



World's Greatest Naval Battalion (WGNB) Newsletter

February & March 2016

Notre Dame Leadership Conference

This past weekend the WGNB sent three midshipmen to the 2017 Naval Leadership Weekend at the University of Notre Dame. MIDN 1/C Joseph Morrison, MIDN 1/C Ariana Parra, and MIDN 2/C Alex Perello represented the WGNB at the event. These midshipmen, along with three hundred other students from around the country experienced the pinnacle of U.S. Navy leadership.

The weekend began with a welcoming speech from Rear Admiral Stephen C. Evans, Commander of Naval Service Training Command. The day continued with speeches from General Robert B. Neller, Commandant of the United States Marine Corps and retired Fleet Master Chief April D. Beldo. Following the speakers, the midshipmen had the opportunity to attend a junior officer panel and Q&A session. Junior officers from all communities within the USN and USMC.



MIDN 1/C Ariana Parra (left) and MIDN 2/C Alex Perello (right) with Rear Admiral Stephen C. Evans, Commander, Naval Service Training Command.

Saturday began with a speech from Vice Admiral Christopher W. Grady, the Commander of 6th Fleet and then continued with many more impressive speeches. The other speakers included Admiral Michael S. Rogers, Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, Vice Admiral Thomas S. Rowden, Commander, Naval Surface Forces, and Dr. Michael C. Desch, Director of the Notre Dame International Security Center. The day concluded with a speech from keynote speaker Admiral John M. Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations.

When asked about his experience at the Notre Dame Naval Leadership Weekend, MIDN 2/C Alex Perello responded, "The Notre Dame Naval Leadership Weekend was a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet and learn from the Navy and Marine Corps highest ranking officers. I am still in utter disbelief that I was able to speak to the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commander of the Surface Fleet, and learn from people like the Commandant of the Marine Corps. I took away an unfathomable amount of information in regards to leadership, and I am incredibly humbled and grateful that I had an opportunity to attend such an event."



MIDN 1/C Ariana Parra (right), MIDN 2/C Alex Perello (left), with Admiral John M. Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations.

OCS PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY

For the last two months, the Marine Option midshipmen of the WGNB have been focusing heavily on readying themselves for Officer Candidate School this summer at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia. The unit will be sending a total of eight midshipmen to both increments, and these candidates-to-be are in the process of finalizing the necessary skills that will be required to pass the six week course. The majority of this preparation occurs during Marine Option Laboratory, or MOLAB, every Tuesday afternoon.

No two weeks have been the same as there is a variety of knowledge that each candidate should master before arriving at OCS, and each week has thus far focused on this myriad of requirements.



The entrance to Marine Corps Base Quantico where marine option midshipman will attend Officer Candidate School this summer (above).

One of the major tests at OCS is the small unit leadership exercise (SULE) that each candidate is required to pass. This evolution is made up of a variety of skills including land navigation, writing and briefing five paragraph orders, and squad-level tactics. Thus, the first few weeks of MOLAB have focused on reviewing land navigation. Midshipmen

WGNB Basketball Team

The WGNB basketball team is back in action this semester competing in an intramural league against other student teams on campus. The team is lead by captains, MIDN 2/C Alex Perello and MIDN 1/C Nathan Todd. Coming into the season the team had high hopes as four of the five starters from last year returned. As of now, they have lived up to the expectations and are currently undefeated. Along with a 2-0 record, the WGNB basketball team is the highest scoring team in the league. With one more victory the WGNB will clinch a spot in the playoffs and have an opportunity to avenge last year's triple overtime loss in the first round of the playoffs.



MIDN 1/C Nathan Todd (left), MIDN 2/C Alex Perello (middle), and MIDN 2/C Zach Thoren (right) after a big win.

OCS PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY (Cont.)

learned how an eight digit grid coordinate is mapped out with the use of a scale and protractor, and then practiced measuring distances and angles between points to prepare for eventually including them while giving a complete order. The next period of instruction focused on practicing with compasses to complete a land navigation course which mirrors yet another required evolution at OCS.

Writing and briefing five paragraph orders, the method used for running a SULE at OCS, was the next focus as midshipmen learned about each part of an order. They then worked to formulate and brief their own orders for review. Most recently, midshipmen reviewed fireteam and squad level formations in order to be able to bring the key elements of a SULE together for eventual practical application later on in the semester.

Many hours have and will go into the Marine Option's preparations for OCS and all of them look forward to earning the title of United States Marine.

