



World's Greatest Naval Battalion (WGNB) Newsletter

April 2018

Commander, NSTC Drill Visit

On 4 April 2018, the weekly drill period for the Midshipmen of the WGNB was one like they had never before experienced. Travelling from his home base at Naval Station Great Lakes, Rear Admiral Michael D. Bernacchi (Commander, Naval Service Training Command) was kind enough to dedicate his day to visiting our unit here at the University of Illinois. The period began with a short brief on his career in the Navy and the work he has done since taking command of NSTC in 2017. As commander of all Naval ROTC Units, RADM Bernacchi then spoke of his vision for the future and the plans he has for further development of Midshipmen. The floor was then opened for questions in which our Midshipmen had the chance to understand the driving forces behind the work that they do everyday. Following the drill period, a luncheon was held in the unit spaces for Midshipmen to converse with RADM Bernacchi and exchange their views on the program. The WGNB would like to thank Rear Admiral Bernacchi for taking the time to visit the University of Illinois and greatly appreciates the work that he does everyday to make our successes possible.

Dining In

On 13 April 2018, the WGNB's annual Dining In ceremony took place at the I-Hotel on campus. The event began with a number of Navy traditions, including the recognition of the POW/MIA table, that are unique to this function and are a part of all Dining In ceremonies fleet wide. Prior to commencement of the festivities, Midshipmen and staff enjoyed dinner provided by the venue. Following the meal, Midshipmen had the chance to take part in one their favorite activities, the levying of fines. An event that was new to this year's Dining In ceremony was the "Company reveal" in which the Fourth Class Midshipmen learned of the new companies that they will soon join. As is done every year, much of the event was dedicated to recognizing the senior class for all of their hard work over the past four years as they look towards commissioning in the coming months. The presentation of gifts allowed the unit to commend each senior individually. As the event drew to a close, remarks from the Commanding Officer and Battalion Commander reflected an appreciation for Bravo Company's hard work throughout the semester in preparing such an amazing ceremony.

BMOM, cont.

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RADM Bernacchi addresses the Battalion during their drill period (above).
MSgt Taylor reads SSgt Rawdanik's promotion citation (below).



Battalion Member of the Month

This month the WGNB is privileged to recognize MIDN 4/C Dylan Hyams as the Battalion Member of the Month. From Chicago, Illinois, MIDN Hyams takes great care and attention to detail, particularly during his time as MPO of Delta Company this semester. Going forward into the fall semester, MIDN Hyams will serve as Platoon Commander for the New Student Orientation Program and set the example for the incoming freshmen class when they report to the unit. MIDN Hyams' positive attitude, dedication, and work ethic have earned him the title of BMOM and continue to uphold the highest values and traditions of the United States Naval Service.

MIDN 4/C Hyams and his mother, Cyndi (right).

Staff Sergeant Rawdanik Promoted

On April 2, 2018, MECEP Pawel Rawdanik was promoted to Staff Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps. To show our support, Charlie Company, MECEPs, Unit Staff, and his family attended the ceremony. The promotion ceremony was held at the Armory flagpole. To begin the ceremony, Master Sergeant Taylor commanded "attention to orders." Thereafter, the Commanding Officer, Captain Corapi, then gave Staff Sergeant Rawdanik his promotion certificate and congratulated him. To conclude the ceremony, SSgt Rawdanik's parents did him the honor and pinned his new rank insignia.

Tri-Service Physical Training Competition

Last fall, the WGNB participated in a Tri-Service Physical Training Competition and successfully beat the other branches in almost all of the events. This spring, we were privileged again to compete, with the addition of a few more events, and again, the WGNB blew away the competition. Being able to prove our physical fitness to our military counterparts boosts morale, provides incentive during the semester, and gives the battalion a sense of pride. During the competition, both Navy and Marine Options demolished pull-ups, the mile run, burpees, tug-of-war, and, perhaps most impressive, the bench. Sergeant Sutton, one of the MECEPs in the WGNB, benched 225 pounds for an impressive 23 repetitions, while the Army's competitor only managed 17, and the Air Force, five. The WGNB is responsible for developing midshipmen physically, and the win from this semester's competition confirms the dedication and outstanding ability of the midshipmen's physical fitness, continuing our six-year victory streak.

