

# Sidelights

Fall 2021





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# The University of Colorado Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps Vision Statement

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To develop students morally, mentally, and physically to become professional officers in the Naval Service; to reinforce the enduring core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment and cultivate the necessary knowledge and skills to prepare them for service to our nation.



“For in this modern world, the instruments of warfare are not solely for waging war. Far more importantly, they are the means for controlling peace. Naval officers must therefore understand not only how to fight a war, but how to use the tremendous power which they operate to sustain a world of liberty and justice, without unleashing the powerful instruments of destruction and chaos that they have at their command.” – ADM. Arleigh Burke



# Commanding Officer

## Colonel Thomas J. Dodds, USMC

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It has been a great start to the 2021-2022 CU school year. The level of commitment and the proactivity demonstrated by the students and staff has been exceptional and is indicative of a strong unit. The Top 4 and the company staffs did a great job. I am very proud of what this student led organization has accomplished and honored to be part of it.

The Fall 2022 semester held numerous commitments and culminating events and the Battalion executed the training schedule with precision. From the FEX, LRC, and Sea Trials to the aggressive training schedule each week the Battalion demonstrated tenacity and diligence. Best of all, we were finally able to celebrate our Naval heritage as a Battalion with guests during the Sea Service Ball, which was an outstanding event.

great job to all.

Spring of 2022 will hold similar challenges with more large events and hosting the Colorado Meet in March. This will require leadership and for us to manage our time and resources wisely. Build the time into your plans to ensure that we can properly account for our people and equipment. Accountability of people and things will be imperative to unit success during this high operational tempo period. I expect billet holders to embrace their leadership roles and know those in their charge. It all starts with teamwork and that TEAM's foundation is built by our small unit leader's action and engagement.

People are our greatest resource! Ensure that we are looking out for one another. With challenging schedules, changes in leadership, and life in general comes stress. Keep life in balance and maintain a strong perspective on what you need to do to succeed. Take the time and have the fortitude to reach out to someone if it appears that they are struggling, regardless of whether they are senior, a peer, or subordinate, it matters.

Congratulations to our two new 2nd Lieutenants and two Ensigns that will be commissioned in December 2021. We wish you well in your follow-on training and we have no doubts that you will make this unit and the University of Colorado extremely proud. Looking forward to the Spring 2022 commissioning!

# Executive Officer

## Commander Regina Kauffman, USN

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I reflect on all that I have to be thankful for and all that we have accomplished. Despite an environment that continues to be challenging, the NROTC battalion has thrived. During the summer, many students accomplished a training cruise or advanced training program, which is an essential part of Midshipman training. We hit the ground running with New Student Orientation, led by MIDN Witherell. Throughout the semester, the battalion trained at least three times a week with consistent focus and attention on core competencies and PT. The field exercise, Leadership Reaction Course, and Sea Trials were outstanding culminating events in which the battalion demonstrated practical application of knowledge and leadership training. These events were carefully and thoughtfully planned and executed by student leaders, particularly MIDN Deng, MIDN McLaughlin, MIDN Johnston.

The Sea Service Ball was an outstanding tribute to the Marine Corps and Navy team; Bravo Zulu to the OIC SSgt Long and all who participated to make it a success. Major General Mullen, the guest of honor, reminded us of the sacrifices of those who came before us to preserve our freedoms. Vice Admiral Mustin, the Chief of the Navy Reserve, visited in October; he spoke of how the Navy and Marine Corps team fit into the National Security Strategy, as well as leadership lessons for new officers. There were several guest speakers who assisted with naval science classes by sharing their experiences and operational lessons; many thanks to all these leaders who contributed to our students' development.

Great job to you, CU NROTC students, keeping up morale this semester, with events such as game night, a capture the flag competition, a friendly ROTC Tri-mil competition, intramural competitions, and a pre-holiday potluck. Even during stadium cleanups, the Midshipmen epitomized teamwork and maintained high morale. Bravo Zulu to the Color Guard who proudly carried the colors during half-time at the CU homecoming football game and many other events. Bravo Zulu to MIDN Early, MIDN Pietenpol, SSgt Lee, MIDN Mosichuk, MIDN Smith, and MIDN Lewis for leading the team to success. Thanks to our public affairs lead, MIDN Hayes, for assembling this newsletter, and MIDN Hayes and MIDN Elder for recent photo renovations in the unit spaces. Thank you to ALL who put in extra effort to make a difference and make the NROTC unit better, to mentor and assist battalion members, and to professionally represent CU NROTC. Thank you to Alumni benefactors who have helped to provide scholarships to our students.

