navy and Marine Corps.
On 7 March of this spring semester, we were given the opportunity to travel to Boulder, Colorado for their annual Drill/Rifle/Endurance Competition. There were nine schools from all over the country, from USC to Wisconsin. The drill portion of this competition consisted of platoon basic drill, squad basic drill, and color guard. Our drill team participated in two of the three graded events. However, there was a different aspect for this competition, and we had to double up for who was on each team due to minimal spacing in the van. Led by myself, the drill team did a notable job considering having to know two completely different sequences. With the Colorado NROTC unit sending out five different LOIs and changing things by the hour, the situation was not ideal. However, we made the most of what we had and adjusted accordingly, practicing the unofficial Marine Corps motto “Semper Gumby.”

There was a rifle/pistol shooting competition that incorporated 3 stages of fire for both rifle and pistol. Here at UNL NROTC we are lucky to have our own weapons, and quality ones at that. Of all the schools, we were the only ones to bring our own weapons and they were the nicest ones there. The older weapons they had occasionally jammed and required more time and strength to get the rounds down range. The countless hours we put in every week with practice all paid off with us placing 2nd for the rifle portion.

This is my first time traveling to a drill competition since I’ve been here, and it was an eye-opening, valuable experience. This was a good evaluation of where we stood in regards to our quality of drill. It was also a good way to see how things are done in different units across the country. All in all, the Colorado drill competition was a fulfilling and motivating trip to take.
The University of Nebraska Naval ROTC represented itself extremely well in Colorado this year with their performance in the endurance competition, a portion of the Colorado Drill Competition. The team of six competed to conquer the 9-mile course that included summiting one of the peaks near the Colorado campus, gaining over 3,000 feet of elevation in just an hour and a half.

As the team began the descent at an astounding pace, the Colorado guide who was navigating for the team found himself lost and we ended up several miles off course. Our senior leader, Midshipman VonDerOhe, helped reorient the guide and we ended up finishing the race. Although we were no longer competing for time, we did have one of the fastest paces for the event at just under 4 miles an hour, and traveled the furthest of any group at 14.2 miles. While getting lost proved to be very discouraging, especially considering we were towards the front of the teams, it proved to be an excellent experience for the midshipmen in overcoming adversity and completing a seemingly overwhelming challenge. The scenery in the mountains was amazing and the team got to display its physical prowess to several of the schools, especially in the pool portion of the event. Overall, the event proved to be an awesome experience for the team and we look forward to competing again next year.
Mess Night
By Midshipman 3/C Tyler Martin

Every year in the spring time, the battalion and the unit staff get together to have Mess Night. Mess Night is an evening ceremony and dinner in which midshipmen get to poke fun at each other. Throughout the course of the academic year, everyone in the battalion ends up doing something funny, dumb, or embarrassing, and many midshipmen plan for Mess Night months in advance. Some even retain “evidence” of these misdeeds, such as pictures or props. The ceremony begins in a formal manner with a dinner, and then quickly devolves into the part of the ceremony where “fines” or “chits” against other midshipmen may be levied. The ceremony is a fun part of being in ROTC that midshipmen look forward to every year. It gives everyone a chance to unwind and laugh at themselves and the fun times they had throughout the year. The event brings about a feeling of camaraderie every year.
Top: Midshipmen conversing before the start of Mess Night. There are no pictures allowed to be taken within the dining area.

Left: LT Berry inspecting midshipmen to make sure they look sharp for Mess Night.
On April 16, 2015 the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps gathered inside the Cook Pavilion to take part in the Chancellor’s Review. The Chancellor’s Review is an event that gives university officials, friends, and other distinguished guests a chance to review all three ROTC units and to award certain cadets and midshipmen with various rewards and scholarships. This event is really a culmination of all the hard work that all of the units have put into the year, and is a chance to be rewarded for it. The event itself is split into several parts including inspections, pass in review, and the awards themselves. This event took a lot of time and planning. Leading up to this year’s review, the midshipmen, along with the Army and Air Force cadets, spent hours practicing to make the event run as smooth as possible.

