

# Sidelights

Spring 2020



# 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.



“The only thing we have to fear is...fear itself — nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.” - Franklin D. Roosevelt

# Commanding Officer:

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## Colonel Thomas J. Dodds, USMC



As my first year concludes here at the University of Colorado, I want to note that it has been a great experience and I am proud of the Battalion and staff's accomplishments. Though we had a significant curveball thrown at us with COVID-19, the entire unit persevered. Next fall also poses some unique challenges in the way we will be instructing our NAVR classes, conducting Leadership Labs and executing Physical Training, but I am confident that the Battalion and staff's ingenuity and resourcefulness will ensure that the mission is carried out in the most efficient and effective manner. Regardless of the delivery method of how we meet our mission requirements, accountability, professionalism, and doing our absolute best in the classroom and on the grinder will be at the forefront of everything we do.

As we move into the Fall 2020, we must continue to establish an inclusive and supportive environment for all in this unit; successful units operate from a foundation of trust. It is imperative that we are treating others as we would want to be treated and we are leading as we would want to be led. Just as you will do in the Fleet, ensure you are looking out for one another and have the fortitude to reach out to someone if it appears that they are struggling. Leadership is about knowing and understanding our people, the Naval Services greatest resource. I expect billet holders to embrace their leadership roles and know those in their charge. It starts with TEAM, and that TEAM's foundation is built by our small unit leader's action and engagement.

With the loss of much of our summer training this year, I know you will find constructive ways to make it a good summer. Additionally, I would ask that each of you take time to reflect on your academic, physical fitness, and military aptitude strengths and weaknesses. Develop and implement a plan to reinforce your strengths and improve areas that require work. The discipline and effort that you put in this summer will only enhance your performance next year. I look forward to your professionalism, spirit, and fortitude next semester.

Finally, we wish our new Ensigns and 2nd Lieutenants well in the future with their follow-on training and we have no doubts that you will make this unit and the University of Colorado extremely proud.

Get fired up and stay healthy!

# Executive Officer:

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## Commander Regina Kauffman, USN



In our tradition of excellence, during Spring 2020 semester, we confronted obstacles head on; continued to learn and improve; and developed physically, mentally, and morally as tough warfighters, despite unusual trials unlike any in recent time.

Congratulations to all of the Second Lieutenants and Ensigns who were commissioned into the Naval Service; took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States; and agreed to uphold the highest ideals of duty, loyalty, and the core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

Congratulations on a job well done to Midshipman Wang, Midshipman Spitzer, Midshipman DeLong, and Staff Sergeant Jackson in leading the battalion with particular focus on establishing and fulfilling a vision and goals, thoughtful and meticulous planning and communications, accountability, professionalism, and adaptability during both “normal” and “remote” operations. This focus helped us to stay strong and kept us rooted in our foundations, despite the unique challenges that Coronavirus presented.

Bravo Zulu to all battalion members who made personal and team advancements, achieved milestones, and had personal wins in academics, leadership, physical fitness, service and other areas. We trained and developed rigorously in core warfighting competencies, and we continued to improve upon the high quality and timeliness of military instruction. A key accomplishment was the NROTC Colorado Meet, with involvement from all hands hosting 13 schools participating in Marksmanship, Color Guard, Platoon and Squad Drill, Knowledge, and an eight-mile Endurance Race up Green Mountain in Chautauqua Park. The expertise coordinating and executing the event was invaluable in inspiring leadership and camaraderie in future Marine Corps and Navy Officers from coast to coast. The CU NROTC overall win further exemplifies the outstanding dedication, stamina, and professionalism by competing members and our battalion.

I applaud the staff and all battalion members for adaptability, creativity, and fortitude during the pandemic. Looking ahead, we need to continue to adjust and adapt to a new environment as we create professionally trained, disciplined, tough and courageous future Naval and Marine Corps Officers. We must all be responsible to foster an environment of respect that embraces ethics and values-based decision-making. We must take care of our people, and actively engage ourselves in all that entails.

