SOUNDings

University of Utah NROTC
2013-2014
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From the Desk of the Commanding Officer

Captain James Housinger

-Biography-

A native of Portage, Indiana, Captain Housinger was commissioned in 1987 upon graduating from the University of Southern California. His first sea assignment was as Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer in USS MOOSBRUGGER (DD 980). He later served as Fire Control and Missiles Officer in USS HEWITT (DD 966) where he deployed twice to the Middle East as part of Operation DESERT STORM. He served as Weapons Officer, then Combat Systems Officer, in USS GETTYSBURG (CG 64), also deploying twice to the Middle East. He served as Executive Officer in USS DOYLE (FFG 39) where he deployed to South America conducting counter narco-terrorism operations. He then served as Chief Staff Officer of Destroyer Squadron Twenty-eight, deployed to the Mediterranean Sea. He commanded USS JOHN PAUL JONES (DDG 53), deploying to the Western Pacific performing Ballistic Missile Defense duties. His latest sea assignment was as Commanding Officer of USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53) as well as the Air Defense Commander for the USS MOBILE BAY as well as the Air Defense Commander for the USS STENNIS Carrier Strike Groups.

-Hold high standards demand performance.-

Sure, there are many ancillary parts to that job that require a lot of hours of administrative work, but if we look at that basic premise it means our existence at the U is to serve the Midshipmen and Officer Candidates. Sometimes a Midshipman might think, “Oh, I don’t want to bother Captain Housinger because he is busy” (substitute in the name of any staff member). But nothing could be further from the truth in that statement. Of course there may be some meeting or immediate task that would make the staff member unavailable, but YOUR issues are our business and we are NEVER too busy to work with your issues. Our ultimate goal is your success. At times we will reach out to help from our direction, but the mere fact that we have a collective 124 years of Active Duty experience makes the staff a deep resource for you. Don’t just come to class, lab, and other mandatory events, make use of the resources that are here. Seek out those resources. And to reiterate: those resources are here purely for YOU. We would not be here otherwise.

Now I’ll address why the students are here. The answer is service. There can be no other bottom line answer as to why are the students in the NROTC unit. Again, there may be some job motives or additive reasons such as “the Navy is paying for it” or “I want to fly jets” or even “I will look great in Marine Corps dress blues” (all good reasons by the way), but your desire to serve your Nation and every time I think of that, it makes me proud to be associated with you.

Our country is big. The world is big. There are billions of wonderful people in the world. There are military forces throughout the world, many of whom are truly friends of ours and many of whom are at least cooperative and have common goals. But there is another side—a more unfortunate side. There are bad people in the world too. There are individual efforts, SERVE the way your country needs to be. The missing part there is the concept of leadership. You have to lead by doing all those things I just listed. And you can’t do that unless you are competent as an individual...it takes hard work to get there. That is why you are here—to be our Nation’s future leaders. I am especially proud of the fact that our Midshipmen, MECEPs, and Officer Candidates have volunteered to be those leaders, because if not you, there might not be anyone else willing to do it. And don’t look around for those who might be more capable, BE the ones who are more capable.
From the Desk of the Executive Officer

LtCol Ethan Bishop

LtCol Bishop graduated in 1994 with a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Biology from the University of Idaho. He received his commission as a Second Lieutenant in December 1994 via the Platoon Leaders Course. Following The Basic School, he attended Infantry Officers Course then reported to 1st Battalion 2d Marines, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina in March 1996 where he served as a Rifle Platoon Commander, Weapons Platoon Commander, and Assistant Operations Officer. While a Weapons Platoon Commander, Lieutenant Bishop deployed to the Mediterranean with BLT 1/2, as part of the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). In 2000, Captain Bishop reported to Headquar ters Marine Corps, Quantico, Virginia where he served as the Marine Corps Readiness Officer in Manpower & Reserve Affairs. In June 2002, Captain Bishop assumed command of India Company, 3d Battalion 5th Marines in Camp Pendleton, California. During this period, Captain Bishop deployed to Kuwait in February 2003 and subsequently took part in Operation Iraqi Freedom from March-September 2003. In November 2003, Captain Bishop assumed command of Headquarters Company, 5th Marine Regiment. In the summer of 2004 Captain Bishop entered the Special Education Program where he received a Masters Science in Environmental Engineering at the Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base followed by a payback tour as Deputy Natural Resources & Environmental Affairs, Quantico, Virginia. In October 2008, Major Bishop was assigned to US Central Command where he completed a deployment as the Teams Chief (Afghanistan) & Operations Chief with Joint Security Office (Forward), Qatar. Upon his return, Major Bishop transferred back to Camp Pendleton, California where he served as an Assistant Operations Officer with 1st Marine Regiment until his transfer to the Iraqi Training and Advisory Mission where he completed a year-long deployment as the Senior Advisor to the Iraqi M3 Military Movements and Iraqi Joint Operations Center in Baghdad. In June 2011, LtCol Bishop transferred to Salt Lake City where he is currently the Executive Officer & Marine Officer Instructor at the University of Utah. Lieutenant Colonel Bishop's personal decorations include the Bronze Star with Combat Distinguishing Device for Valor, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Gold Star, and Combat Action Ribbon.

