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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 science, and have a high potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government.
Greetings to all shipmates, alumni, family, and friends,

As the 2016-2017 academic year winds down, we can reflect on a very successful year, and look forward to a very promising summer and 2017-2018.

We wish Lieutenant Robert Berry, USN, and his family fair winds and following seas as they head off to Department Head School. We also welcome our new Surface Warfare Officer, Lieutenant Paul Hast, USN, to the UNL NROTC team. We are pleased to have him and his wife here in Lincoln.

We commissioned Ensign Robert Lowe in December, and we wish him the best at flight school in Pensacola. This May, 2nd LT Daniel Quan, Ensign Rachel Love, Ensign Brett Brokaw, Ensign Laine Phillips, Ensign Tucker Bonow, Ensign Matthew Ostdiek will be commissioned. Later this summer we will commission 2nd LT Adam Brake upon his return from OCS. Ensign Love will head off to start her nursing career at Balboa Naval Hospital after graduation. Ensign Brokaw will begin naval aviation training this summer. Ensign Ostdiek will report to USS Arlington (LPD-24). Ensign Bonow will report to USS GREEN BAY (LPD-20) this summer. Ensign Phillips will join USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN (CG-57) on deployment after graduation. We wish all of our newest officers the very best as they start their careers!

I also am proud to report that Ensign Tyler Martin and Ensign James Burroughs were accepted into the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program this past February after successfully passing their interviews. They will both commission next fall and join the Navy as future submariners. Well done!

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

Our class of 2021 is starting to take shape and looks to be another great one. We look forward to welcoming them and their families in August!

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

R.E.THOMAS
I have been here only a short time, but every day I am grateful for the opportunity. I am grateful to be a part of the “Blackshirts of Defense” team. In only a short time I am starting to understand the pressures on your time and the dedication to the success the Battalion Midshipmen put forward. I offer my best wishes to all of you as you work through study preps for the remainder of the semester, finals, summer training and summer fun. You should be proud of your accomplishments. Your work is noticed and it is paying off. Congratulations to everyone on the numerous academic and aptitude awards earned in the fall semester, and those delivered at the Chancellor’s review and Navy Day. It has been a highlight to see the hard work rewarded. Keep up the steady strain. I am sure there is more to come. While we are recounting accomplishments, we should not forget the first place finish for the color guard at the Colorado drill meet, or the good showing of the other teams at the meet. BZ to all involved.

In the spectrum of unit size, our team might fall toward the small end, but you have no rivals in your strength of character or quality of participation. I would like to take a moment to thank the departing seniors for your leadership, your contribution to the Battalion, and in working with me as your advisor. It was an exciting year working with you through academic challenges, service assignment, ship selection, etc. What an exciting opportunity no matter what route the process takes (just ask MIDN Brokaw). I would like to join you as you depart on the start of your career. The mind is willing but the body is weak. As you move on, stay in touch with each other and strengthen the Navy Team. Weave a scarlet red thread into the Navy fabric as you spread to different parts of the globe. To the returning seniors and juniors fleeting up, we will do it again next year with excitement for the opportunity. Finally, to all participating in summer training this year; train hard and kill it! It is your chance to get intimate with the gear you will get to work with in the future. Enjoy the summer and come back safe in August.
A Message from the Naval Officer Instructor

Learning to be a Leader

By Lieutenant Robert Berry

It is believed that some people are natural leaders. You either have it or you don’t; however, the Navy believes in building leaders. Leadership isn’t something that you are born with, it is something that is learned, achieved, and earned.

So what makes someone a great leader? There are two things I want to look at here. First is what we observe as good leadership. When interacting with bosses, mentors, or professors we notice leadership traits with which we agree or disagree. The way that leaders interact either encourages us to follow or causes us to take a different path. Each time we interact with those we consider to be leaders, we learn something about leadership. Take the time to observe your leaders and take notes. Start a notebook. On the right side pages write down all the positives that you see. Record the person you observed, the situation you were in, and what they did that you felt was positive. On the left hand pages write down the interactions that you believed were poor examples of leadership and why you believed they were poor examples. This will allow you to focus on the positives and build yourself into the leader you want to be.

