



# SIDELIGHTS

Spring 2018



University of Colorado at Boulder Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps





# NROTC University of Colorado

## *Vision Statement*

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.

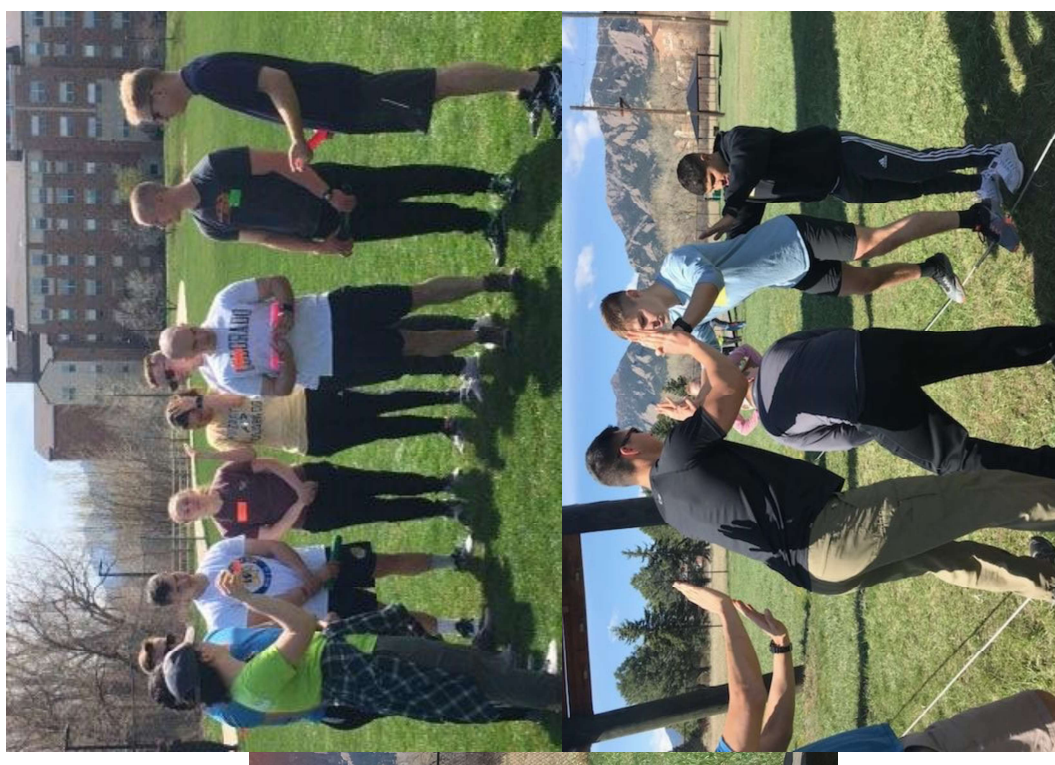
# Ropes Course



The Ropes Course gave midshipmen and Active Duty members of the Battalion the rare opportunity to train together in a fully integrated environment. Done in cooperation with the CU Challenge Course, members of the Battalion worked on teamwork and leadership skills through a series of obstacles. Above all, the event allowed us to better know and understand each other, and develop the camaraderie and unit cohesion we are striving for. The low obstacles provided midshipmen the opportunity to focus on problem solving and communication close to the safety of the ground. Perhaps in future semesters, we will have the chance to overcome greater physical and mental challenges by participating in the high obstacle portion of the course. Regardless,

this semester's Ropes Course provided a solid foundation upon which we can develop even more valuable integrated training events.

## *MIDN 2/C Fox, OIC*



*"Rough waters are truer tests of leadership. In calm water every ship has a good captain."*

*- Swedish Proverb*



# Tri-Mil Awards Ceremony

The annual Tri-Military awards is dedicated to the hard-working ROTC students of all three branches of service (Navy, Army, and Air Force) here at CU Boulder. Every year, representatives of organizations from all over the country come together to present awards to over 80 Midshipmen and Cadets for their outstanding performance, professionalism, and their propensity to serve in the United States armed forces. The award ceremony also serves to support local veteran organizations and to foster camaraderie between branches of service.