- Biography -

In the late 90’s General Krukal, 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps, coined the phrase “Three Block War” to signify that he foresaw Marines and Sailors conducting humanitarian, peacekeeping, and combat operations simultaneously on three localized city blocks. This was a prophetic concept at the time, but one that emerged out of experience and lessons learned from the past 200+ years of warfare. Since, the emergence and the change of doctrine which have accompanied this concept our nation has not only applied and evolved combat tactics to fit, but has simultaneously developed skills necessary to locate, close with, and destroy the enemy in this asymmetric environment. It must be recognized that America’s war machine is well-trained in this concept whether in an urban, jungle, alpine, desert, aerospace, cyber, or maritime setting or, as is often the case, operating on the seams of each.

To truly embrace the concept of asymmetric warfare in the Three Block War, a seasoned veteran also recognizes that we must thrive in chaos! Thriving does not imply existing, reacting, or sitting idle. Thriving means out-witting, out-maneuvering, and creating conditions in any direction forces change. Success is impossible if you play the chess game with an opponent that is always driving your moves or setting up obstacles.

One also must continue to seek mission clarity through simplicity, which seems to run counter to the term “chaos.” The catch phrases “Three Block War” and “Thriving in chaos” help to simplify a dynamic environment, imparting a sense of confidence while operating in entropy. Simplicity becomes difficult to achieve when one transitions from a tactical reality in which our infantry operate daily to a strategic vision. As young officers you will begin to understand that creating and operating in this chaotic battlefield is not only paramount to success but relies upon the appropriate application of the elements of national power: ”DIME” – Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic. Even at the tactical or micro-level, one must be cognizant of elements of power you are able to apply and your long range goals. Decentralized command and control allows you, the future warrior, the ability to generate the tempo of operations we desire and to best cope with the uncertainty and fluidity of combat by insisting on initiative. In other words, thriving on chaos fosters a climate where subordinates use their initiative to make decisions, based on their understanding of their superiors’ intent. Since war is a human endeavor, there is nothing more important than communication, familiarity and trust gained through tough training, shared experiences and focused, simple communication.

- Thriving in Chaos -

Since war is a human endeavor, there is nothing more important than communication, familiarity and trust gained through tough training, shared experiences and focused, simple communication. Repetition and familiarity enables the warfighters to even anticipate each other’s thoughts eliminating the need for explicit communication. Our nation is in good hands.
Assistant Marine Officer Instructor

MSgt Nathan Orndorff

MSgt Orndorff enlisted in the Marine Corps in August of 1996 and he attended recruit training in San Diego, California with the 1st Battalion's Delta Company. Upon graduation MSgt Orndorff attended Marine Combat Training (MCT) at Camp Pendleton, California. After completion of MCT he was stationed with 2nd Battalion 8th Marines at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina where he served as a Radio Operator, Motor Transport NCO, Platoon Sergeant, and Martial Arts Instructor.

MSgt Orndorff was promoted to Sergeant and transferred to 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, where he deployed with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) in support of naval operations. Upon completion of his deployment he received orders to Drill Instructor School in San Diego, California. He served at Marine Corps Recruit Depot from March 2002 until April 2005. During this time he served as Drill Instructor and Senior Drill Instructor with 1st Battalion Delta Company.

After his successful tour as a Drill Instructor, MSgt Orndorff was transferred to Marine Wing Support Squadron 371 (MWSS-371) in Yuma, Arizona where he served as Radio Chief and Squadron 1stSgt. During this period, MSgt Orndorff volunteered for two separate individual assignment (IA) billets in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF), serving as Communique Officer, Driver, Gunnery and Vehicle commander.