Congratulations, MIDN Mita and MIDN Glantz, GySgt Henderson, and SSgt Brown, commissioning as Ensigns and Second Lieutenants. Your hard work and dedication have paid off. Best wishes as you take the oath of office and commit to service to the nation and supporting and defending the Constitution.

NROTC staff members continue to make the magic happen. Welcome to Mrs. Kaaoush, Program Administrator; LT Robbins, Surface Warfare Officer and 2/C Advisor; and LT Wagner, Nuclear Submarine Officer and 3/C Advisor. Mr. Weymiller, Mr. Lovato, and Mr. Staroscik are the remarkable behind-the-scenes cast. Capt Murphy leads Semper Fi and is the liaison with the battalion. GySgt Matthews mentors in all manner of discipline, drill, and color guard. LT Dziwulski instructs the 4/C, Aviation, and PT. Fair winds and following seas to LT Dodge, who is going to back to the fleet after a successful and impactful tour. Staff, your hard work and dedication continue to make all the difference.

# Words From the Top Four

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Battalion Commanding Officer  
MIDN 1/C Early



As our first semester fully back in person in 2 years, we hit the ground running in Fall 2021. My job was made much, much easier by the positive attitudes of all of you, who were eager to return to a normal op-tempo. But still, this billet and the responsibilities that accompany it cannot be accomplished alone. I was fortunate enough to be able to work with three extremely motivated, hardworking individuals in MIDN Pietenpol, SSgt Lee, and MIDN Mosichuk. Thank you three for adapting and growing with me to make this semester a success. I also want to thank the company commanders, MIDN Lewis and MIDN Smith, and all of the event OIC's. You all are the backbone and the workhorses for your respective training evolutions.

When I was a 4/C, I used to read these Sidelights excerpts and wonder which one of my friends would be writing it one day. Not once did I ever consider that it could be me. I didn't think that I was cut out for it. But there is no such thing. One lesson I have learned throughout my time here is that leadership comes in so many different forms. There is no formula for success. At this unit, we are put into positions, sometimes uncomfortable ones, so that we can learn to bloom where we are planted. This has been a challenging, yet extremely rewarding experience and I am grateful to have been given the opportunity.

As a 1/C, we wanted to emphasize the importance of integration, morale, and professionalism this year. Through successful events like New Student Orientation, the LRC, the Sea Service Ball, and many others, we have been able to accomplish just that. Of course, it has not been without its bumps in the road, but I am proud of the battalion and where it stands. This semester I have seen underclassmen repeatedly taking initiative, completely exceeding the expectations set in place. I have seen upperclassmen developing their own personal leadership styles, trying out different techniques to see what does and doesn't work for them. And I have seen all of you fully embracing your roles here.

Thank you for allowing me to learn with you and from you this semester. I hope that this transition back to full in person training has left you prepared and excited for the rest of your time in this battalion, however long or short that may be. You all should be proud of what you've accomplished thus far. Please take the time to rest and recharge over winter break; it is well-deserved. Look out for each other, take care of yourselves, and we will see you all in the spring!

# Words From the Top Four

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## Battalion Executive Officer MIDN 1/C Pitenpol



It was great to have the battalion back conducting in person training after a year and a half hiatus. Students were able to have successful trainings including the Alpha FEX, LRC, and Sea Trials which provided MIDN hands on experience with material learned over the course of the semester and gave upperclassmen MIDN, MECEPs, and OC with experience planning and executing these events.

I would like to give a shout out to MIDN Deng, MIDN McLaughlin, and MIDN Johnston for putting together these great events. Throughout the semester I saw trainings and briefs given that were pertinent and well executed. I would like to thank all the MECEP and MIDN instructors who took time to plan successful trainings. As we head in to second semester, I want to emphasize that the mission is not over. We

still have significant training to complete, and I want everyone to carry the momentum that we have gained this semester into the future.