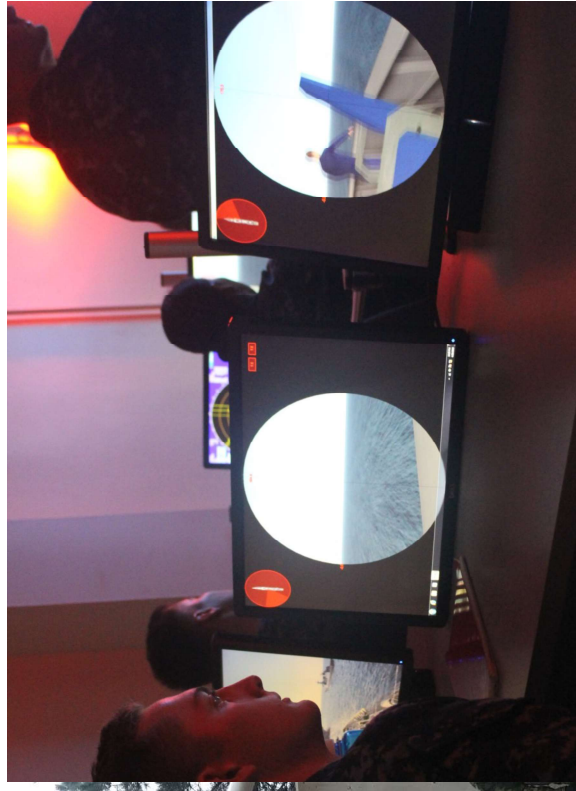


*MIDN 3/C Aldrich, OIC*



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# Commanding Officer

A roomful of tired faces of various backgrounds and ages look at you expectantly. Some show an eager anticipation. Others just look ready to get back to work. A couple exchange knowing glances, the meaning of which you can only guess. But one thing is certain, all eyes are on you. You're the new Officer, and they're waiting for you to introduce yourself and tell them what you expect. This is the moment you've been looking forward to since you started your journey years ago at CU NROTC. *Are you ready?*

For our commissionees, this moment will be coming very soon. You will be awed by the responsibility that you will be assuming as an Officer serving our enlisted and carrying out your mission. You will be continually asked, "Ensign, what do we do? Lieutenant, what now? Ma'am, what do you recommend? Sir, where do we go now?" Figuring out the answers to these questions is the bread and butter of the Junior Officer. Solving problems and leading your Sailors and Marines to successful mission execution is what Ensigns and Second Lieutenants are all about. Of course, you will have help in many forms: your training, guidance from your boss, advice from your senior enlisted, ideas from your junior enlisted, etc.

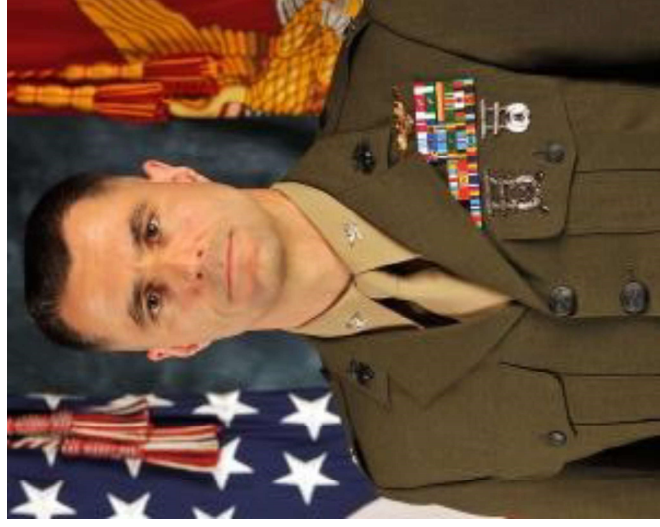
*But are you ready?* I would say that it depends. It depends on whether you embrace what you have learned here and how much you challenge yourself to continue to learn. It depends on whether you really focus on the core traits we've explored in this unit: character, winning mindset, service, and pride. It depends on if you are willing to truly serve your enlisted and put in the effort to master your tactical mission. Of course, having watched you over the last few years, the staff and I are confident that you are indeed ready.

For the rest of the Battalion, it's time for you to use the summer to recharge and prepare for another challenging year. For many, you will be going to summer training. Embrace this opportunity and get as much out of it as you can. For all of the Battalion, use the summer to:

- **Recharge your batteries** – get some rest, find balance, and get prepared to return in the fall to thrive in school and in this program.
- **Serve a purpose greater than yourself** – find a way to volunteer and/or contribute to a cause in which you believe. Visit a Veteran's home, donate your time at a community center, or give of yourself to a local charity. There are many ways to serve; find one that suits you.
- **Stay in shape** – mentally and physically. The summer gives you an excellent opportunity to train your mind and body so you return in the fall in great shape.