Fair winds and following seas to Captain Justin Colgrove, our Marine Officer Instructor, and to First Sergeant Anthony Stockman, our Assistant Marine Officer Instructor. Both will be transferring. Their mentorship, leadership, and devotion to service over the past three years has left an enduring impression and has been instrumental in the military and character development of hundreds of students. Captain Colgrove and First Sergeant Stockman will be missed!

# Words From The Top Four



Battalion Commanding Officer  
MIDN 1/C Wang

Through the spring 2020 semester I had the privilege of working with some amazing individuals to help train and equip the CU NROTC Battalion. In striving to serve others and help make this organization a better place, I also learned countless lessons along the way. One lesson that really stuck with me is that it is no longer about yourself. Holding this billet really showed me the importance of teamwork and how things will go poorly very quickly if you do not rely on your teammates. I was blessed with an all-star Top 4 team this semester with MIDN Spitzer as XO, SSgt Jackson as OPSO, and

MIDN DeLong as SgtMaj. I could not have asked for more qualified and trustworthy individuals to work, struggle, and grow alongside with.

Looking back over the course of the semester is was definitely out of the ordinary. With the impacts of COVID-19 a majority of our day-to-day training operations were completely canceled in addition to some of the bigger events that were planned. Both of the company FEXs were not able to take place along with valued guest speakers, the Battalion Competition, community service project and other training evolutions. Despite all of the negative impacts, it was inspiring to see the resiliency and creativity of the members of our Battalion and efforts that they made to stay in shape and train in the capacity that was possible. Weekly workouts kept up the competitive nature and workout equipment was distributed to members of the Battalion to help with physical training throughout the pandemic.

Although far from a traditional semester I think that we made improvements on communication and learned many valuable lessons. It was a semester full of experiences that we will hopefully take to the fleet. Good luck to all of the newly commissioned Ensigns and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants - remember where you came from and make us proud!



# Words From The Top Four



Battalion Executive Officer  
MIDN 1/C Spitzer

This last semester was a challenging and historic semester. However, the impacts of COVID did not stop training and development for our Battalion as a whole. Overall, using new progressive training methods, we were able to provide specific training to those at different levels in order to better cater to the needs of each individual. The shining moment of every spring semester, the beloved Colorado Meet was a challenge met and conquered by our motivated Midshipmen. They executed and successfully ran the largest Colorado Meet in its illustrious history. MIDN Vanlangendonck and his team did an excellent job, with little needed support from the Battalion leadership. All hands were expected to contribute, and everyone rose to the occasion to smoothly execute the event.

As a Battalion, we focused on academics, quality training, and physical fitness, and as we strived to reach each of those goals, we increased the support system for those struggling in academics. We also utilized the MECEPS in a greater capacity to increase the level of expertise into each training evolution. Continuing to hold our PT standards high, and building off of the fall semester, we increased our physical fitness level and camaraderie at the Battalion level and at the Company level. As COVID halted the rest of the semester, we continued to support and look out for one another with constant accountability at all levels. Even with our time cut short, I believe there was learning and growth at all levels, and looking back at this time, I am confident that all unit members were able to make the best of this last semester.



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## Words From The Top Four

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Battalion Operations Officer  
Staff Sergeant Jackson

This past semester brought many learning experiences and opportunities for growth, both professionally and personally. My goal during this time was to streamline the means of communication and create standard operating procedures that fortified operational tempo and reduced friction within command leadership. Establishing a hub in the form of a BN wide Google Share Folder, allowed for members in the BN to quickly access necessary information, and consolidate pertinent files for future use of an ever-rotating leadership. This hub was crucial in disseminating information quickly, allowed for ease of access, and collaboration between event Officers in Charge.

Having been in leadership positions before, it was a personal goal of mine to act as an advisor to the BN Staff and not the commander during this time. My time as the BN Operations Officer allowed me to hone my abilities as a communicator and mentor while working with an exceptional BN Staff. The lessons that I learned during this past semester will not be soon forgotten, and have fortified my idea that leadership is not just one person, but takes all kinds.