The first part of the review is the inspection of the units. Each unit, along with a separate group made up of the entire award winners from all three branches, form up and prepare for inspection by the year’s guest of honor. This year’s guest of honor was University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Assistant to the Chancellor for Community Relations, Michelle Waite. Immediately after the inspection, the color guard is marched into position for the playing of the National Anthem. After this, the
award ceremony starts. The awardees are marched into place in the center of the parade deck and, rank-by-rank, file off to the award stand. Each individual’s name is called and he or she is awarded with various scholarships or awards.

This year, the NROTC Battalion had several midshipmen receive such honors, with many midshipmen receiving multiple awards. Honors are presented for several factors such as academic excellence, military proficiency, and community service. Many distinguished guests of honor were in attendance to present awards. After each cadet and midshipmen were given their various awards, the three units formed back up to prepare for the pass and review. The order was given and all three units turned and marched across the parade deck in front of the stands and then around the deck back into their respective positions. The next event was the playing of each branch’s song. The midshipmen proudly stood at attention and sang the Marine’s Hymn and Anchors Aweigh. The order to dismiss the units was given, thus ending the review.

This year’s NROTC Battalion was decorated with numerous awards and honors, showing that their hard work all semester in the classroom and in the community was well worth it. The ceremony itself was conducted very smoothly and was a great show for all in attendance.

The Midshipmen do stand out in a crowd while wearing their whites.
Putting Leadership Theories to the Test
By Midshipman 3/C Burroughs

I have always had an idea of what qualities I thought made a good leader. Honesty, unselfishness, perseverance, transparency, and mentorship are just a few. As long as you built a cohesive team, focused on doing what was right, and worked hard to accomplish your goals, you couldn’t go wrong. After receiving my first leadership role in the battalion this semester, I have come to realize that some things are easier said than done. Don’t get me wrong, all of these qualities are very important things to strive for, but it is one thing to know what makes a good leader, and it is another to actually be a good leader. After being a squad leader for this semester, I have come to better understand the skills that I need to work on and the skills that I have succeeded in. One of the qualities I need to work on is being a better mentor for the people in my squad. This takes time and effort; it does not come naturally. As an introvert, it is hard and often uncomfortable to be the one to open up and build not only mentorships, but close relationships. Growing and learning both require you to get out of your comfort zone. This is what NROTC is mainly about. We are here not only to get an education and commission, but also to experiment, learn, and grow as leaders. This is our time to try things out and learn what kind of leader we need to be in order to be as successful as possible.

Part of becoming a good leader is recognizing what your strengths and weaknesses are, and then playing towards your strengths and working on your weaknesses. Your leadership style should reflect your strengths. Everyone in this battalion has both strengths and weaknesses. Some are good at PT, some are good at drill, and others are good at academics. It’s important that we realize that not everyone is going to be an all-star at everything. This doesn’t mean we shouldn’t try to be one, but it should make us realize that everyone is a piece of the puzzle. The whole purpose of a team is to utilize everyone’s strengths rather than utilizing only one individual’s strengths. A good leader will know every one of his/her follower’s strengths and weaknesses and be able to utilize each person in order to minimize the weak-
nesses for the team as a whole. This builds cohesiveness and a sense of belonging that turns that team into more of a family. This is what makes a good team. It is the leader’s job to make this happen and it is the followers’ jobs to help each other up when someone stumbles.

As for my strengths and weaknesses, as stated before, I am an introvert. This is not an outright strength or weakness. It depends on your leadership style and how you use what you know about your own personality. For example, I am not one to get up in someone’s face and yell at them for making a mistake. Knowing this, I will base my leadership style more on leading by example and other ways of changing my followers. Being a squad leader has helped me understand my strengths and weaknesses better. I am thankful for the opportunity I have been given and I am looking forward to my next opportunity so that I can keep improving my leadership abilities. Remember, implementing what you know a good leader should be is easier said than done. However, this just means that you have to actively work toward becoming the ideal leader.
Naval leadership weekend in Notre Dame was a fantastic experience. While it was cold, those of us that had the opportunity to attend were able to learn about the many leadership styles of some of the most respected members of the Navy and Marine Corps.

Our first speaker was Sergeant Major William Sowers who talked about his perception of officers as a senior enlisted member of the Marine Corps. The first and arguably most important question he posed was: "How much more capable would your unit be if you cared more about team success than personal success?" He elaborated on this humbling question throughout his presentation, emphasizing the importance of taking care of your people and earning respect.