In 2009, MSgt Orndorff was transferred to Marine Corps Communications Electronic School (MCCES) in Twentynine Palms, California where he served as the Curriculum Development and Field Radio Operator Chief Instructor. In 2011, MSgt Orndorff received orders to 1st Battalion 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division (1/7). He deployed to Sangin, Afghanistan as Communication Chief Sergeant in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.

MSgt Orndorff was promoted to his current rank in May 2012, and was selected for Assistant Marine Officer Instructor (AMOI) at the University of Utah.

STEINBRECHER-

LT Steinbrecher served his first tour as an officer in the “Zappers” of VAQ-130 and completed a combat deployment on board USS HARRY S. TRUMAN (CVN-75) flying sorties in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and NEW DAWN. Shortly after returning from deployment the Zappers were selected to transition to the EA-18G Growler and reported to VAQ-129 EA-18G Fleet Replacement Training. Once qualified LT Steinbrecher returned to VAQ-130 and conducted a workup cycle in the Growler.

In March of 2013, he reported to University of Utah where he is currently serving as Assistant Professor of Naval Science and Freshman/Sophomore student advisor.

LT Steinbrecher has accumulated 2,900 hours of flight time in various rotary and fixed wing naval aircraft. His personal decorations include the Air Medal (four Strike/Flight awards), Navy Achievement Medal (seven awards), and various campaign and unit awards.

FAIRBANKS-

In 2008, upon commissioning, LT Fairbanks received orders to report to Naval Nuclear Power School at the Charleston Naval Weapons Station in South Carolina followed by Submarine Officer Basic Course and Nuclear Prototype. Upon completion of his nuclear training he reported to USS MARYLAND, home ported in Kings Bay, Georgia in March 2010.

LT Fairbanks served in USS MARYLAND as the Main Propulsion Assistant, followed by the Tactical Systems Officer. He was instrumental in two Operational Reactor Safeguard Exams, two Tactical Readiness Evaluations, and an INSURV inspection. LT Fairbanks helped prepare the MARYLAND for her Engineered Refueling Overhaul, and was the Officer of the Deck who placed her on the blocks in the dry-dock at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard.

LT Fairbanks reported to the University of Utah NROTC as the Nuclear Programs officer in March 2013.
New Student Orientation

By: OC Furtak

The University of Utah NROTC conducted its New Student Orientation (NSO) for incoming freshmen consisting of nine males and one female for the 2013-2014 school year. This orientation is designed to introduce necessary skills for success while at the University of Utah NROTC for the next four years. These skills include preparation for both academic and military success, safety, awareness, professional development, and team building. The orientation lasted a total of three days from 15-17 August 2013 and was led by OC Furtak. NSO took place at the University of Utah campus rather than Camp Williams where previous orientations have been traditionally held.

The first day started with a staff meeting to brief key members on how the intake of the new Midshipmen would take place, and that the standards that were to be held during the course of their career at the U of U NROTC. It demonstrated how to perform colors, a practice included in duty conducted by the Battalion Commander (BNCO), MIDN Sorensen. The first evolution was the indoctrination of the new Midshipmen to handle weapons in the shooting range. For some, this was the first time handling weapons. Following this, the new Midshipmen were given chow in the form of MREs prior to completing an introductory swim qualification test at the HPER pool. The swim qualification evolution went well considering only two of the thirteen Midshipmen did not qualify at the time but eventually qualified later in the school year. The next evolution allowed the new Midshipmen to participate in drill, which is a major component of NROTC because it is part of military tradition that instills discipline and emphasizes the importance of teamwork and the immediate execution of orders. Following the first day of events it was then time for the new students to study their knowledge, which was given to them to instill the foundations of the Navy and Marine Corps as they began their entrance into the NROTC program. The first day concluded with a short hygiene period before taps.