Second, and this comes from a question I ask on scholarship interviews, how does followership support a great leader? The common and easy answer to this is, if you want to be a good leader you must be able to follow those above you. This is not wrong but it is not the answer I am looking for. So how does followership support or make a great leader? To be a great leader you must be able to know when you need to follow. You must be able to read the situation and understand that you don’t have the answers but someone else might. It is taking the time to listen to the new Petty Officer that has an idea and supporting them by following them. If you want to be a great leader you must be able to support and follow those who follow you. Just know that you will not be perfect immediately out of the gate. That is why we call you an Ensign or 2nd Lieutenant. Eventually you will get better and will continue to learn from your mistakes. Good luck on your next steps in your career.
A Message from the Naval Officer Instructor

Adversity Makes You Stronger

By Lieutenant Matthew White

After reflecting on the past three semesters here at UNL, I am able to say that this job has been a huge transition from the Fleet, but a good change for my family and I. Some may know that we had a baby boy on December 10th and life has definitely changed for us, but in the best possible way. I could not think of a better place (besides NC) to raise a child for the short period of time that we are here. My job here is to teach midshipmen Naval Engineering and Weapons systems so that they are ready to take on the Fleet upon commissioning, but I am also in this billet to prepare midshipmen for the nuclear Navy and get the best possible men and women out to our submarines and aircraft carriers. I realized before coming to this job that the nuclear Navy was of great importance, but it was not until successfully getting our two nuclear candidates through their interviews that I realized how important it is to all those involved including me. I am very proud of our future submariners and would be honored to share a wardroom seat with them in the future. I say all of this to point out that you have to strive for something and work hard in order to get what you want in this world and you have to know that life may not always be roses, but those hard times are the ones you learn from and make you stronger in the end. As a junior officer in the Fleet, you are going to face adversity with your job and qualifications so you have to take it one day at a time. When the pace slows remember to look back at your wins and your failures because that is what makes you who you are as an officer. I will leave you with one of my favorite quotes:

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.” -Theodore Roosevelt
A Message from the Marine Officer Instructor
Nebraska, the Good Life
By Captain Travis Horner

As the 2017 spring semester comes to an end, I reflect on my first year as the Marine Officer Instructor (MOI) at UNL. Being selected as a MOI was one of the highlights of my 18-year career. I went through the NROTC program as a MECEP from 2007-2010 which gave me an understanding of how important NROTC is to the development of the future naval leaders of our great service.

Admittedly, prior to my arrival, I had little experience with UNL or the state of Nebraska for that matter. I knew of the football dynasty of the 90s and had visited Omaha on one occasion to watch the Louisiana State University Tigers (my alma mater) win the College World Series. My wife, Jessica, and I visited Lincoln for the first time in April 2015 to search for our future home. We immediately recognized that we would soon move to a special place. The good life, Nebraska.

I can think of no greater honor than shaping the leaders of tomorrow and I understand the immense responsibility that has been entrusted to me. At the start of my first semester, I quickly realized the solid foundation laid by my predecessors and owe them a debt of gratitude. I am impressed daily by the drive, determination, and professionalism of our midshipmen. They are truly the finest young men and women our nation has to offer.

The past year provided numerous opportunities for midshipmen growth both personally and professionally. The battalion has been extremely busy. Members of the battalion attended leadership conferences, provided security for all Husker home games ensuring a safe game day experience for over 90,000 fans per game, performed several hours of community service, competed in a drill meet at the University of Colorado, hosted a Navy and Marine Corps ball, and participated in countless other university events.

My first year was incredibly rewarding. I look forward to the remainder of my time serving and watching the midshipmen of UNL NROTC develop into young naval officers and responsible citizens as they take the torch as the defenders of our freedom. Go Big Red!
The Life of Game Day Security
By MIDN 3/C Alexander Kniowski

During Husker football games thousands of fans file into the iconic Memorial stadium from across Nebraska. The atmosphere around campus and around town changes as the center of focus is directed towards the action on the field. Game days become the largest event for Lincoln, and bring people filing through the gates and into the encompassing stadium. Etched above every entrance gate into the stadium is, “Through these gates pass the greatest fans in college football,” a motto that is upheld every game day. But maintaining over 90,000 fans within a single stadium every game day is not a simple task. It takes countless hours of planning, hundreds of personnel, and dedication to ensure that each and every game day runs smoothly and most importantly, every single fan that enters through the gates is safe.