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# Words From the Top Four

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## Battalion Command Master Chief MIDN 1/C Mosichuk



As the Senior Enlisted billet holder this semester I was able to witness the training and development throughout the Battalion as a whole. When the Top 4 Began planning for the long-range training plan back in May of this year, COVID was still a major roadblock. But after planning for and implementing an in-person plan, I got to witness rapid growth in overall aptitude throughout all classes. When we began, there was a general confusion about many things: watch standing, PT, Formations, LOIs, small unit leadership. But you all embraced the training laid out by your companies and I now see a unit full of growing confidence and skill. For the 4/C continue to charge ahead, you've walked into a reenergized unit. To the 3/C, excellent job shaking off the COVID cobwebs, get ready to take the lead in the semesters to come. 2/C you didn't let COVID stop you from building your military prowess. Continue to take ownership of your actions, maintain integrity in your training, and keep soaking in the knowledge that was denied to you. 1/C we aren't done yet. We arrived in Boulder and saw just what this unit can be (good

and bad). Let us own these last few months and leave our comrades with something they too can be proud of. A special thank you is due to the MECEPS for their continued support and development of us MIDN; you make this unit better with your pool of experience. Finally, thank you for allowing me to learn and grow as a member of your Top 4. I am proud to continue forward at CU amongst you all.

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## Battalion Operations Officer SSgt Lee

As the Battalion Operations Officer, I was able to learn a lot about myself while simultaneously being able to serve the CU NROTC student battalion. While being a challenge, it was an eye-opening experience and helped me build even further upon my skills as a future Marine Corps officer. I enjoyed working with the rest of the top 4 throughout the semester and having lessons learned along the way. I still have a lot to improve upon and I thank the battalion for giving me this opportunity. We came back from a semester where COVID was still very prevalent, and everyone hit the ground running. I'm very proud of the Marines, Sailors and MIDN for putting forth great effort and I am looking forward to an even better Spring 2022 semester.



# Alumni Highlight

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LtCol Godwin, USMC (ret)

On 9/11/2001, I was the NROTC Battalion Master-at-Arms. It was a Tuesday, and the Marine Platoon always had PT on Tuesday mornings. I didn't have class on Tuesday or Thursday that semester, so after PT, I would always go to the Battalion spaces after PT to ensure the students were on time to the quarterdeck, etc. I was standing in the Wardroom watching the TV when the towers and the Pentagon were attacked. What I realized that day was that we in our naval service have to stay ready so we don't have to get ready. I went to Colonel Garrett, who was the PNS at the time, and I asked to drop out so I could go back to a Scout Sniper platoon and get in the fight. He of course told me "No", because I was getting commissioned on 12/21/2001. As it turns out, there was plenty of war for our generation in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The advice I would give to the students of the NROTC is to harden your bodies physically and learn everything you can from the staff. They are a wealth of knowledge, and quite frankly, a new war could break out tomorrow. It is veterans like me who are relying on all of you to protect our country and our way of life. You have embarked on an incredible journey, one of which will show you the world and give you a unique perspective on what it means to be an American. However, as they say, iron sharpens iron. You need to continue to learn and study so when you do step in front of that first group of Sailors or Marines, **YOU ARE READY to LEAD** them.

What I learned very quickly once I got my first platoon was that the purpose of the officer corps is to **SERVE** the enlisted corps through selfless, courageous, intelligent and adaptive leadership! You must truly care about those you serve and you must be the duty expert in all things pertaining to your job. Sailors and Marines aren't stupid, and if they feel you are ingenuine and putting on a facade, you will lose their respect. Accordingly, when the bullets start flying, you have to be confident (not arrogant - arrogance is the scourge of the officer corps) enough to lead the men and women you have been entrusted to serve alongside. That confidence stems from taking the extra steps to be the best student in your college classes, your NROTC classes, and your schooling after you are commissioned. Additionally, if it is not an immediate, time-sensitive decision, **ALWAYS, ALWAYS** confer with your enlisted leaders. As a young Ensign or 2ndLt, most likely your Sailors or Marines are going to have more experience than you. Learn from them; they will show you the ropes and aid you in your decision making process. As I used to tell the enlisted members I served alongside, "Officers don't have a monopoly on the good ideas." Listen and learn, but make no mistake, you are going to be the one in charge and the one ultimately making the decision. **DO NOT** take that responsibility lightly!

