New Student Orientation 2017

The final week of summer marks a week of high-intensity training for prospective WGNB Midshipmen. New Student Orientation (NSO), known formerly as the Midshipman Orientation Program (MOP), is a Midshipman organized event designed to challenge and prepare recent high school graduates for life in the Naval ROTC Battalion. The week includes close-order drill instruction, swim qualifications, briefs about warfare communities and life as a Midshipman, a night camping at Kickapoo State Park, and a campus tour. Both the Company Staff and Training Staff began preparations for this training evolution in January of 2017, six months prior to execution. Chief Petty Officer Chalantay Yelder, a Recruiting Division Commander (RDC) from the Recruiting Training Command, joined the Midshipman Training Staff for the week to assist with drill instruction and the enforcement of standard Naval regulations. With the help ofYNC Yelder, the week was a success, graduating over twenty new Midshipmen into The WGNB. Special recognition should be directed to MIDN 4/C Pedro Villanova as Honor Candidate and MIDN 3/C Nicholas Autili as Honor Midshipman Instructor of NSO 2017. Both of these individuals gave maximum effort throughout the week and focused everyday on their individual roles during NSO. Recognition should also be directed toward MIDN 1/C Austin Gregson as NSO Midshipman In Charge and MIDN 1/C Sammel Beasley as Company 1st Sergeant. MIDN Gregson and Beasley led the Company Staff and Training Staff respectively. Their leadership and guidance made this year’s NSO a success.

New Command Coin

MIDN 2/C Matthew Mah and MIDN 5/C Angela Park designed a revitalized Command Coin to more effectively represent Navy ROTC at the University of Illinois. The front of the new Command Coin features an anchor with the Illinois Block I in the background. The back of the coin has the Navy core values of HONOR, COURAGE, and COMMITMENT surrounding a hand-drawn depiction of the Armony Building, the home of the WGNB. These new Command Coins will be given as a gift to special guests, individuals and organizations that contribute to our accomplishments of the Mission of the NROTC, and outstanding Midshipmen in the battalion.

Midshipmen YP Trip

Each year 3/C Navy Option Midshipmen of the WGNB take a trip to Chicago and spend a day underway on Lake Michigan aboard a U.S. Navy yard patrol vessel. This is a great experience for these Midshipmen to highlight the skills that they have been learning in their Navigation and Naval Operations Naval Science Class. Onboard YP-671, “Manatra,” eighteen members of the unit worked with the crew of the vessel to understand all essential operations in order to properly navigate a ship in open water. The Midshipmen were split into groups, which rotated through four different stations, each focused on a different aspect of ship control operation. These stations included navigation plotting, managing the pilot house, taking bearings on the fly bridge, and conducting lookout. Also, on board were LT Jaime Mayer and LT Ty Sordelet who used their years of experience underway to assist in the learning experience. Several upperclass Midshipmen including MIDN 1/C Alex Perello, MIDN 1/C Ted Grothe, MIDN 2/C Matthew Mah, and MIDN 2/C Angela Park attended this year’s trip as their second time underway on YP-671. Their help in coordinating, prior to the event and on the vessel, was essential in making for a smooth, successful trip. After returning to campus, the 3/C Midshipmen noted how amazing this experience was and how valuable the information learned will be toward their future careers as Naval Officers.

9/11 Motivational Run

Every year, the members of the tri-ROTC units at the University of Illinois coordinate a run through campus in honor of those affected by the attacks on September 11, 2001. Although the Army battalion was unable to participate in the event this year, the Navy Midshipmen and Air Force Cadets carried on the tradition. During a three mile route that began at the Armory and finished on the Main Quad, the group made its way, in formation, through the streets of campus, singing cadence and carrying the Marine Corps, Navy, and American flags. The WGNB would like to extend their gratitude to the Champaign and Urbana Fire Departments and Campus Police Department for providing an escort during this run. Additionally, a thank you to Jimmy Johns for supplying sandwiches for all of the participants at the end of the event.

The new design for our Command Coin (below).
New Organization of Leadership Labs

Beginning this semester, the WGBN is executing a plan to create several Labs for Midshipmen to attend during drill in order to learn more about the different career opportunities available to them in the Navy and Marine Corps. These Labs include MOLAB, SWOLAB, POLAB, and NOLAB.

Marine Option Lab (MOLAB): Provides specific training to the Midshipmen that will commission into the Marine Corps upon graduation. From land navigation to squad tactics to Marine Corps Martial Arts, our Marine options will learn valuable skills that will prepare them for success at Officer Candidate School (OCS), The Basic School (TBS), and a career of leading Marines.

Surface Warfare Officer Lab (SWOLAB): Members actively participate in open-ended conversations led by Current Naval Officers and First Class Midshipmen on topics such as discovering an individual’s leadership identity and how to succeed both professionally and personally as a Junior Officer. Additionally, they are exposed to the different weapon systems on each vessel and the various missions of the ship’s within the US Navy fleet.

Flight Option Lab (FOLAB): Exposes those Midshipmen who are interested in becoming Pilots or Naval Flight Officers to the various communities within aviation in the US Navy. Officers and First Class Midshipmen lead discussions that equip Midshipmen with both valuable insight into the work ethic necessary to excel at Naval Flight School at NAS Pensacola and the tools for Midshipmen to be successful leaders in the fleet.

Endurance Team Indoctrination

On 07 September 2017, the Endurance Team held their indoctrination workout, otherwise known as E-Team Indoc. This event is the buy-in to be able to participate on the University of Illinois NROTC Endurance Team. E-Team Indoc consists of a 5 hour workout in the boots and seats, that pushes the minds and bodies of Midshipmen interested in participating in the WGBN’s Endurance Team. Typically, Fourth Class come out to prove their PT prowess, but it is always open to upperclassmen who never seized the opportunity to try out in past years. This year only MIDN 4/C Carsten Boast, MIDN 4/C Pedro Villanueva, and MIDN 4/C Ryan Ellis completed E-Team Indoc. After earning a spot on Endurance Team, these Midshipmen will continue to compete for a spot on the competition team that participates in endurance events across the nation.

Our tailgates take place before and during each home game at Grange Grove. Each tailgate will have food, drinks, and alcohol (for those of legal age)! See the map above for more details on the location of the tailgate.

Upcoming Events

If you are in the area, we welcome you to join us at any of the following future events!

- Tailgate vs. Nebraska - 29 SEP 2017 at 1600
- Wisconsin (Madison, WI) Drill Meet - 6-7 OCT 2017
- Alumni Tailgate vs. Rutgers - 14 OCT 2017 at TBD
- Tailgate vs. Wisconsin - 28 OCT 2017 at 0600
- DaA’s Weekend Tailgate vs. Indiana - 11 NOV 2017 at TBD

If you are interested in coming to Madison, WI to watch our Drill Team, Endurance Team, Rifle/Pistol Team, or Color Guard compete against other schools from across the nation, please contact Capt. Benjamin Held at btheld2@illinois.edu.

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