This safety is not only found amongst the presence of campus and city police, but among the individuals who stand at every gate scanning for potential threats and checking each bag that enters the stadium. These individuals, who give up their game day experience of enjoying the action from the stands, are a mixture of ROTC Cadets and Midshipmen. As a battalion, we serve as event security for every home Husker football game. While all other college students spend their game day in a different manner, we dedicate our entire day towards being event security. This role we have paired alongside the University, police department, and third party security to ensure that every fan is safe and can enjoy the game in a safe environment. Responsibilities such as this help instill the working mentality, and to work in service of others.

It all begins three and a half hours before kick-off, when our battalion musters for accountability. Once everyone has been accounted for we move over to a pre-game brief where a second round of accountability is taken, gate assignments are given, radios and “Event Security” vests are distributed, and we are briefed about the game day details from the Athletic department and the police department. Once these pre-game operations have been taken care of, the hundred or so ROTC Cadets and Midshipmen file to their respective assigned gates. The lines of people begin to form and spectators begin to get antsy as they wait for the gates to officially open. But once they open, there is no lull as fans endlessly round the corners and file in through the gates. These moments are most important, as these are the times we scan the crowd and fans entering, we check every bag that enters Memorial Stadium and ensure that no dangerous or contraband items are entering. As soon as it is kick-off and the influx of fans begins to die down, each ROTC security personnel takes their position at either one of the 24 gates, or situated somewhere within the stadium ranging from the edge of the field, to the student section, to the heights of the concourse section.
As the game continues all ROTC Cadets and Midshipmen continue to scan the crowds and ensure that all fans are safe and that no situations arise. But as the game comes to an end, the day is not over for us as security personnel as we are not able to file out of the stadium alongside of the fans. We make our way down to the field from wherever we were positioned throughout the field. With a minute left of the fourth quarter, everyone prepares to line the sidelines of the field in order to prevent fans from rushing the field. As the last second of the game is played, we take our position on the sideline encompassing the field from all directions. We stand at our positions until all fans have left the stadium, and our last signal that indicates that our duties are done for the day is when the Husker band departs the stadium as well.

It is a unique experience to have the opportunity to be a part of the Husker gameday experience. While it is drastically different from that of all other students on campus, it instills the working ethic and mentality while teaching discipline and obedience. It may not always be the most enjoyable thing to spend the entire Husker gameday working security while your peers are having fun, but you know that you are contributing towards the safety and enjoyment of the 90,000 fans.
I was involved in platoon drill in Navy JROTC in high school, but never participated in a color guard at the high school level. When I came to Lincoln in the Fall of 2014, I realized that UNL NROTC did not attend drill meets the way my high school unit did. To continue my involvement in some kind of drill, I signed up for as many color guards as I was available for. I quickly learned that the pressure that comes with performing in front of drill instructors and judges seemed to be nothing compared to performing a color guard in Memorial Stadium in front of 90,000 people. Throughout my first year and a half at UNL, I continued to participate in color guards at events ranging from football games and basketball games, to the Tin Can Sailor reunion and STRATCOM/Submarine birthday balls. Every color guard was different, and every color guard proved to be a learning experience.

Towards the end of the Fall semester of 2015 (my sophomore year) I was chosen to be the color guard commander for the Battalion. I was extremely busy that semester, but the year was winding down and we were almost finished with football season. As the color guard commander, I was responsible for coordinating with the Army and Air Force ROTC units to perform joint color guards, particularly for football games. Once the color guard was put together, I organized at least one practice before the game so we could all get on the same page. This was one of the most difficult parts of the job, because all four branches perform drill movements differently, and we had to work around everyone’s volatile schedule.

Our color guard team also travels annually to the University of Colorado at Boulder Navy & Marine Corps ROTC drill competition in the spring. This was the first year I was going to be on the traveling color guard, and I had a steep learning curve as the commander. Preparation for the drill meet in Colorado included additional early mornings on top of our normal PT regimen, afternoons in between classes, and some weekends. By the time we made the trip to Colorado, our rifle bearers were perfectly synchronized, our flag bearers had their movements down perfectly, and I had the commands/drill floor perfectly mapped out in my head. During the color guard, the head judge did not line up for me to report in and present the colors. I thought he was testing us, so I held the color guard still for about two minutes in the middle of the drill floor. He never lined up, so I decided to proceed with the rest of the drill card. Towards the end of the color guard, I became tangled up in the American flag and by the time I fixed myself, my cover had fallen off. We finished the color guard and were all convinced that we had lost miserably. However, in addition to being graded on our completion of movements, we were also graded on our military bearing throughout the entire performance. During our two mishaps, we all maintained a flawless level of bearing, and didn’t miss a single point. We ended up winning the color guard by a comfortable margin. We traveled back to Colorado this year with a new commander, but most of the rest
of the team stayed the same. We came home for the second year in a row with the first-place color guard trophy.