Semper Fidelis Midshipmen, Sailors and Marines of the CU NROTC. I know you will carry on the great legacy of those Alum who have come before you. **GO Buffs!!**

Dave Godwin  
LtCol, USMC (ret)



LtCol Godwin



# Commissioning Graduates

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ENS Rory Mita

Hometown: Anytown, USA

Bachelors in Science: Civil Engineering

First Duty Station: Aviation Preflight Indoctrination, Pensacola, FL



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2<sup>nd</sup> LT Tyler Henderson

Hometown: West Branch, MI

Bachelors in arts: Geography

First Duty Station: 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 6<sup>th</sup> Marines- Camp Lejeune, NC



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2<sup>nd</sup> LT Abram Brown

Hometown: Havelock, NC

Bachelors in Business: Personal Financial Planning

First Duty Station: MCAS, Cherry Point, NC



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ENS Logan Glantz

Hometown: Thousand Oaks, CA

Bachelors in Arts: Strategic Communication, Media Design

First Duty Station: Everett, WA



## Congratulations to the Fall Graduates!!!!



# New Student Orientation

New Student Orientation is an introductory event for the 4/C and a great leadership experience for upper classmen. It was very awarding and beneficial to have an in person NSO this year. With great Assistant OICs, Officer and Midshipmen staff assistance, CUNROTC created an event that the 4/C midshipmen learned a lot from. Midshipman 1/C Witherell was the OIC and with the AOIC and staff help they were able to pull off New Student Orientation this year.

The process of planning NSO is an extensive one. There are a multitude of steps to take in order to ensure that 4/C Midshipmen are able to learn everything they need to properly fit into the unit in a short amount of time. It started with proper planning of staff early on before the semester even started. MIDN 1/C Witherell did an amazing job executing this planning process in the absence of direct help from those above her. Starting with a meeting with the MIDN and MCEP instructors, Witherell was able to set the expectation of the staff. Then the execution, sea trials went on for



five days exceptionally well. Colonel Dodds was proud of the work put in saying “this NSO was one of the best I’ve seen” at the end of NSO.



NSO lasted a total of five days. Day one was all about ensuring 4/C MIDN received their uniforms and understood their expectations at CUNROTC. The morning of Day two, 4/C MIDN were woken up to the sounds of MECEP and MIDN instructors yelling and running into the fieldhouse. After the MIDN were awake the 4/C were taught proper military bearing and morning Physical Training took place. Days three and four involved swim qualifications, more PT and studying of military knowledge. To top off NSO, on day 5 the MIDN ran a

Leadership Reaction Course to see how the 4/C would handle solving problems under stress and fatigue.







# FEX/ LEADERSHIP REACTION COURSE

The Marine FEX is an annual field exercise out in Jacks Valley at the Airforce Academy in Colorado. The 2/C Marine option Midshipmen lead squads in a three-day long training exercise where they practice land navigation, patrol operations and small unit leadership. This exercise helped the MIDN prepare for Officer Candidate School and The Basic School. This event wouldn't have been possible without the planning and hard

work put in by MIDN 1/C Deng and MIDN 1/C Lewis. On the second day of the FEX the Marine option MIDN joined up with the Navy Option MIDN for the Leadership Reaction Course.



The LRC included a variety of different puzzling events. These events ranged from finding a way across an “Electric fence” using nothing but rope and a few pieces of wood to getting a casualty across a “washed out bridge”. With every station timed and some stations having the rule that MIDN couldn't talk, this was no easy feat. All MIDN did a great job leading, briefing and coming up with new action plans when in charge of their squad. The 4/C proved themselves at the LRC, stepping up to the squad leader role without question and adapting to new situations. Once again, great job OIC, MIDN 1/C McLaughlin and OC Barnes for the work you put into the planning and smooth execution of this event.