Professor Joseph Holt was another memorable speaker from the event. He spoke on the many meanings and interpretations of the word "courage" and what it takes to possess all forms of courage. He also mentioned that solitude and deep reflection are essential in the success of a future officer. After all, how can you lead people if you don't even know what you believe in? He mentioned many famous philosophers’ views on leadership and taught the importance of learning to fight for what you believe in.

Admiral Bill Gortney was possibly the most comical of all of the speakers that weekend. The emphasis of his talk was how taking care of your people first will pay dividends for you in the future. As future officers, it is our job to fight for those that sometimes are not in a position to fight for themselves. He impressed upon the importance of getting to know those who serve under you and figure out who they are outside the job. It’s vital to find something your subordinates take interest in. This opens your eyes to a world you may have never known, and it helps them to alleviate some stress from the job.

This was an incredible weekend. If I had the chance, I would love to go back again. I met people from all over the country that I will hopefully see in the fleet one of these days. It was interesting to see a few of the different uniforms from the bigger schools. If there had been any doubt in my mind going into the weekend about joining the Navy, or the military for that matter, it was completely erased. This weekend helped me further confirm that I am in the right place with the right people.
Left: Midshipmen preparing for the command of “Fall In”

Right: MIDN 3/C Mullany teaching a class during Naval Operations
The 2014 Battalion Staff

CAPT Thomas
Commanding Officer

CDR Stearns
Executive Officer

MAJ Trout
Marine Officer

MSgt Criswell
Assistant Marine Officer Instructor

LT Berry
Naval Officer Instructor

LT Oldenkamp,
Naval Officer Instructor

Mrs. Kim Pappas

Mr. Bill Pate

Mr. Bill Miller
The Fall of 2014 Battalion Top Six

MIDN Klein
Battalion Commanding Officer

MIDN Washa
Bravo Company Commanding Officer

MIDN Blomstedt
Battalion Operations Officer

The Spring of 2015 Battalion Top Six

MIDN Lowe
Alpha Company Commanding Officer

MIDN Berg
Bravo Company Commanding Officer

MIDN Brake
Battalion Operations Officer

MIDN VonDerOhe
Battalion Commanding Officer

MIDN Sheets
Battalion Executive Officer

MIDN Brokaw
Battalion Administration Officer

MIDN Meharg
Battalion Executive Officer

MIDN Blomstedt
Battalion Operations Officer

MIDN Berg
Bravo Company Commanding Officer

MIDN Brake
Battalion Operations Officer

MIDN Klein
Battalion Commanding Officer

MIDN Meharg
Battalion Executive Officer

MIDN Breskin
Battalion Administration Officer
Graduating Seniors

Fall 2014

MIDN 1/C James Brown
Home Town: Lincoln, NE
Service Selection: TBS
Our Donors
Fall 2014

- Mr & Mrs. Burton Holthus
- P&G Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation
- CAPT & Mrs. Daymond Schmidt
- Dr. & Mrs. Donald Schafer
- Mr Dennis Gagilardi

*We apologize if we missed any donors.*
Graduating Seniors
Spring/Summer 2015

MIDN 1/C Tyler Sheets
Hometown: Keller, TX
Service Selection: Aviation (SNA)

MIDN 1/C Reese Berg
Hometown: Rickman, TN
Service Selection: Surface Warfare

MIDN 1/C Alyssa Selberg
Hometown: Redding, CA
Service Selection: Aviation (NFO)

MIDN 1/C Seth Meharg
Hometown: Grand Island, NE
Service Selection: TBS

MIDN 1/C Alex Klein
Hometown: Walton, NE
Service Selection: Aviation (SNA)
Our Donors
Spring/Summer 2015

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Dear NROTC Alumni and extended family,

For the Midshipmen, Sailors, and Marines of the NROTC Unit, University of Nebraska, training continues to develop these future military leaders through a broad range of valuable experiences, such as the Great Planes Drill Competition, the University of Notre Dame Leadership Conference, and Orientation Week (“O-Week”). Unfortunately, Navy funds cannot be spent in the execution of such events. If you are interested in helping our students attend these excellent developmental opportunities, please consider providing a monetary donation (UNL Foundation #30277). Your donation will directly support the students enabling their further development.

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Very Respectfully,
R. E. Thomas
Captain, USN
Professor of Naval Science

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