

Fall 2013

Panther Press, Fall 2013

University of Northern Iowa. Department of Military Science.

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PANTHER PRESS

PANTHER BATTALION, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA



UNI ROTC NEWSLETTER

Fall 2013

UNI Teams up with Dubuque for Fall Training

The Fall Field Training Exercise (FTX) took place at Camp Ingawanis Boy Scout Camp just south of Waverly, Iowa. Cadets from the University of Northern Iowa and the University of Dubuque took part in this yearly training. The senior cadets from both schools collaborated long distance in order to make this training happen. “We planned from the ground up,” said MSIV Cadet Faley, “we knew what we wanted each MS class to gain in knowledge and we simply had to make those changes to make it happen.” The senior cadets focused on the needs of the MSIII cadets in order to increase their Leadership Developments Assessment Course (LDAC) success. Over sixty cadets participated in iterations of Day/Night Land Navigation, Squad Situational Training Exercise Lanes (STX), and Field Leadership Reaction Courses (FLRC), which tests teamwork, problem solving skills and mental agility. Cadets also learned basic field craft, building shelters out of materials from the environment, to keep them dry and warm as Cadets slept under the stars.



Cadet Daniel Yehieli briefs Cadet Lucas Tener during the FTX.

Each MSIII Cadet had the opportunity to be placed in a garrison leadership position as well as take on the position of squad leader for a STX lane. “I personally enjoyed the Fall FTX. This was my third Fall FTX and my first actually being in Cadet Leadership. I was the Platoon Sergeant and enjoyed making sure my Platoon was squared away for training and all the needs of my platoon were met throughout all hours of the day. I was the last one to go to bed and the first to rise. I did everything possible to make sure my platoon outperformed first platoon in all matters. It was also great to lead a STX lane and help mentor the newer cadets on ROTC tactics. It was a great leadership opportunity! (Story continued on page 4)

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Members of the Ranger Challenge Teams after finishing a morning ruck run. Cadets pictured from left to right starting at back left corner Colin Johnson, Daniel Yehieli, Luke Ostrander, Kenneth Voorhees, Cameron Griffith, Chris McIntyre, Tom Madsen, Mark Wieneke, Taylor Julander, Karlee West and Maggie Maher. Not pictured are Cadets Catie Maher, Miranda Pleggenkhule, Lucas Tener and Tyler Jensen.

Ranger Challenge Teams Excel in Competition

On October 19th 2013, the UNI Army ROTC program took one all-male team and one all-female team to Dubuque, Iowa, to compete in the Ranger Challenge Competition. Five female teams and 13 male teams from Nebraska and Iowa competed at different locations throughout the state. The UNI male team successfully came in 3rd place overall and the female team placed 4th. This was the best showing for the male team since 2010, and the first ever competition for an all-female team from UNI.

The Ranger Challenge competition was comprised of three events: the Army physical fitness test (APFT), a 10K foot march carrying 35lbs of equipment, an overall knowledge exam and two mystery events. The mystery events included creating a rope bridge to cross a water obstacle and an attention to detail challenge. "This was one of our best teams since 2010," stated Co-Captain Cameron Griffith, "so we really wanted to put up a good fight." Overall, the males came in 4th on the APFT, 10th in the written exam and 2nd in the 10k foot march. The females took 3rd on the APFT, 4th in the written exam and 3rd in the 10k foot match. UNI came out on top over their partner school, University of Dubuque, and both male and female teams plan on competing again next fall at Camp Dodge in Johnston Iowa.

- MSIII Cadet Karlee West

Eight Cadets Took the Oath in the UNI Dome at Veteran's Appreciation Game



Cadets listed from left to right: Samuel Hubbell, Daniel Yehieli, Lucas Tener, Cameron Griffith, Karlee West, Gaitlin Meador, Chris McIntyre and Jack Dee.

UNI and Dubuque set to Host Military Ball in the Spring.

Where: PIPAC Centre

1521 Technology Parkway Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

When: February 21st 2014, 6pm

Point of Contact:

Jennifer Nunez 319-273-6178

Or Deb Ackerson 319-273-7648

Invitations Coming Soon!



Seven MSIII cadets and one MSII cadet took the field on November 9th, 2013, to take the Oath administered by the Professor of Military Science, Lieutenant Colonel Glen Keith, during the half time portion of the UNI Veteran's Appreciation home football game. These cadets have sworn their time and efforts to join not only the ROTC program, but to serve as officers in the United States Army once they graduate from UNI. See more photos of the ceremony on our Facebook page! You can also see what other events cadets participated in on page 5!