The second day of evolutions started with reveille in the form of MREs prior to completing an introductory swim qualification test at the HPER pool. This was then followed with transportation back to the unit for chow and a lengthy part of the day dedicated to briefs. MIDN 2/C Blankers briefed on the Customs and Courtesies of the Navy and Marine Corps, then MIDN 2/C Davida and MIDN 1/C Vasconcellos conducted a Drug and Alcohol Policy brief, followed by a Hazing and Sexual Assault brief by MIDN 1/C Barker to conclude the briefs. The conclusion of the brief portion in the orientation followed with MREs for chow and a knowledge quiz from the information that was presented to the new Midshipmen prior to the start of the orientation. A uniform inspection was then held by the troop handlers in order to ensure that the new Midshipmen knew the correct way to wear their uniforms in order to represent the Navy and Marine Corps at the highest level. After a long day of briefs and exercises, the new Midshipmen were allowed to watch a movie, ‘Master and Commander’, before a motivational run. The moto run allowed the new Midshipmen to run around campus, which allowed them to become more familiar with it as well as test their physical and mental endurance. Finishing the moto run, they ran up to the Jewish Community Center where they were given packs and, for some, a steep hill were the giant U for the university sits. All of the new Midshipmen were tested on this run, which concluded the second day of the orientation events.

The third and final day of the orientation was light compared to the first two days. It started with an earlier morning PT session led by MIDN 2/C Emma Llewelyn and the troop handlers. Following the PT session, the MIDN were allowed a quick shower and change into their NWU MARPAT uniforms. After chow was served, the new Midshipmen studied for a knowledge quiz and engaged in team sports, which allowed them to build camaraderie in the form of competition in these physical events. The New Student Orientation concluded with a swearing-in ceremony, where these ten MIDN took the oath of office that initiated their career as future Navy and Marine Corps Officers.

Fall Battalion Commanding Officer

MIDN 1/C Vasconcellos

Originally I never really wanted the position of Battalion Commander. However, it afforded me a great opportunity to grow as a service member. From the day-to-day functions of the unit, to larger ceremonies and activities of the semester, each required a coordinated effort of dedicated individuals. Had I not whole-heartedly accepted my position, it not only would have robbed me of the valuable lessons I gained, but my peers would not have had the experience of working with someone in my predisposition. Fortunately, both the staff leadership and my peers were willing to work with me as I progressively increased the level of commitment I devoted to the unit and its goals.

First, I had to resolve in my mind that I needed to do better. This required me to be honest with myself as I admitted my performance was substandard. I could no longer choose to remain a passive member of the unit. I not only had to actively participate, I had to be the exemplar. I had to find reasons to eat, sleep, and breathe everything the unit did. Seeing that within less than a year, I would be commissioned, I should already have deep-seated motivations for being in the unit. I used this as my main source for motivation. Every interaction I had, I used my powers of imagination to place myself in the future when my decisions would carry much greater consequences. This added to whatever consequences I faced from failure on my part, including being late, under-prepared, or losing composure in front of my peers. Doing so helped me take responsibility for my actions, realizing I had been given a grace period to learn and become a reliable and effective leader.

There will be many assignments we receive in the Navy along with many circumstances we would rather avoid in our lives. Until we can put our own priorities aside and devote ourselves to a larger purpose, we will never live up to the oath we take, or learn to truly live our lives. I encourage all the Midshipmen to accept the obligations life brings with enthusiasm. Looking back on the last semester, I am able to see the distance made in the “sixty seconds” Rudyard Kipling refers to in his poem If. Although the destination does not change, the individual who arrives can be considerably different due to the manner in which they traveled and arrived.
**Navy and Marine Corps Ball**

By: OC Carlson

The University of Utah NROTC celebrated the United States Navy and Marine Corps’ 238th birthdays at the annual Birthday Ball held on 2 November 2013. This year it was hosted at a new venue in the downtown Zion’s Bank Building, coordinated and arranged by OC Remington Carlson and MIDN 3/C Jose Gonzalez.

This year’s celebration of our Navy’s birthday was particularly unique. We were able to gather and celebrate on the top floor of one of the tallest buildings in Salt Lake, Utah in a room that had a near 360-degree view of the city below, the Founder’s Room of the Zion’s Bank Building. Active duty members, Midshipmen and guests alike mingled and guests of honor arrived, Senator Jake Garn were high when our guest of honor arrived.

The University of Utah NROTC, in correlation with the Army ROTC (AROTC) and Air Force ROTC (AFROTC), honored those that have served before us in our annual Veterans Day ceremony. Those involved surely were motivated by the stories of the great men and woman being honored that day; all of which had served in various wars and conflicts in the defense of our nation and its ideals.