Battalion Sergeant Major  
MIDN 1/C DeLong

My time as the Battalion Sergeant Major has been phenomenal, all thanks to the battalion and the rest of the Top 4. I've learned so much in the past semester, and I'm thrilled that I was given such a great opportunity to grow as a leader. Thanks to open communication and honest feedback, I feel as though we were able to create a strong foundation for future battalion leaders to build upon.

Despite the troubles we all experienced due to COVID-19, I appreciated the way the unit was able to pull together and make it work. Accountability and classes were able to continue, thanks to the hard work done by all involved. I'm proud to have been a part of this unit, and I'm excited to see MIDN Skilbred continue as the next Battalion Sergeant Major. I know he will do a great job.

# Commissioning Graduates

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Ensign Zachary Aldrich

Hometown: Columbia, MD

Bachelor of Science Mechanical Engineering

First Duty Station: Surface Warfare Officer, USS *Tripoli*, San Diego, CA

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2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Lawrence Bellon

Hometown: St. Louis, MO

Bachelor of Arts Environmental Studies

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA

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2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Evan Blaskowski

Hometown: Pine, CO

Bachelor of Science Neuroscience

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA

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2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Meredith DeLong

Hometown: State College, PA

Bachelor of Arts Environmental Design

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA



2<sup>nd</sup> Lt John Fitzmaurice

Hometown: Flagstaff, AZ

Bachelor of Arts History

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA

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2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Michael Hartley

Hometown: Howell, MI

Bachelor of Arts Political Science

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA

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2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Alejandro Irizarry

Hometown: Woodinville, WA

Bachelor of Arts Philosophy

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA

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Ensign Tyler Lacroix

Hometown: Mililani, HI

Bachelor of Arts Computer Science

First Duty Station: Surface Warfare Officer, USS *Sterett*, San Diego, CA

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Ensign Shawna McGuire

Hometown: Canandaigua, NY

Bachelor of Science Aerospace Engineering

First Duty Station: Student Naval Aviator, Aviation Preflight Indoctrination, Pensacola, FL

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2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Alexander McLaren

Hometown: Brighton, MI

Bachelor of Science Electrical Engineering

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA



2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Tynan McMullen

Hometown: Tomah, WI

Bachelor of Arts History

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt James Cathey Award Winner

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA

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Ensign Natalie Morrissey

Hometown: Eagle, CO

Bachelor of Arts Integrative Physiology

Admiral Arleigh Burke Award Winner

First Duty Station: Student Naval Flight Officer, Aviation Preflight Indoctrination, Pensacola, FL

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2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Cody Osteen

Hometown: Gypsum, CO

Bachelor of Arts Integrative Physiology & Russian Studies

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA

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2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Scot Seitz

Hometown: Carlisle, PA

Bachelor of Science Finance & Real Estate

First Duty Station: The Basic School, Quantico, VA

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Ensign Andrew Spitzer

Hometown: Gig Harbor, WA

Bachelor of Science Electrical and Computer Engineering

First Duty Station: Student Naval Aviator, Aviation Preflight Indoctrination, Pensacola, FL

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Ensign Marshall Van Gundy

Hometown: Arvada, CO

Bachelor of Arts Integrative Physiology

First Duty Station: Surface Warfare Officer, USS *Michael Monsoor*, San Diego, CA



Ensign Samuel Zimmer

Hometown: Castle Rock, CO

Bachelor of Science Electrical and Computer Engineering

First Duty Station: Student Naval Aviator, Aviation Preflight Indoctrination, Pensacola, FL