Being on the color guard has been a rewarding experience, especially as the commander. I’ve had the opportunity to meet many high-ranking officials at various events, and command color guards in front of very large and loud crowds. While I’m no longer the commander, I hope to continue participating in color guards for the duration of my time at UNL, and use these opportunities to represent our Battalion well.
As an incoming freshman and 4/C Midshipmen to the battalion I think it’s safe to say that we all had not the slightest idea of what was to come those initial days of Orientation week. Very quickly we learned how to move and operate in the most efficient and direct manner, speak with volume, have a sense of ownership, and realizing none of us like to play “games.” Gunnery Sergeant Sink (Assistant Marine Officer Instructor) did a phenomenal job creating a cohesive group amongst us 4/C Midshipmen that really set the pace for the remainder of the year.

Having the opportunity to be in NROTC while a full-time student enhances the experience tenfold. Midshipmen get to be involved with events such as the Marine Corps ball, Colorado drill meet, Rifle & Pistol teams, Color Guard at sporting events, Summer Cruises, Naval Leadership Seminars and the list just keeps going on. These opportunities obviously aren’t customary to your average college student, but Midshipmen still enjoy the college student life by having the freedom to choose their housing, join different clubs and organizations on campus, and be involved in the community which the battalion encourages.

All considered, what’s most important about UNL NROTC is the environment of success that is present here in the battalion. From mandatory study hours, weekly/monthly grade reports, frequent meetings with academic advisors, FITREPS, and the many more devices that are at play to ensure success comes second to none to any other organization on campus. It truly is a great feeling knowing that you are a part of an organization that cares about you and has your best interest in mind. As the year progresses, bonds form, and lifelong friendships are made. I’d imagine that there are not too many other places where young adults have the opportunity to train with their future colleagues. We all have a purpose for being here and that purpose is to commission as officers in the Navy and Marine Corps. No one ever forgets how excited they are first joining the battalion and beginning that road to commissioning. My advice would be to remember that feeling and remember why you’re doing it because nothing will ever be given, it has to be earned, and that’s not always easy.
Incoming midshipmen learn drill from Gunnery Sergeant Sink during Orientation Week.

Gunnery Sergeant Sink inspects the Midshipmen before Navy Ball.
The Navy/Marine Corps Ball was a huge success for Fall 2016. The night of fellowship and comradery presented two opportunities for freshmen who were new to the program. Not only were we able to learn about and honor our Navy/Marine Corps heritage, but we also were given the chance to interact with our honored guests from all branches of the United States Military. Both aspects made the Ball a memorable evening for me, and I am sure my fellow midshipmen feel no different.

First, attendance of the Ball allowed us to participate in an age-old tradition of honoring the birthday of our Navy and Marine Corps. This being my first year to attend an occasion such as the Ball, I was in awe of the preparation and finesse that was required for such an event. I experienced the arduous planning firsthand, as I was on the color guard for the evening. Presenting the colors and singing both “Anchors Aweigh” and “Marines’ Hymn” really made me realize that I was finally a part of something much larger than just myself, and that is a feeling not easily dismissed or forgotten.

Lastly, the Ball had a variety of guests from different branches of the U.S. military. This provided both myself and my fellow midshipmen with the opportunity to socialize and learn from personnel already serving. The information I learned from the individuals I spoke to will prove invaluable not only as I link up with the fleet, but also in the coming years as a college student. I quickly learned a few do’s and don’ts of being a midshipman, and have already begun following the advice I received that night.

In conclusion, I would describe the Navy/Marine Corps Ball as a brilliant success. Not only was I able to learn about and honor our Navy/Marine Corps heritage, but I was also given the chance to interact with our honored guests from all branches of the United States Military. This left a lasting impression on me, and I look forward to attending the Ball again next Fall.
I was the Midshipman in charge of the Joint Field Meet for 2016. Each year we participate in several events where we compete against the Army and Air Force. These events are designed to build camaraderie and a sense of tradition between all the ROTC programs at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. By overseeing the event I had several things that had to be done prior to everyone competing. I communicated with the members of the other branches who were in charge of their branch so that they could disseminate the word as needed.