Sergeant Sutton benches 225 pounds for 23 repetitions and wins the event.



Scholarship Recipients

The WGNB would like to congratulate three midshipmen on the recent achievement of being awarded a four-year national scholarship. MIDN 4/C James DeTulleo, MIDN 4/C Cole Hilliard, and MIDN 4/C Thomas Jordan. In order to commission as officers in the Navy or Marine Corps, Midshipmen must obtain either scholarship or advanced standing. This year, only three of the fourth-class midshipmen applied for the scholarship and since each attained it, the WGNB is proud to claim 100% success rate. Six other fourth-class midshipmen have applied for the three-year sideload scholarship and will hear about their status over the summer. As fourth-class midshipmen, it is remarkable that three midshipmen of the WGNB have received the national scholarship and is a true result of the hard work and time that they have dedicated toward earning this honor.

MIDN 4/C DeTulleo

MIDN DeTulleo is a fourth-class Marine Option from Naperville, Illinois, aspiring to commission with an aviation contract after earning his degree in History. Having received a phone call on the bus to Bulldog Prep informing him about receiving the scholarship, MIDN DeTulleo was “extremely shocked, especially considering how selective the program is, and is now determined to try and help the rest of [his] class pick up scholarship and prepare for OCS”. He says he owes “[his] parents for all their support through school, sports, and ROTC, and motivating [him] to constantly try and be better every single day” and “first-class Marine options for their leadership and examples of what midshipmen should strive to be”. He says he would also like to “thank Captain Held, Master Sergeant Taylor, and 2nd LT Boggs for all their assistance through the scholarship process, as well as Captain Corapi”.

MIDN 4/C Jordan

MIDN Jordan is a fourth-class Navy Option from Aurora, Illinois, pursuing a degree in Economics with the ambition to commission as an aviator. Being the third midshipman to receive the four-year national scholarship out of the three who applied, MIDN Jordan says he is “thankful for all the help from upperclassmen. Specifically, MIDN 1/C Groebe, for his advice and guidance; MIDN 2/C McClanahan for academic help and being a good role model; and MIDN 1/C Paulson for consistently setting the example of a good leader”. He would also like to thank his “parents and most importantly, LT Verone and Captain Corapi for their recommendations and guidance during this time”.

MIDN 4/C Hilliard

MIDN Hilliard, an Aerospace Engineering major from Peotone, Illinois, hopes to commission as an aviator or Surface Warfare Officer (SWO). Finding out at dinner with his fellow fourth class that he received the scholarship, MIDN Hilliard was ecstatic that “all the hard work over the years finally paid off in the form of a guaranteed commission”, and was happy to be able to celebrate with his classmates. He would like to thank “MIDN 2/C deLutio and MIDN 2/C Gayford for mentoring [him] and all of the fourth-class Navy Options at the Freshmen Development Program and throughout Delta Company, his parents for their encouragement, and LT Verone and Captain Corapi for their continued support and assistance while applying”.

Volleyball Intramural Team

Every semester, the WGNB participates in a number of intramural sports. This spring, the WGNB had teams in soccer, sand volleyball, and softball. Despite losing in soccer and softball, and a couple injuries, the sand volleyball team won the championship! With a particularly difficult time in the semester, with finals approaching and other commitments, the team successfully won without ever having a practice. This victory, lead by captain MIDN 4/C Emano, allows the team to continue on next semester as we prepare for the next season and another win.



MIDN 4/C DeTulleo and RADM Mike Bernacchi pose with WGNB midshipmen after a luncheon (above).
MIDN 4/C Jordan and MIDN 4/C Ellis, before Dining In begins (above).



MIDN 4/C Hilliard poses with his date at the Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball in the fall (above).
The sand volleyball team, after their championship win (below).



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