We look forward to tracking our newly commissioned Officers as you go through follow-on training and begin your first tours in the Fleet. We wish you all the best of luck. *You are ready.*

**Michael J. Gough,**  
**Colonel, USMC**



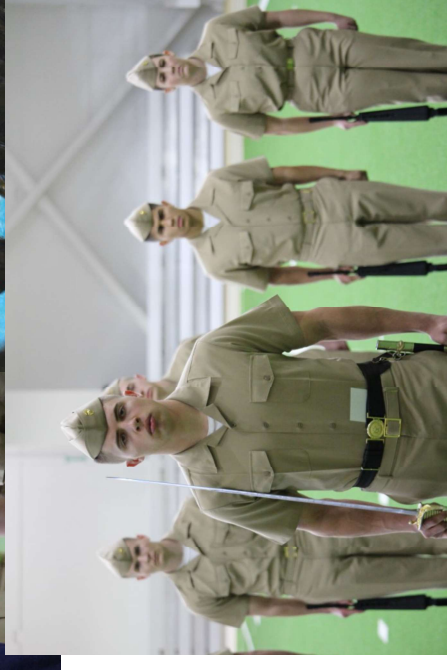
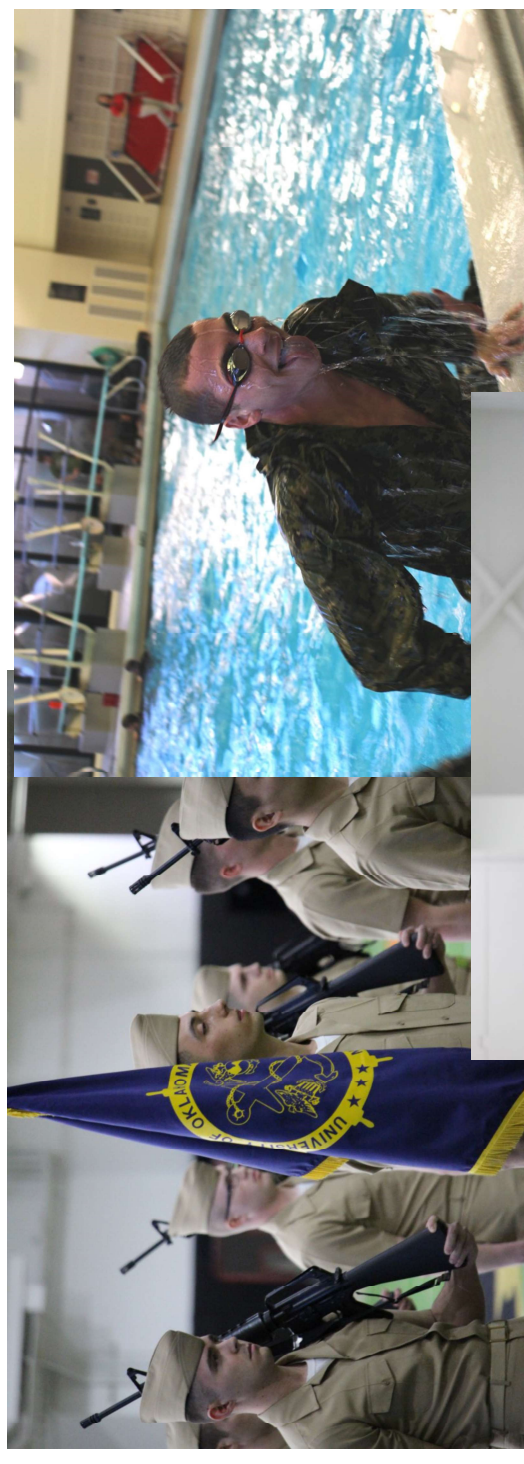
# Colorado Meet

In March 2018, several schools from across the nation visited CU to compete in the annual drill meet held here. The events included pistol shooting, rifle shooting, squad drill, platoon drill, color guard and an endurance race. For many months Midshipmen from across the country practiced in order to come and compete their best. The goal of this meet was to teach essential leadership skills to members of the CU Naval ROTC battalion and for members of the national ROTC program by providing billets and presenting Midshipmen with a challenge to solve and lead through. This year the Colorado Meet was focused on presenting a fair and friendly competition. We made several changes by housing all drill events under one roof and filming them and adding more swimming for the E-Race. These changes were meant to increase the consistency of scoring as well as



make the training translatable to both Marine and Navy options. It was my great pleasure to organize this meet and I am sure that whoever takes my place next year will make it better than ever. Go Buffs!