## Congratulations Commissionees!

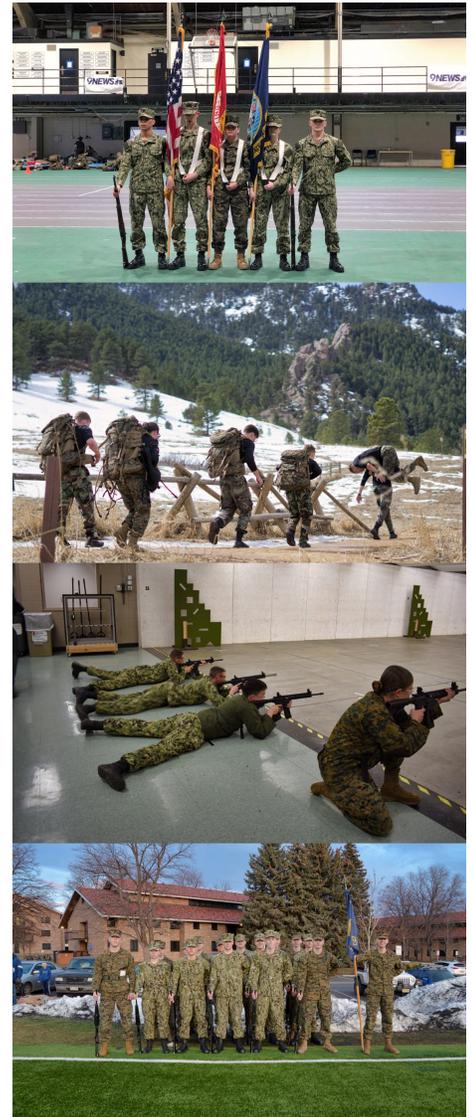
CU NROTC is proud of all the work that you have done while members of our unit. As stated by Col Dodds, "It's time to get it on." Make us proud in the fleet.

## Colorado Meet

Event OIC – MIDN 2/C Vanlangendonck

In order to ensure a fair and successful Colorado Meet, the Meet AOIC Midshipman Lee and myself made sure all communications and documentation were effective in creating a thorough understanding of the Colorado Meet's Course of Action. Furthermore, the Colorado Meet planning is useless without a strong force of personnel to carry out the plan; the Colorado Meet is an all-hands evolution where Midshipmen, MECEPs, and Active Duty Staff play vital roles as safety observers, range safety officers, hospitality liaisons, PAO liaisons, and many other positions providing support to the planning staff. Personnel working the Colorado Meet dedicate their entire weekend to make sure all events and evolutions of the Colorado Meet are successfully underway.

Bravo Zulu to all CU NROTC personnel on hosting a great meet and taking first place in the overall meet!



# MIDN during COVID-19

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During the last month and a half of the semester, all of our lives were turned upside down due to the novel coronavirus. Most NROTC activities were canceled and all classes transitioned to online learning. Because of these changes, many of the members in our unit were forced to make changes to their plans for the remainder of the semester and the summer. We reached out to some individuals and asked them to write about how they have adapted their lifestyles due to COVID-19. Below you will find personal anecdotes written by MIDN in our unit talking about their experiences in these last few months.

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MIDN 3/C Alejandro Cancio

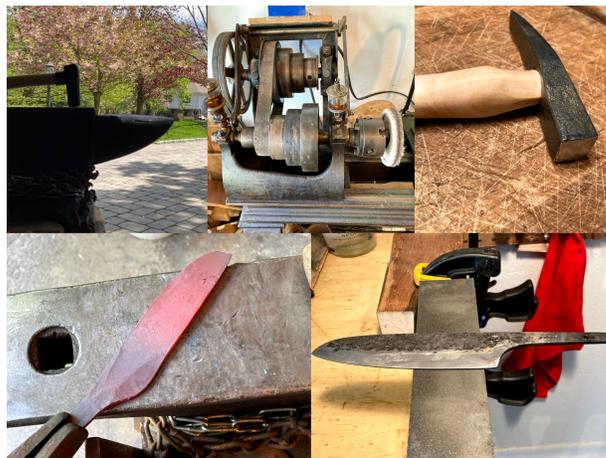
Hope everyone is doing well and staying busy! Once classes ended I found myself with an endless stream of things to keep me busy in my workshop. For those of you that don't know, I own and operate a full machine shop, blacksmith shop, and jewelry design studio. I worked for many years designing and selling jewelry, and now I spend most of my freetime doing bladesmithing.