The events that we competed in were the stretcher relay,izzy dizzy relay, log sit-ups, tug-of-war, pushups, and pull-ups. These events take a variety of different skills to be successful. An example of this is that to win in tug-of-war you need your competitors to be as big and strong as possible. Whereas with the izzy dizzy relay it is better to have lighter and faster members. The stretcher relay needs a variety of all of these as it involves running as well as carrying some heavy water jugs.

Each event has its own equipment that is needed in order for the event to be successful. This is where the coordination between the three branches becomes crucial. In order to keep the cost of the event down it is coordinated between the branches to borrow the equipment necessary so that the responsibility does not fall on one branch.

By competing against the other branches every year, we are able to develop camaraderie and tradition. The traditions of competing and passing a trophy back and forth to the overall winner helps to enable the newest and the oldest midshipmen in the battalion to feel connected with each other. The camaraderie that is built between the branches is good, but where I see it have the greatest effect though is in our own battalion. This competition is a great way for the midshipmen to get to know each other better.

The Joint Field Meet is an important event that takes place every fall semester that I feel should continue every year into the future. There are a number of things that take place during this event to ensure that it runs smoothly as well as making sure that the branches get to know each other better.
(Left) Midshipman 4/C Lamar completes push-ups during the push-up portion of the Joint Field Meet.

(Right) Midshipmen prepare for the log-sit up portion of the Joint Field Meet.
Battalion Staff

Captain Richard Thomas
Commander Lawrence Henke
Lieutenant Robert Berry
Lieutenant Matthew White
Captain Travis Horner
Gunnery Sergeant Shane Sink
Mr. Bill Miller
Ms. Kim Pappas
Ms. Patricia Stoki
Top Six Fall 2016

Battalion Commanding Officer
MIDN Brett Brokaw

Battalion Executive Officer
MIDN Tyler Martin

Battalion Administration Officer
MIDN Jacob Garcia

Battalion Operations Officer
MIDN Tucker Bonow

Alpha Company Commander
MIDN Laine Phillips

Bravo Company Commander
MIDN Rachel Love
Top Six Spring 2017

Battalion Commanding Officer
MIDN Daniel Quan

Battalion Executive Officer
MIDN Thomas Tevebaugh

Battalion Administration Officer
MIDN Alexander Kniowski

Battalion Operations Officer
MIDN Zachary Schneider

Alpha Company Commander
MIDN Colton Morris

Bravo Company Commander
MIDN Grant MacDougall
Graduating Seniors

Fall 2016

MIDN Robert Lowe
Hometown: Kearney, NE
Service Assignment: Aviation
Graduating Seniors

Spring 2017

MIDN Tucker Bonow
Hometown: Kingwood, TX
Service Assignment: Surface Warfare

MIDN Adam Brake
Hometown: Northfield, MN
Service Assignment: TBS

MIDN Brett Brokaw
Hometown: Grand Island, NE
Service Assignment: Aviator

MIDN Rachel Love
Hometown: Papillion, NE
Service Assignment: Navy Nurse

MIDN Matthew Ostdiek
Hometown: Omaha, NE
Service Assignment: Surface Warfare

MIDN Laine Phillips
Hometown: Eden Prairie, MN
Service Assignment: Surface Warfare

MIDN Daniel Quan
Hometown: Romeoville, IL
Service Assignment: TBS
The Tide and Current Staff would like to thank all of the writers for their contributions to this article of the Tide and Current.

Captain Richard Thomas  MIDN 3/C Alexander Kniowski
Commander Lawrence Henke  MIDN 2/C Thomas Tevebaugh
Lieutenant Robert Berry  MIDN 4/C Ramarro Lamar
Lieutenant Matthew White  MIDN 4/C Ian Kernes
Captain Travis Horner  MIDN 2/C Zachary Schneider
A special thanks to all of our donors. Your donations are greatly appreciated and help make our events and the publication of the Tide and Current possible.
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.

Thank you. GO BIG RED!

REMINDER: Your financial contributions allow the NROTC Foundation to make students stronger in all areas. Your donations to the NROTC through the UNL Alumni Association are always welcomed and tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Thank you for your generous support!

Very Respectfully,

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

YES! I’D LIKE TO SUPPORT UNL-NROTC.

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NOTE: All personal information is kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with any organization outside NROTC.

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