Cadet Highlight MSI Tyler Jensen



Age: 19
From: Carroll Iowa
Major: Pre-Nursing
Hobbies: Hunting, Fishing,
Sports and Hanging with
Friends
Involved In: Intramurals,
SHAC (student health
care advisory committee)

What Interested you in the ROTC program at UNI?

I enrolled in the ROTC class because they not only offered scholarships, which pay full tuition, fees and books, but I also receive a monthly stipend. The program itself I learned, is one of the nation's top leadership programs. The ROTC program also will help me to gain: experience you can't find anywhere else, respect of your peers and family and unrivaled leadership training.

What Do you Like About the ROTC Program at UNI?

As a cadet in the ROTC program, you have the same lifestyles and academic schedule as any other student. The professors teach you real-world skills that will benefit your professional and personal life. The best part of this ROTC program is the cadets and cadre themselves.

**"I really feel like I am part
of something greater
than myself, already as a
Freshman MSI."**

Cadet Battalion Commander (CBC) Mark Wieneke

Cadet Mark Wieneke has been with the UNI ROTC program for two years, he is also a SMP cadet with the 1-133rd. His primary job is infantry, his current major is Biology and he intends to pursue medicine after graduation at the graduate level while hopefully branching infantry. "I know what I do best, and biology and infantry are what I do best" stated Cadet Wieneke.

During his semester as CBC Cadet Wieneke has learned more than his initial expectations: "I have learned that everyone MUST work as a team to get the job done. No one can do it alone in the Army, there is just too much to be accomplished in such short timespans. It's a team effort and every person, no matter how big or small their job, is important in their own right and efforts." So far, he says that he has been impressed with the MSIII's overall base knowledge and the MSII's and is quick adaptability. With the cadets already ahead of the curve, the cadets receive the opportunity to take part in more in-depth training such as patrolling and company level garrison classes. Not only do our cadets gain more knowledge, but that also means they are more available to take part in other activities on campus.

"This year, we are getting more opportunities to be seen on campus" says CBC Wieneke, "So far, we've taken part in recruiting booths, concession stands, fundraising opportunities and color guards." He also noted that the cadets are also available to participate in activities outside of ROTC such as Ranger Challenge and bonfires held by cadets in the program. "Events like these are critical to have, they help develop long-lasting relationships and build trust, which is critical in a unit." More opportunities to spend time together outside of the program is simply one of the changes that the CBC has observed. Longer lab sessions, hands on cadre, more intense physical training are just some of the major changes this year for the program.

"You can tell these small changes are making a large impact on the program," says CBC Wieneke. "There is more cohesion than last year as well as motivation to keep the program this way, everyone is buying into the program." The program's strong knit family has resulted from the hands on cadre and the constantly involved senior cadets. These cadets also participate in Ranger Challenge and all recruiting activities and fundraising events. The senior cadets want to be involved in the development of their mentees in the program.

**- Cadet Maggie Maher
Public Affairs Officer**

*"There is more cohesion than last
year as well as motivation to
keep the program this way."*



CBC Mark Wieneke evaluates the performance of the cadets in a live casualty exercise during the medical first aid lab.



UNI ROCT Cadets & Cadre (left to right) Cameron Griffith, Daniel Yehieli, 2LT Bryce Meier, Chris McIntyre, Kenneth Vorhees, Tyler Jensen, who participated in the 5K Homecoming Race on October 12.

UNI ROTC Steps up Involvement on Campus

This year, the UNI ROTC program started off strong with a plethora of recruiting events. Cadets have staffed recruiting booths in Maucker Union, the GBPAC, and the McCleod Center. The booths took place during various college events and were often partnered with the Army National Guard. A new initiative this semester is forming a strong mentorship program with the Junior ROTC program at East High in Waterloo. Upperclassmen attend the JROTC class once a week, all day to lead inspections, physical training sessions and briefs. ROTC is working to involve JROTC in their training events and create a lasting bond between the programs. “One of our main goals this year was to make a large impact on the JROTC,” says LTC Glen Keith, ‘and it is working.’ Not only is the program making itself known off campus, but it is striving to build a strong presence on campus.”

“We are striving to be seen on campus” says LTC Glen Keith “We need to step up our game if we want to continue to sustain our reputable program while making the program well-known on campus.” Along with the constant presence at East High, the ROTC program is participating in more campus events. We started off the year with a recruitment BBQ offered free to the students. It was a good way to interact with potential future cadets as well as build relationships with other students and supportive faculty. This year, we also participated in Homecoming festivities like tailgating and the 5K. The cadre prepared food for the cadets and their families. It was a good bonding experience for everyone involved in the program. Another way the program is being seen on campus is through our color guard, William N. Ruud, Northern Iowa’s President, recognized the program at his Installation Ceremony this year. The opportunity to participate in color guard at University events portrays the professional appearance and tradition of excellence that each cadet possesses.