Coming back from Colorado I was greeted with an extremely messy workshop. I had a small journal of projects that I wanted to get started on, but I knew that the first step would be cleaning. Every tool in the shop was removed, oiled and painted (save my 1891 wood lathe), and then reinstalled. All of the drawers were organized, labeled and inventoried and after 2 weeks of nonstop organization I was able to get started on a few projects.

The first thing I worked on was programming and installing an MC-60 motor control board for a variable speed belt grinder. I'd like to say it worked flawlessly on the first try, but really it was something like the 5th. I then made a few designs of various tools I'm planning on building in Solidworks later this Summer (a hydraulic press, vacuum induction casting machine, etc...).

Finally it was time to light my forge! After not touching a piece of hot steel since November, I have spent the last week hammering out some traditional Japanese kitchen knives for practice. Over the next month I will be finishing them up and sending them off to their new homes.

Thank you for listening to me ramble about what I've been up to during the quarantine! I will say, it's nice that my hobbies are mostly isolated already, and though daunting they are all relatively easy to get into, so if you think Blacksmithing or jewelry design is something you want to give a try, take advantage of the situation and go for it. Stay safe everyone, Sko Buffs!



## MIDN 4/C Josh Minimo

When the COVID-19 outbreak began, and classes switched over to remote learning, returning home early and attending classes online overseas became a new challenge for me. I had to adjust to waking up at 0100 Japan Standard Time to participate in online lectures until 0600, then began working on homework throughout the morning and ensured I reported in for muster during the evening. Adjusting to this new lifestyle took effort and hard work, but it finally paid off when I finished the spring semester with a click of a button.

Living and growing up in Japan has been a unique and valuable experience. I grew up in a community where American, military, and Japanese culture all blend together. In Yokosuka, it is normal to go out and see men and women in uniform, pass by children and teenagers going to school and hanging out, and spot Japanese workers taking breaks from construction projects. On a typical summer break, I would often travel off base to explore Japan with friends and family and interact with the Japanese locals. Normally, I enjoy eating at local restaurants, visiting historical landmarks, and take pleasure in switching languages on the whim whenever I need to translate dialogue or signs for my companions.

Exploring Japan is an opportunity to learn something new from the Japanese culture, and it has been a pleasant experience interacting with polite locals. Sometimes you learn a tradition that is pretty interesting or one that can be very strange, but I think that goes with every culture.

However, due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the base I live on restricted all unnecessary travel from the installation – which means no more going out to walk through the streets of Japan. I found this news discouraging but necessary for the well-being of others over the summer. Even though I am confined to base, I have found ways to make this summer a productive one. I plan to take summer courses to pass the time and do workouts on base as a way to go outdoors. I am also incredibly grateful that the base deemed outdoor exercises “essential activities,” and have been using this time as an opportunity to escape the indoors.

I, like many of you, hope that the course of the pandemic will do a turnaround, and restrictions will ease off over the summer. I am excited to think that one day I can go out and spend a day at Miura-kaigan Beach to go windsurfing again. Additionally, I am eager to come back to Boulder to see familiar faces again and getting back into the grind of work.



### MIDN 3/C Nicole Lewis

My time in quarantine has been interesting no doubt. Most days were spent working on school assignments or watching the next best TV series on Netflix. I have somehow managed to keep things interesting during these times. I have done everything from baking, to running, to skiing. Even though we have all been limited in the activities we are able to do at the moment, I found it important to continue with different activities that I enjoy. I was fortunate to have spent my quarantine in three exceptionally different states: Colorado, Utah, and California. Being in these three different locations made it relatively easy to stay entertained as we were all stuck in our homes. No matter the circumstances, there is also fun to be had.





**“Get fired up and stay healthy!” – Col Dodds**