**MIDN 2/C Althouse, OIC**





# Widefield JROTC Meet



The Widefield Drill Meet was one of the larger public service events that the Battalion participated in this year. Members of CUNROTC served as judges and proctors for the competition, which saw NJROTC units from across the state striving to be the best. This event is particularly unique as it allows the junior members of our Battalion to experience leadership positions that they would not have had access to until later in their NROTC careers. Invaluable lessons in responsibility and bearing were learned during the event, as the autonomy Midshipmen were entrusted led to them making independent choices. Through our volunteers' invigorating spirit and military bearing, a new generation of America's servicemembers have been inspired to dig deep and be something bigger than themselves.



# Executive Officer

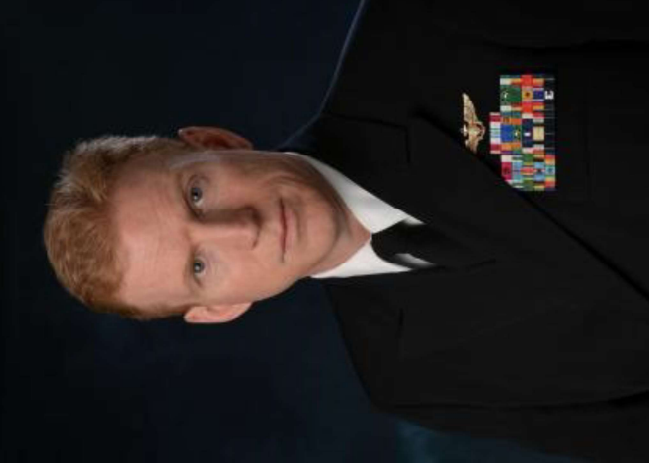
Success. Spring 2018 is complete. Four new Ensigns and four new 2nd Lieutenants enter the fleet! The year as a whole had quite a number of accomplishments. And a bump or two. This spring saw the successful completion of our Colorado meet, the Semper Fi field exercise, and another iteration of our Sea Trials.

Each of these events successfully being executed makes me proud of the staff and midshipmen's efforts. Let's start with the Colorado meet. No we didn't win the overall competition like last year but there was solid effort and improvement throughout most of the performances. Additionally the operation and execution of the event itself was excellent. Your efforts outshined efforts I've seen in the fleet and you have nowhere to go but up.

Take Semper Fi's field exercise. A great event to challenge folks working as a team and demonstrate small unit leadership. It offers a fantastic opportunity for leadership, especially with those preparing for OCS this summer, as well as followership for those squad members on their team. And one of the core competencies to exercise and improve on is communication. Whether it is verbal orders, active listening, a 5 paragraph order....we can all improve in this area. Especially MIDN 2/C Miller. It's challenging for folks from Georgia.

Sea trials. Why are we training overnight or attempting to cross a pool with sticks and a barrel (newly patented Hebenstreit frog kick)? Over the years folks have made fun of aviator's crew rest requirements but now other communities are starting to factor in these issues with the dangerous jobs that are performed in their warfare areas. However there are times when a unit may have a surge in their operations or arduous duty that has to get done. During those times it is going to be more difficult to think clearly, make smart decisions, and effectively operate under stress. Training is the perfect place to practice these scenarios and learn how stress affects our mental and physical abilities and learn how better to handle and use that knowledge in the future.

I think at the end of all three of these evolutions you could look back at the event and know a lot of good work went into the planning, the execution, and the training provided. There was plenty of other things to be proud of so take a moment and reflect on all the good that took place, and the bumps, and have a great summer!



And by the way, ask ENS Byrne how he temporarily lost track of his wallet in Pensacola. Good story.