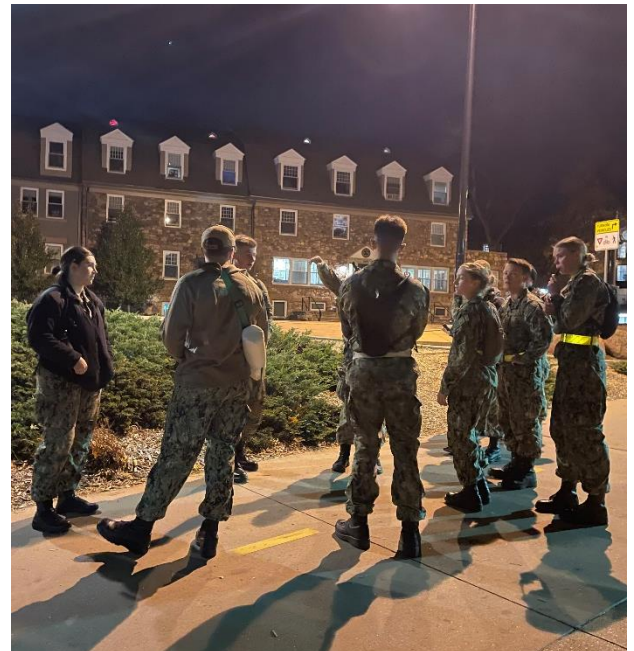
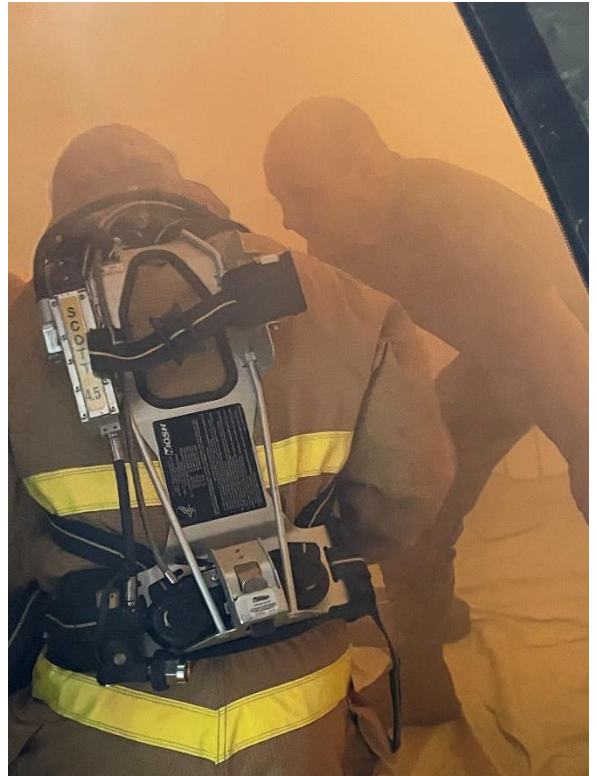






# Sea Trials

CU NROTC hosted its own Sea Trials this fall! Sea trials acts as an accumulating event for all the Trident trainings this semester. Sea trials evaluated Midshipmen on their competency in three major areas: Firefighting, damage control and ship navigation. Sea trials took place over the weekend where training lasted over 15 hours. Sea trials started off with teams running to different Physical Training stations around campus. With two “injured” team members, ammo cans and a water jug to be taken with the teams this was no easy task. After completing this event, the exhausted MIDN then had to give their all in the main Sea Trials events. Thanks to the planning of the OIC MIDN 2/C Johnston and LT Dodge, Sea Trials had all new gear and situations for the MIDN to take on. This year the firefighting station had a tent that was fogged to the point of near zero visibility along with flashing lights, yelling and constant sirens added to the realistic commotion of a casualty. Thankfully the 1/C and 2/C MIDN instructors did an amazing job this semester teaching Trident all they needed to know this semester to successfully make it through sea trials.





# Battalion Events

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TRIMIL Fall 2021. Teams from Airforce, Army and Navy compete in challenging events.



Veteran's Day Run to Columbia Cemetery. MIDN planted flags to honor those who have served.





2/C MIDN before the Navy/  
Marines Birthday Ball held this  
year inside the UMC.





