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Panther Tracks, February 2010

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Panther Tracks

February 2010



A Bar of Gold

By: Laura Quam

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On the 19th of December the UNI ROTC program commissioned 2LT Brian Lynch and 2LT Nathan Perry. A commissioning ceremony commemorates the commissioning of a cadet to the rank of a 2nd Lieutenant. What this means is that the Cadet has finished the first section of their training through the ROTC program and are now officers in the US Army. Both 2LT Lynch and 2LT Perry are members of the Army National Guard and will attend the second portion of their training, the Basic Officer Leadership Course later this year. During the ceremony several traditions take place, one of these traditions includes the Silver Dollar salute; as an officer these young lieutenants give a silver dollar to the enlisted soldier who has affected them most throughout their military career, and in return they receive a salute from this soldier. Family members are invited to attend and are encouraged

to come onto the stage and pin on the gold bars that represent the new rank that these new officers have earned. General Maxwell Taylor once said, “The



-2LT Lynch (center) and 2LT Perry (right) take the oath given by LTC Roadcap (left) early Saturday at the Russell Hall

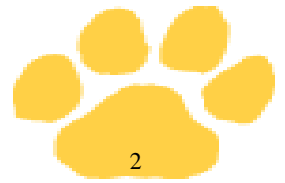
badge of rank worn by leaders is a symbol of servitude – servitude to soldiers.” Now that they are commissioned, 2LT Lynch and 2LT Perry will be responsible for leading and encouraging their fellow soldiers, a responsibility that these two officers carry with pride. We wish them the best of luck!



PANTHER TRACKS ROTC ALUMNI NEWSLETTER IS AN UNOFFICIAL PUBLICATION BY THE UNIVERISTY OF NORTHERN IOWA ARMY ROTC BATTALION. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE UNI ROTC PROGRAM PLEASE VISIT: www.uni.edu/rotc Edited by Christopher Jacobson

From the training room to the Classroom!

By: Brian Kuennen



With the start of the spring semester, another year of school is coming to a close. For the seniors in the ROTC, this means that all of the hard work that they have put into the program is finally going to pay off when they receive their first salute in the upcoming months. For most of us, we will be starting a new career whether it is for the active army or a private employer while serving in the reserve forces. As we all make final progress towards our degrees in the classroom, I find myself in a different role this semester. Instead of being just a student, I am now a student teacher. This means that I will spend the entire semester completing an internship to earn my license to teach.

"I accredit the UNI ROTC for giving me skills that I can incorporate in my teaching profession."



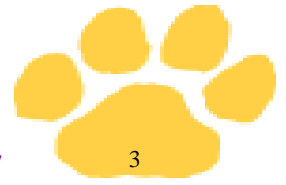
-CDT Kuennen helps a student solve a math problem.

Like I mentioned early, I now spend my days in a high school working with a teacher so that I can gain experience to become a better teacher. This is the process that any teacher in Iowa has to go through if they want to find a job in Iowa. As a student

teacher there is a lot that is asked of you, you are expected to be to the school just as early as the teacher and leave the same time. Additionally, you take on the responsibilities of the teacher, for example, it is my job to create lesson plans on upcoming units. I am also accountable to assess the students to see what they have learned from my teaching. It is important for me to record all my students' progress so that I can prove that I am capable in developing students learning abilities.

The way a student teacher shows that they are qualified is by completing a teacher works sample. The teacher work sample is the most important thing a new teacher will write because this one paper decides whether they are going to teach or find a new career. For some students, this is a drastic change from their usually college routine. However, I feel that I have adjusted well do to my new experience do to the ROTC. From my time in the program I have had to spend time in leadership roles, create training plans, and record our progress which is just like what you will find in the classroom. I accredit the UNI ROTC for giving me skills that I can incorporate in my teaching profession. For example, I now have the skills to lead others whether it is thirty soldiers or thirty students.

Even though my last semester is not typical to most students, there is still a lot of work that must be done. It is my job to grow myself professional and gain valuable experience as I finish out my career as a student. For most students, student teaching can be a difficult experience. But for me, the first few weeks have been great and I can thank it all to the experience I have gained from the UNI ROTC program.



UNI ROTC Welcomes New Senior Military Instructor!

By: Carl Beck

On January 11th, 2010, the Panther Battalion was honored with a new Senior Military Instructor (SMI) – MSG Ronnie Lary. MSG Lary is from Henderson, Texas and has spent 23 years in the Army. MSG Lary joined the army three years after high school in 1986 as a tank turret mechanic and reclassified to a combat engineer 2 years later and has served as a combat engineer since.