Charles W. Brown,  
Commander, USN



# Battalion Leadership



Leading the Battalion this semester has been a wonderful privilege. During the semester, we incorporated great training exercises to improve welfare, morale, and unit cohesion. Some training exercises include Monday Morning PT, the Colorado Meet, Field Exercises, and the Ropes Course. All events were executed well and I am extremely proud of the work done by the individuals organizing each event. Additionally, the Battalion built a strong sense of cohesion through intramural sports including soccer, volleyball, hockey, ultimate frisbee, and softball. Thank you to those who participated to bring the unit close through competition. Afterwards, we ensured the MIDN were properly prepared for their summer cruises. The MIDN have improved greatly since the beginning of the semester to produce an excellent Battalion of future Navy and Marine Corps Officers.

The past four years have been a great experience and have learned a lot from my peers and active duty. I am excited to get to the fleet and have great faith that I leave the Battalion in capable hands to produce leaders.

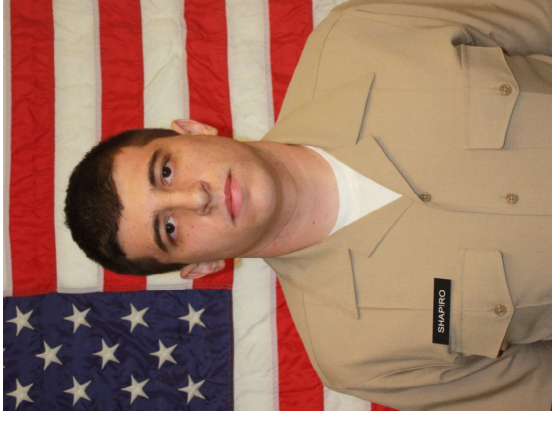
***John McLaren,  
Battalion Commanding Officer***



This semester I had the honor of once again serving in one of the Top 4 billets, this time as the Executive Officer. While I initially began the semester as a part of the Tiger Team, alongside the other members of last semesters Top 4 (MIDN Shapiro, MIDN Johnson, and MIDN Fox), due to some unforeseen circumstances I was asked to return to the Top 4 to serve as MIDN McLaren's XO. Due to this unusual and abrupt change of billet, I had to quickly learn the roles and duties of the XO. The XO serves as the CO's right-hand-man, making sure that his vision is implemented and his goals for the battalion are met. The XO is also often the first person the CO will look to for advice when making decisions for the battalion. I enjoyed the opportunity to once again serve the battalion as a member of the Top 4 and despite not having the luxury of time to plan in advance, I felt that we came together as a cohesive team quickly and were able to lead the battalion through a strong second half of the semester.

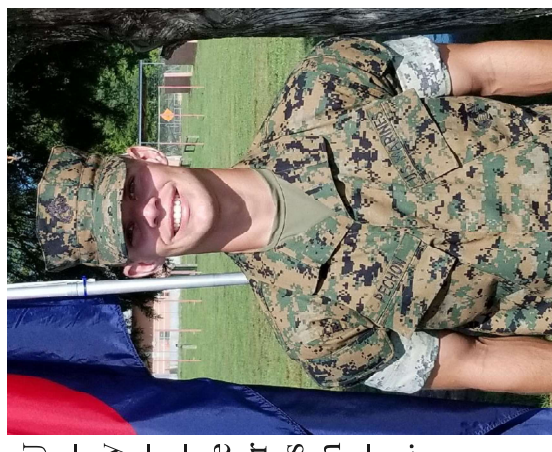
***Jacob Vornholt,  
Battalion Executive Officer***

# Commissioning Graduates



Wow, 4 years goes by so fast. It's been an absolute privilege to be in this unit and grow as a person and as a leader. The class that I entered with allowed me to become the person I am today and I am honored to have been around such amazing people, and great future officers. While a member of CU NROTC I learned when developing into a leader you have to make mistakes and the most important thing is to learn from those mistakes and move forward. Another thing I learned is take ROTC seriously but also enjoy college these 4 years are not just about determining what type of leader you are but determining what type of person you are too.

***Logan Shapiro***



I could not be more grateful for the last four years as a student at CU Boulder and as an NROTC Midshipmen. I have made lifelong friendships and grown both professionally and personally. Throughout my time at CU I have learned a few things; get outside and enjoy Colorado, find a balanced life early on, and don't be afraid to take on a challenge. I encourage everyone to find your own adventure and make your time here worth your while. Seek out opportunities to lead your peers and learn from the mistakes you will make along the way, that is what you are here to do. I am proud to say I am a CU Buff and I wish everyone the best as they finish their degree and earn their commission.