Rear Admiral Maxine Conder was one of the honorees present this year. She was escorted by one of our own, MIDN 2/C Alexander Blankers, who said about the experience, "Rear Admiral Maxine Conder is a living testament to the power of hard work and determination. As a nurse, she was promoted up to chair the second female Rear Admiral in the entire Navy. Spending an afternoon with her presented me with great insight into true leadership and what being an officer is all about."

The ceremony included formations from each ROTC formed respectfully to the side of the audience as the honorees were escorted to their seats atop the stage and given a medal from the University of Utah. The honorees remained on the stage as their achievements and contributions to the United States were read. It was humbling to hear about the many heroic actions they took in the conflicts in which they served, and the many other contributions they made just being members of their respective branches. Many served in World War II, Vietnam, and Korea; and all had earned every ounce of our respect.

Overall, the ceremony was a success this year. It was an honor to support those that have served before us, and it was beneficial to be able to hear of the sacrifices they made for our freedom. We should, as a result of getting to meet these extraordinary men and women, be that much more inclined to continue that tradition and legacy.

**Veterans Day Ceremony**

By: MIDN 1/C Barker

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**Christmas Party**

By: MIDN 2/C Blankers

On 5 December 2013, the U of U NROTC participated in a battalion gift exchange and Christmas dinner. Designed to inspire camaraderie amongst the battalion, this event, organized by MIDN 2/C Blankers, served just that purpose.

After NROTC Lab that Thursday, all members of the battalion were invited to change into proper civilian attire and meet on the gun-deck to set up for the dinner. After everything was set up, all members met in the wardroom and gathered around the Christmas tree where a secret Santa gift exchange took place. To this day, few members of the battalion know who their secret Santa was. After a few minutes of opening presents, and good natured joking, those battalion members who were so inclined gathered on the gun-deck for a wonderful Christmas dinner, the piece de resistance: wonderful, honey-glazed ham. After dinner ended, members of the battalion engaged in friendly discussion followed by a half hour of clean up. As a military organization, camaraderie is chiefly important. As such, events like this are of paramount importance to promote such an idea. Our battalion party, though small, brought us together and, hopefully, strengthened the relationships between battalion members and between the Midshipmen and staff.
Fall Change of Command

By: MIDN 1/C Sterk

The University of Utah NROTC conducted its semi-annual Change of Command Ceremony. This ceremony occurs at the end of each semester when the student Command and Staff changes. This allows for other students to step into leadership roles and take on more responsibility around the unit to prepare themselves for future command in the fleet.

Before the ceremony begins, a new command triad must be selected for the Battalion. The positions known as the “Big Three,” which include the Battalion Commanding Officer (BNCO), Battalion Executive Officer (BNXO), and Battalion Sergeant Major (Sgt Maj), are selected by the active duty staff (CO, XO, Student Advisors, and AMOS). These three are selected based on academic performance, athletic performance, military bearing, success in previous billets, and overall aptitude. The selection process is very specific since these three positions are very important because they are involved in the decisions that influence the Battalion. The three that were selected for the positions on the 2014 spring semester were MIDN 1/C Samantha Filipovich for BNCO, MIDN 1/C Gabriella Davida for BNXO, and MIDN 2/C Tyler Sterk for Sgt Maj. MIDN Filipovich is the first Nursing MidN to ever be selected to be the BNCO in the history of the University of Utah NROTC. Once the positions were filled, a Change of Command Ceremony was held on 5 December 2013, the last day of lab for the fall semester in the Naval Science Building.

For the ceremony, all battalion members and active duty staff were present. The members who were a part of the ceremony stood in formation on the gun deck and oncoming Sgt Maj and outgoing Sgt Maj stood in the back of the gun deck. The outgoing BNCO, MIDN 1/C Timothy Vasconcellos, and oncoming BNCO, MIDN Filipovich stood in the front of the battalion. However, MIDN Filipovich was also the oncoming BNCO, she could not stand in the place of the outgoing Sgt Maj, so MIDN 1/C Robbie Barker was a stand-in for the outgoing Sgt Maj position. The ceremony began when Sgt Maj Filipovich called the battalion to attention and turned them over to the BNCO, MIDN Vasconcellos. The Commanding Officer of the unit, CAPT Housinger, then took over and said a few remarks about the past semester. CAPT Housinger finished his remarks, and MIDN Vasconcellos also said a few words about how the past semester went for him.