MSG Lary's career has taken him around the world and across the United States. MSG Lary has spent time in Germany, Ft Leonard Wood, Missouri, South Korea, Ft Irwin, California, Ft Hood, Texas, and now Iowa. MSG Lary has served as a drill sergeant, served in Operation Desert Shield/Storm, and recently served 15 months for OIF as a First Sergeant. MSG Lary has served in the active duty army for 23 years.

MSG Lary spoke highly of his days of being a drill sergeant – He explained the great deal of pride that comes from transforming a young recruit, sometimes straight off the street or straight out of high school, into a US Army Soldier. MSG Lary is looking forward to the same sense of pride when it comes to the commissioning ceremonies of Panther Battalion cadets.



MSG Lary described his excitement to work with future lieutenants because he has a chance to influence lives and to know the men and women serving under us someday will be in good hands. MSG Lary looks forward to spreading his wisdom of his experiences in life and to further build the mental strength of the cadets to help develop us into better leaders. MSG Lary currently resides in Waterloo with his wife, Stephanie, and his dog, Prince Albert.

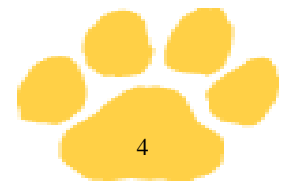
A Panther in Public Service

By: Andrew Jones

This spring current UNI ROTC senior and Political Science major Aaron Berg is getting a chance to partake in an internship in Iowa's senior U.S. Senator's office. As a member of the U.S. Senate, Senator Grassley is one of Iowa's most influential natives.

The Senator Grassley has served in the United States Senate since 1981 and is currently the Senate Finance Committee's ranking member. Like Cadet Berg, Senator Grassley is also a University of Northern Iowa alumnus.

“MSG Lary has served as a drill sergeant, served in Operation Desert Shield/Storm, and recently served 15 months for OIF as a First Sergeant.”



Political Science majors learn and discuss political issues as they occur at any level, local to global. They develop a wide range of perspectives on issues such as health care, justice, war, peace, and gender equality. In addition, students learn about the historical and cultural relevance of such issues. Working in a Senator's office is an opportunity of a lifetime and one that Cadet Berg cherishes. Working in Senator Grassley's office also allows Cadet Berg to become immersed in the intricacies of public service and see the inner workings of government and public administration. "This internship has allowed me to get a hands-on approach to public service.

Senator Grassley does an outstanding job representing his constituents in Washington D.C. and I'm honored to work in his Waterloo office. I am fortunate enough to work with his knowledgeable staff members Valerie Nehl and Jason Mohr. They couldn't be nicer and are willing to help you with whatever you need. They don't isolate themselves from you and they have a genuine desire to see that I get as much from my experience as I possibly can. I undoubtedly have a lot yet to learn, but feel I have learned more this semester as an intern than I could have just taking classes. I would strongly recommend the experience to anyone considering a career in politics or public administration."

Some of the activities that Cadet Berg is involved with include administrative

functions, data entry and speaking with constituents who need assistance with federal agencies or to allow their voices to be heard. Later on this semester he will attend public appearances and speaking engagements.

Cadet Berg believes that a lot of the tasks he is involved with have a parallel to the military. "As an officer you aren't in front of troops your whole career, there are times when you work as a staff officer or perform administrative functions and the knowledge gained here will help me when I am in those situations.

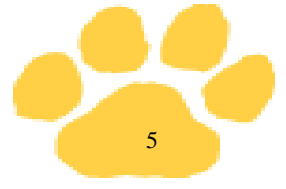
Cadet Berg also has a personal interest in politics. "One of my career goals is to serve as long as I can as a commissioned officer and then move my family back to Iowa and run for public office. I feel I'll have a lot to offer the people of Iowa and would be honored to represent them in Des Moines and then possibly in Washington. With that in mind, this internship will be useful in making contacts and opening doors that would have otherwise remained shut."

When asked what lasting impressions Cadet Berg will have from his internship he had this to say, "The dedication in this office is really amazing, this staff has devoted their lives to the Iowa people. I am learning new things everyday that I can take with me and implement in my future as an Army officer. From interacting with a diverse constituency, to serving for the good of our country to working on paperwork and casework, this experience will remain with me throughout my career.

"Some of the activities that Cadet Berg is involved with include administrative functions, data entry and speaking with constituents who need assistance with federal agencies or to allow their voices to be heard."

Alumni Feature

By: Christopher Jacobson



When someone has a question about how to accomplish something they tend to go to someone with prior knowledge of the task for advice. Cadets in the ROTC program are no exception, when they have questions they ask the advice of those in the upper classes, the officers and NCOs around them, and from those who have already completed the program. This month I interviewed Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Boesen, a member of the 1992 graduating class, currently serving as the commander of the 1st Battalion 168 Infantry Regiment for the Iowa Army National Guard. With over 23 years of service from both enlisted and officer sides of the Army LTC Boesen shares some well learned advice for all future leaders.