***Matthew Pechon***



# Commissioning Graduates



I am grateful for my time here at CUNROTC. The wisdom I leave you is live in the moment, take advantage of every opportunity, and use this opportunity to open your curiosity to the world. To live in the moment, do not rush your way out of the battalion. Enjoy yourselves and this opportunity—it is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Take advantage of every opportunity—every leadership lab, Trident meeting, Semper Fi meeting, and training exercise will better your leadership if you allow it to. Use this opportunity to open your curiosity to the world—open your minds to new ways of thinking and things you are curious in. Use this opportunity to learn more about the world, the fleet and yourselves. Thanks and keep up the hard work.

## Patrick Fischer

The past 4 years have been ones of significant development. During my time in NROTC, I have had the opportunity to serve in many billets, be mentored by several officers, meet some extraordinary prior enlisted Marines, and evolve into a better person and officer. Over the past 4 years, I have been taught the importance of accountability, professionalism, and integrity in every facet of my life. As a sophomore, I was mentored by LT Kim who showed me the need to care for our people.

As a junior, I had the pleasure of serving as Battalion Sergeant Major, a role which forced me to focus on servant leadership and understanding the welfare of our troops. Finally, as a senior I had the opportunity to serve MIDN Shapiro and the Battalion as the Executive Officer. Within this challenging role, I learned the necessity of proper planning, communication, and some of the challenges which are inherent in leading an organization. In summation, my four years at CU have been filled with tremendous leadership opportunities. The person who I am today is vastly different than the young Midshipmen who entered four years ago, and this transformation would not have been possible had it not been for the professionalism of the staff, MECEPs, and MIDN whom I call my fellow buffs.

## Michael Johnson



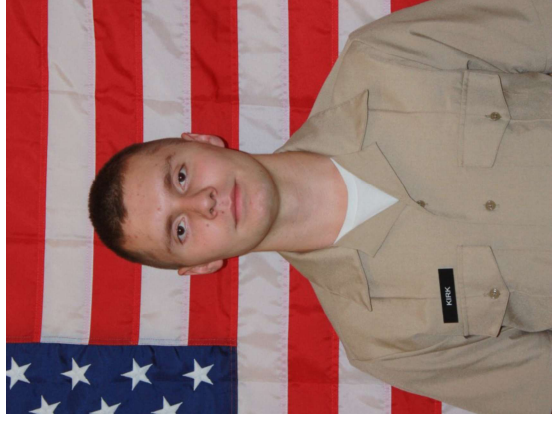
# Battalion Leadership

This spring I had the opportunity to serve in a Top 4 role as the Battalion Operations Officer. As the Operations Officer my primary responsibility was to collect information on battalion events and distribute information to the battalion, as well as to keep updated on the planning process of major battalion events. In addition to distribution of information, the Battalion Operations Officer serves as an additional source of input and planning for the rest of the Top 4. As Operations officer this semester I learned a lot about the importance of attention to detail in planning the operations of the battalion, and discovered that the planning of many battalion events is much more in-depth than I had previously thought.

Throughout this semester, I gained significant experience in adapting to changes in established plans as well as reacting to significant changes within the battalion leadership, learning the importance of backup plans and being able to change the course of operations on a short notice.

Working with the rest of the Top 4: MIDN McLaren, Vornholt, and Kirk, has provided many new perspectives of leadership styles and has been very valuable in developing my own. Overall, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to serve in such a significant role and would like to thank all the Midshipmen and Staff I worked with for a productive semester.