Once he finished, he called attention to the battalion and the oncoming BNCO, MIDN Filipovich, took her place on the left of MIDN Vasconcellos. The narrator of the ceremony, MIDN 3/C Hamilton Stoddard, announced “attention to orders” and read the orders for the oncoming BNCO and the outgoing BNCO for their take over and relief of their respective position. The narrator then stated “present the Midshipmen Battalion Colors to the Battalion Commander.” At this point the two Sergeant Majors, both in the rear of the battalion aligned with their respective BNCO, marched forward toward the BNCOs. The outgoing Sgt Maj carried the guidon as both marched toward the front. The outgoing Sgt Maj then handed the guidon to the outgoing BNCO, who then left-faced and handed the guidon to the oncoming BNCO; the oncoming BNCO left-faced and handed the outgoing Sgt Maj the colors. The oncoming BNCO shouts “post,” at which point the Sgt Maj’s about-faced and marched to the rear of the battalion. The CO then marched forward and took his place in front of the outgoing BNCO who saluted him and stated, “Good afternoon sir, I have been relieved as battalion commander by MIDN Captain Filipovich.” The CO returns the salute and moves onto the oncoming BNCO who saluted the CO and stated, “Good afternoon sir, I have assumed command of the NROTC Unit, University of Utah Midshipmen battalion.” The CO returned the salute, graduated both, and returned to his seat. The two BNCOs changed places and shook hands at which point the outgoing BNCO returned to his seat. The oncoming BNCO, MIDN Filipovich, then made her remarks about the upcoming semester and then turned the battalion over to the oncoming Sgt Maj. The narrator stated that the ceremony had concluded at which point the Sgt Maj, MIDN Sterk, dismissed the Battalion.

Army-Navy Football Game

By: MIDN 3/C Stoddard

Salt Lake City, Utah - University of Utah NROTC quarterback MIDN 3/C Chase Stoddard grimaced as he watched his ball fly well behind his intended receiver and into the hands of an Army player, setting up what would be the game winning touchdown. Navy lost for the first time in recent history, playing in a thriller that went down to the wire and had only a single touchdown as the margin of victory.

This year Westminster College had the honor of hosting the annual event and the game was played on 7 December 2013, the same day as the Army-Navy Game in Philadelphia, PA. The field conditions at Westminster College were questionable due to the amount of ice on Dumke Field, but players quickly adapted during warm ups and got ready for the start of the game.

Army won the toss and elected to receive, and after a long march down the icy field, they failed to convert any points and turned the ball over on downs. Navy took over and capitalized on several receptions to receivers MIDN 2/C Tyler Sterk and MIDN 4/C Conner Hallinger they punched it into the end zone on a quarterback run by Stoddard with little time left in the first quarter. The next Navy possession ended in a pick thrown by MIDN Stoddard, which lead to another Army touchdown putting them up 42-35 with less than a minute left in the game.

Army had time for just two plays and after a deep pass that fell incomplete on the second play the clock ran out and the celebration was on for Army.

A dominant offensive line and a defensive secondary that ended the game with two picks highlighted Navy’s play. Some speculate that a change from a running clock in the second half was to the loss but it was movement away from effective play calling and a hurry-up offense, as well as two picks by their quarterback, which would eventually doom Navy.
Spring Battalion Commanding Officer

By: MIDN 1/C Filipovich

It is considered one of the highest honors in the Naval Reserve Officers Training Program to be awarded the position of Battalion Commanding Officer. The Battalion Commander is responsible for the success of all unit functions through the tasks of delegation, leadership and commitment to excellence. Stating this makes evident how much responsibility, teamwork, communication and devotion is involved in this position. An individual who has witnessed several individuals take on this leadership role, both successfully and unsuccessfully, and witnessed various types of leadership styles accompanying their duties, it was an exciting challenge for me when I was called to action.

The greatest challenge I faced after becoming Battalion Commanding Officer was learning to lead from the shadows. Letting my staff personnel directly carry out orders given through the chain of command and interact directly with a few individuals. It was the perfect definition and action of delegation. I anticipated this difficulty, which made my transition into this role simple and easier to learn from and understand. Being Battalion Commander has enlightened me to the “real world” operations of a Naval Officer, better preparing me for what to expect when I get to the fleet. For this, I am grateful and wish that all individuals take on this leadership role, both personally and professionally.