The first question I asked was what is the biggest difference you see in officer coming out of ROTC and into the Army? LTC Boesen took a moment and responded with “New Lieutenants come to the Army way more tech savvy.” This statement relates to how the Army has been and will continue to modify the training for Officer as they (new officers) bring in tech skills into a profession that is lead by many who started their careers on typewriters.

The second question I asked LTC Boesen was drawn from the fact that he had been an active Army Officer from 1992 to 2001 and a full time guard Officer from 2001 to the present. The question asked was there any universal truths that both active and guard officers must know and do? The parallels in both types of officers he found was “both having to own leadership, take care of soldiers, be mission focus, understand and live the warrior ethos.” Additionally he believes regardless of duty assigned to the officer (active or guard) having the mechanism in place for family is critical; a mechanism that allows for support

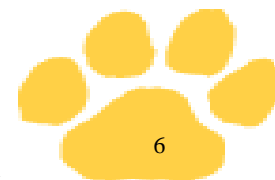
dissemination of information on and off deployments.



LTC Boesen during a humanitarian assistance drop in Afghanistan.

Deriving from the answer from the last question my third question asked about how much has military been a part of his life? LTC Boesen answered by first telling me he has two brothers who are currently officers in the Army guard: CPT Josh Boesen with the Missouri National Guard (also commissioned at UNI) and 2LT Jason Boesen in the 1-133 Iowa National Guard. LTC Boesen also has a sister, Major Katie Hanna, who has ended her active career with the Army but still lives on post in Hawaii with her active officer husband. Along with his siblings LTC Boesen’s wife Anne and children Zach (13), Ally (11), and Ben (9) all support and are proud of the job he does. Though there is more understanding from his siblings as to why he has to deploy so much (LTC Boesen will be fast approaching his third long duty deployment this year) his children none the less know that their dad is doing something important by serving his country.

The last question I asked seek the most current advice I can get from a senior officer recently (2007-2008) returned from Afghanistan. I asked what advice could you offer to 2LTs as individual and leader when



going into such a country? LTC Boesen began the answer to that rather open question by stating that all officers should know how to fight in COIN (counter insurgency) environments. This means driving nose first into FM 3. 24 way before given the mission to deploy. Learn as much as one can about the culture and language as one can. Yes the Army does provide many sources for culture awareness but going beyond what the Army provides can only help you mission. As for the language part, the Army provides free access to Rosetta Stone in many of the languages spoken in Afghanistan on AKO, use it. LTC Boesen stresses know how to run combat patrols, mounted particularly. There will be many TIC (troops in contact) situations and more often it will happen during a mounted part of your mission. It is therefore critical to begin to master your command and control of mounted combat patrols. Along with the being able to command and control a mounted element in a firefight he believes a leader has to know how to conduct security force assistance thru combine action with the ANSF (Afghanistan National Security Force.)

LTC Boesen advice to the future officer as an individual is to know how to operate all the communication devices you are bringing and are going to use in country. Pay special attention to the operations of Blue Force Trackers and the R3505 tactical-communications handheld software radio. Knowing how the radio works is only half the process as being able to give effective reports is really what good communication is all about. "Practice proper reports and don't forget to include the basics such as when you leave, arrive, and contact." He moved on from communication advice to the medical field, urging that individuals should learn LSS (Life saving skills) and become CLS (combat lifesaver) qualified. As a leader, LTC Boesen feels you should make

it your job to try to obtain qualified troops under which you command as it only strengthen the survival of all of the Army. Changing from the lifesaving skills LTC Boesen addressed weapon knowledge; "one must be able to employ all weapon systems available to them whether direct, indirect, CAS (close air support), and know CCAA (contract clearance approval authority.)"

The advice LTC Boesen gave that is hardly a book answer and comes from experience is that regardless of your branch as an officer the enemy will treat you like a combat soldier. It is with that in mind that all officers take the advice listed above even if your branch training does not stress it. When you get down time learn and rehearse battle drills with your troops. What you remember of battle drills and how your troops perform them can be different especially if your troops are not in a combat MOS (military occupational specialty.) This advice goes along with presenting yourself as the most adversary foe, "if you present yourself as a soft target, you are going to get hit (attacked)" said LTC Boesen. This advice is as simple as nature's laws, those that appear weak are attacked first therefore take the advice given by an experienced leader to strengthen your troops and know that if/when attacked your training will be there to back you up.

LTC Boesen is currently gearing up for his 3rd deployment and is excited to have his brother 2LT Jason Boesen along for the ride. Amidst the high tempo training he is putting his troops through he is enjoying his time with his children and helping out his wife Anne who is very busy attending grad school at Drake to earn her master's degree.



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