## **Jesse Holton, Battalion Operations Officer**

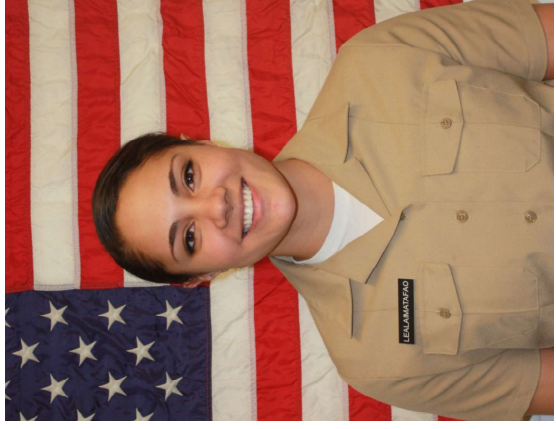


Having the opportunity to serve as the Battalion Sergeant Major this spring and work alongside MIDN McLaren, MIDN Vornholt, and MIDN Holton has been incredibly rewarding. Starting as Battalion Sergeant Major halfway throughout the semester was challenging at first, other members of the Top Four were familiar with their jobs, while I was trying to figure out mine. There were times when we would not communicate effectively with each other and jobs would not get done on time. However, every week we would meet with the staff and each other to try to improve the battalion as much as possible. As the Top Four we learned very quickly that all classes in the Battalion look up to us, and it is our job to be examples, especially the 4/C. In regards to leadership, my leadership style is very different than some of the other members in The Top Four and I learned from their styles and interacting with them. Despite this, we had the opportunity to oversee many battalion events, including the implementation of Battalion PT. Overall, my experience as Sergeant Major has been extremely rewarding. It has allowed me to see my leadership strengths and weaknesses, work on my command presence, public speaking skills, and I feel like I have influenced and changed the battalion for the better. I am extremely grateful for the hard work of the other members of the Top Four and the midshipman in the battalion. Also, for the OCs, MECEPs, and Staff for transforming and helping us be the best possible officers we can be.

## **Kevin Kirk, Battalion Sergeant Major**



# Alpha Company

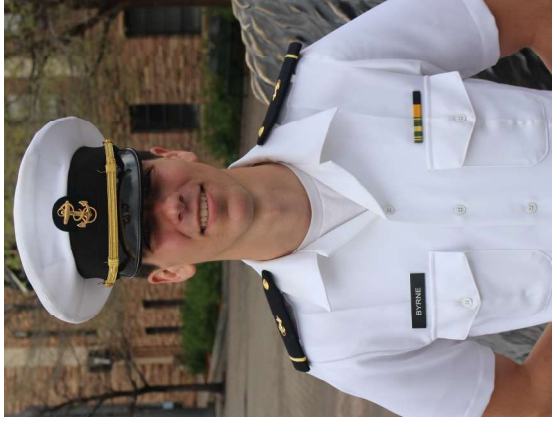


This semester I had the great opportunity to be the Alpha Company Commander. We used the knowledge from last semester and continued to build the foundation of Marine Corps leaders. This semester we focused on small unit leadership, patrolling, and five paragraph orders in order to develop basic skills and increase confidence in leadership roles. I have had the privilege to see many young midshipmen grow and develop both mentally and physically, especially during our Final Field Exercise. The members of Alpha Company were a pleasure to work with and have made my billet this semester an incredibly rewarding experience. I am confident that our midshipmen will excel in Officer Candidate School as well as in the fleet. I am extremely proud of what they have been able to achieve this semester and look forward to seeing them continue to develop. I especially want to thank the rest of the midshipmen staff for being flexible and achieving the goals we set in the beginning of the year. I'm honored to have been a part of the Alpha Company leadership and wish everyone good luck on their coming years, and at OCS this summer.

***Abigail Lealainatafao,  
Alpha Company Commander***



# Bravo Company



**Bravo Company's Mission Statement:** To commission competent, dynamic Midshipman who add value to the United States Navy.

This Spring, I had the privilege to serve as your Bravo Company Commander. It is often said leadership is challenging. After this semester, both of Bravo Company's division officers can confirm that leadership is extremely hard when you work alongside a maniacal boss. As much as the DIVOS don't want to admit it, we accomplished a lot. This semester, Bravo Company's leadership focused on professional development and basic seamanship skills. Midshipmen were introduced to various skills ranging from first aid to sea navigation. It is critical that military members are competent in these areas, particularly in situations of duress. Additionally, Midshipmen practiced speaking publicly by presenting specific naval battles to their peer groups throughout the semester. Midshipmen had a final opportunity to practice these skills in a culminating event known as "sea trials". Throughout this event, midshipman demonstrated their leadership and communication abilities, and mental/physical endurance. As the semester closes, I am proud to have participated in Bravo Company leadership and wish everyone luck as they leave for their summer cruises.

So, I leave you with the two main lessons I learned from ROTC.

First, never give up the ship. In life, you will face many obstacles and challenges. Don't ever let someone else influence you to quit. Everyone faces hardship, those who endure and excel in the face of adversity achieve their goals. Use both the positive and negative things that happen to you to motivate you to be better. Hard work doesn't always pay off, but it sure does help.

Second, if you are going to run PT in dress shoes make sure you wear them confidently.

***Shaun Byrne,  
Bravo Company Commander***