Midshipmen Serve Their Community

By: MIDN 3/C Guyer

The military embodies the concept of service to our country, on and off the battlefield. Extending beyond the combat theater, officers and enlisted personnel also serve their communities through humanitarian efforts. The same values hold true within the University of Utah NROTC program.

Balancing a demanding schedule of classes, physical fitness and ROTC activities among other obstacles, many Midshipmen still find room to donate their time for a higher cause.

At the end of each semester, a Community Service Ribbon is awarded in recognition of Midshipmen who have recorded at least 10 hours of community service over the course of the semester. This spring, the recipients were MIDN 1/C Bobbie Barker, MIDN 4/C William Barnes, MIDN 3/C Chase Stoddard, MIDN 2/C Tyler Sterk, and MIDN 3/C Jose Gonzalez.

"Helping animals is one of my passions." -MIDN 3/C Craig

MIDN 1/C Barker volunteered at Primary Children’s Medical Center as part of their “Kid’s Crew”, spending time with sick and recovering children, as well as sanitizing used toys. He states, “I can honestly say that there’s nothing better than making a kid’s day when they’re in that kind of situation.

The community involvement of Midshipmen spans a diverse range of projects and organizations: everyone has the freedom to pursue their own passions and interests. "Helping animals is one of my many passions and I’m glad that I can be of assistance to a great organization," said MIDN 3/C McKenna Craig, who has had a long history volunteering with the Humane Society of Utah. Her responsibilities at the shelter include cleaning kennels, walking dogs, playing with cats and general cleanup.

Continued on next page

University Nuclear Reactor Site Visit

By: MIDN 3/C Gonzalez

On Thursday, 16 January 2014, Lieutenant Schow - a 2001 University of Utah graduate - escorted the University of Utah NROTC Battalion on a tour within the Joseph F. Merrill Engineering Building to present the Training, Research, Isotopes, General Atomic Engineering (TRIGA) reactor. The purpose of TRIGA is to train students in neutron activation analysis by bombarding different elements with neutrons to observe the reaction that occurs. TRIGA is an open-water, 100kw, safe research, nuclear reactor. It is considered safe since the reactor does not produce any steam, therefore it does not experience a significant amount of decay heat. Also, to put it into perspective, 100kw is strong enough to merely charge your phone. Students are also able to hone their skills in alpha data analysis, gamma spectroscopy, and nuclear forensics. Current experiments being conducted by students are: preventing an excessive amount of radiation for chemo-therapy patients by restricting the poisonous radiation to isolated areas warranting treatment; examining the cement that composes the large walls; and reviewing methods to limit radiation from seeping through the walls; and reviewing methods to limit the pollution of the Great Salt Lake. Parallelly the nuclear forensics room – where students conduct, store and examine their experiments - is the monitoring room, which is adjacent to the TRIGA reactor. Here, students and professors are able to monitor different radiation levels, temperatures, pressures, pH levels and conductivity. Within the nuclear reactor room, they inject samples into the core of the reactor to observe the reaction that occurs. As we passed the nuclear forensics and study rooms, we went through the monitoring room and finally arrived where the TRIGA nuclear reactor is stored. We stood on top of a platform that caged the reactor. Peering down from above, we observed the hexagonal core which students and professors inject different elements by placing the testing-material within a tube, which slides into the core. Protruding vertically on that platform were three control rods composed of boron, an element acts as a neutron sponge, serves to control the rate of fission in the core. On the inner circumference of the circular reactor lined a plethora of upward fuel pods. These fuel pods are filled with low-enriched Uranium 235, and they have not been replaced since 1975. The Uranium-235 within these rods, if enriched enough, has the devastating nuclear destruction power utilized by nuclear weapons. However, the process to enrich Uranium-235 requires sophisticated equipment and knowledgeable operators.

In conclusion, TRIGA is a safe reactor that does not produce any steam and, consequently, does not experience much decay heat. Many Midshipmen were absorbed by the technology of 1960’s nuclear advancements. However, as we left the facility, my mind wondered in curiosity about modern-developed nuclear reactors and their impact on contemporary society. If we have condensed a multitude of recreational technologies into a phone that fits in the palm of your hand in merely 30 years, how much has the nuclear field developed since half a century ago?