The ROTC program has also been reaching out into the community, including the media. The Public Affairs Officer, Cadet Maggie Maher, has been working with local media as well as Northern Iowa’s newspaper, to show the community the benefits of the UNI ROTC program. “My goals as public affairs officer are to bring light to what exactly this program entails and the positives of the program,” says Cadet Maher. “This is a reputable program and it deserves to be recognized.” With constant involvement of cadre and motivation of the senior cadets, it is only a matter of time until this highly reputable program will be noticed.

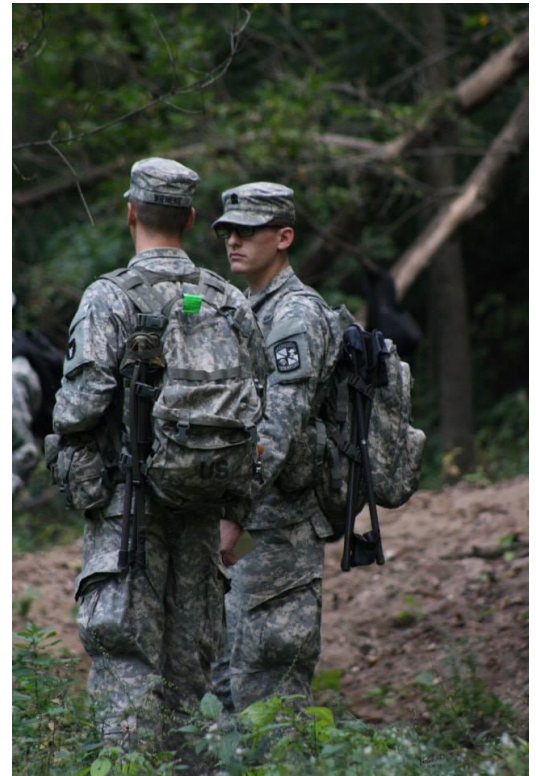
**- Cadet Miranda Pleggenkuhle
S2 Recruiting Officer**

UNI Teams up ... (cont. from pg. 1)

A large positive I noticed this year from the last were the two evaluators for each STX lane. The additional evaluator was able to help instruct the MSI and IIs about the overall STX process and what their duties were as squad members. So much of ROTC is about positive mentorship with the younger class. That was clearly evident from both schools throughout the Fall FTX. From what I noticed from the training we received from the senior class was squared away.

One of the biggest changes the senior class wanted to incorporate was the overall organization and hands on training from us as well as the cadre” Cadet Faley also noted. “A positive from me, as well as the entire MSII class, was the hands on feeling we received from the MSIVs and cadre. The training remained effective and meaningful to us because the cadre were extremely hands on with us. It showed our class that they cared about our progress and development as leaders as well as the program.”

- MSIII Cadet Daniel Yehieli



MSIV Cadets Thomas Madsen (Cadet CSM) and Mark Weineke (CBC) work together to evaluate the MSIII cadets on their STX lanes and instruct the MSI and IIs

**UNI ROTC
Highly Involved in
Veteran's Week on
Campus!**

09 November

UNI Veterans Football Game

Swearing in Ceremony for newly
contracted cadets

Color Guard

Recruiting Booths and Featured Push-
Up Squad

11 November

Veteran's Day

Ribbon tying with Veteran's
Association

2nd Annual Bake Sale

Color Guard / UNIVA Military Ball

15 November

Battalion Run

1st Annual Battalion Run partnered
with the Veteran's Association

*More pictures from these events
and stories from the campus
news and the local station
KWVL can be found on our
Facebook Page!*



Pictured above are the Gold German Armed Forces Proficiency Badges that can be worn on ACUs or ASUs.

UNI ROTC Cadets Repeat Gold at GAFPB

UNI Army ROTC had ten personnel compete for The German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (GAFPB) November 1-3, 2013 at Western Illinois University (WIU). All ten personnel successfully achieved gold, the highest standard for the competition. The gold standard is rarely achieved, and this is the second year in a row all UNI participants achieved the gold standard.