"The opportunity was incredibly refreshing." -MIDN 3/C Gonzalez

From hospitals to animal shelters to classrooms, the Midshipmen at the University of Utah continue to reflect the values of service above self and further the recognition of the Navy as a global force for good.
By: MIDN 1/C Filiopivich

As an organization, the University of Utah Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps is continually looking for opportunities to give back to the communities that support us. Spring 2014 was an exceptional year, for it was the first that we were able to participate in Caps For Kids. Administered by the Navy Office of Community Outreach, the Caps for Kids program is entering its 16th year as one of the Navy’s most consequential outreach programs. Since 1999, Navy commands have donated thousands of unit ball caps, which are then presented by Sailors, Marines and Midshipmen to children who are fighting serious illnesses in hospitals across the nation. The program is made possible exclusively through donations from wardrooms, Chiefs’ messes, first class associations, spouse clubs and similar organizations throughout the Navy. A typical Caps for Kids visit involves a small group of Sailors, Marines and Midshipmen visiting up to 50 children who are inpatients in a children’s hospital. Sailors present the caps to the children and spend time talking with and encouraging them.

The battalion of the University of Utah was able to coordinate with South Davis Community Hospital in Bountiful Utah to spend two days with the children in this facility. It was a memorable experience for all personnel involved. Our Midshipmen and active duty staff were impacted emotionally and motivated to see how these children cope daily with the life threatening illnesses that they face. The children at South Davis Hospital were ecstatic to receive visitors and more than grateful for our time and the presentation of caps.

Of the most memorable moments for both our Midshipman battalion and the South Davis Community Hospital was when our Lieutenant, Kevin Steinbrecher let one of the children wear his leather aviator jacket and pose for a photo. From the moment this child saw LT Steinbrecher he was fascinated by his occupation in the Navy and even more attached to his “fancy” jacket. Putting smiles on these children’s faces and leaving them with everlasting memories is priceless and one of the most rewarding experiences I’ve proudly been a part of while being a Midshipman at the University of Utah Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps.
Salt Lake City, Utah (19 April 2014) - “Upon entering the program I can honestly say I was unsure if I was cut out to be an officer,” states Midshipman 1/C Samantha Filipovich, one of the three soon-to-be Naval officers from the University of Utah Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) unit. The NROTC Unit at the University of Utah was established in 1945 to develop Midshipmen, Officer Candidates, and Marines mentally, physically, and morally in preparation for service as commissioned officers in the world’s finest Navy and Marine Corps. In this pursuit, members of the University of Utah Navy-Marine Corps Team are expected to strive for academic, physical, and professional excellence by executing the Navy core values: honor, courage, and commitment. MIDN 1/C Filipovich states, “I have grown in various ways, physically, mentally, emotionally, intellectually, and have learned things about myself I never would have if I weren’t a part of this program.”

In addition to maintaining high academic standards, NROTC students are required to commit to obligations designed to prepare for future roles as military leaders. The NROTC structure mimics the chain of command structure used in the fleet, and every NROTC student fulfills a role, often based on academic and military performance. Midshipman 1/C Timothy Vasconcellos, the 2013 Fall Semester Battalion Commander, states, “When there is a deficiency in ourselves or a peer, our role now and in the fleet will be to enable and inspire the Sailors in our respective commands and then hold them accountable for their efforts, be they above or below standard.” This Battalion structure facilitates leadership opportunities and responsibilities at all levels within a demanding environment that emphasizes practical application of teamwork, time management, and organizational skills. MIDN 1/C Filipovich, the 2014 Spring Semester Battalion Commander, states, “It is hard work and we often underestimate the dedication and time it takes to succeed as a Midshipman.” Above the student chain of command, the Unit Staff overlook the Battalion’s mission and commit themselves to each member’s development as an officer for the United States Navy service. Additional obligations include: physical training, biannual physical fitness tests, Naval Science courses, labs, fundraising, summer cruises aboard Naval ships, submarines, and hospitals, and unit-related social functions, such as the annual Navy-Marine Corps Birthday Ball.

MIDN 1/C Gabriella Davida, MIDN 1/C Samantha Filipovich, and MIDN 1/C Timothy Vasconcellos will commission at the Utah State Capital in Salt Lake City, Utah on 3 May 2014. Following, these newly commissioned officers will serve our nation around the globe in a variety of military occupational specialties including aviation, nursing, and surface warfare.

For more information about NROTC, visit https://www.nrotc.navy.mil/. For more information about NSTC, visit http://www1.netc.navy.mil/nstc/ or visit the NSTC Facebook pages at https://www.facebook.com/NavalServiceTraining/
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