The successful UNI Cadets and Cadre include; 2LT Bryce Meier, Nathan Rouse, Margaret Maher, Thomas Madsen, Gaitlin Meador, Chris McIntyre, Lucas Tenner, Kenneth Voorhees, Karlee West, and Daniel Yehieli. Over the course of three days, the group competed in several events which included: the German basic fitness test (1000 meter run, shuttle sprints, flex chin hang), 7.5 mile ruck march (35lb backpacks), the 100 meter swim in Army Combat Uniforms, and pistol qualification. "The events don't intimidate us too much," says MSIII Cadet Chris McIntyre. "We are all motivated to achieve the gold, and that is what we are striving for."

GAFB badges come in three rankings – gold, silver and bronze – that are determined during the marksmanship portion of the competition. The number of accurate shots dictates the color of the badge. With five attempts, three hits earn bronze, four hits earn silver and five hits earn gold. "A showing like this from UNI ROTC only increases the level of excellence of the program," says Cadet McIntyre. GAFPB 2014 is scheduled at WIU the first weekend of November with UNI already planning on the third run at gold.

- Cadet Luke Ostrander S3



A Bar of Gold

On the 20th of December, the UNI ROTC program Commissioned 2LT Erin Boyd and 2LT Wes Gudenkauf. 2LT Boyd received her degree in Earth Science. She is a member of the Iowa National Guard and will serve as an Aviation Officer in Det 1 C Co 2/211th General Support Aviation Battalion. 2LT Gudenkauf received his degree in Biology with an emphasis on Ecology and Systematics. He will serve as an Ordnance Officer in the Iowa National Company, 334th BSB. The Commissioning Ceremony was well attended by representatives from the Iowa National Guard, University, Alumni and Family. COL Keith Lostroh was the guest speaker for this event, during his remarks he encouraged both of these new Lieutenants to recognize that the Army is a family and if they care for their Soldiers as they would their family they will be successful. Now that they are Commissioned, 2LT Boyd and 2LT Gudenkauf will be responsible for leading and encouraging their fellow Soldiers, a responsibility that these two officers carry with pride. The UNI Panther Battalion wishes them the best of luck! - Molon Labe!



2LT Erin Boyd (left) and 2LT Wes Gudenkauf after their Commissioning Ceremony on Friday, 20 December.

CONTACT US

Alumni of the UNI ROTC Program, we want to hear from you! The UNI ROTC Program is currently updating the Alumni Contact Roster. Please send us your current contact information and share this newsletter with your classmates to ensure we reach everyone. Alumni will be featured in each newsletter if you want to be

Information can be sent to Debbie Ackerson at Debra.Ackerson@UNI.edu

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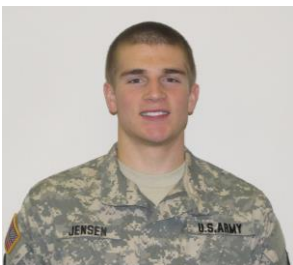
<http://www.uni-foundation.org/>

On the right hand side click on "Make an online gift." To ensure your donation goes to the Panther Battalion you will need to enter *Military Fund for Excellence* in the "Other" box near the bottom of the form.

Thank you for your continued support!

Cadets of the Semester

On December 2, several Cadets from the freshmen, sophomore, and junior class completed the Cadet of the Semester Board. They were tested on Drill and Ceremony, Military History, Basic Military Knowledge and Appearance. Combined with their scores from the board, GPA, and class participation, there was one cadet chosen from each class and an overall winner. Each cadet of the semester received a certificate for their excellence and Cadet Jensen received a plaque for being selected the overall Cadet of the Semester.



Overall & MSI Class
CDT Tyler Jensen



MSII Class
CDT Dustin Smith



MSIII Class
CDT Daniel Yehieli

For more news and stories about the UNI ROTC program, follow us on Facebook and Twitter!



Major Joel Helgerson

Major Joel Helgerson was first enlisted into the National Guard in 1997 and proceeded to join the ROTC program at UNI as a junior in the fall of 1998. In May 2000, he commissioned as an Infantry Officer.

His first duty assignment was a Platoon Leader in Bravo Company, 1-9 IN at Camp Hovey, Korea from May 2001-May 2002. From there, Major Helgerson has acquired a long list of duty assignments including: Company Executive Officer and Battalion Maintenance Officer (at Headquarters and in 1-41 IN at Fort Riley), Assistant Operations Officers (Headquarters at Fort Bragg), Company Commander (2-504 Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) at Fort Bragg), was employed with the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) and then as the Executive Officer to the Director of the Mission Command Center of Excellence at Fort Leavenworth. In between duty assignment, Major Helgerson deployed to Kuwait (Operation Desert Spring in 2002), and Iraq (initial invasion 2003, 2004-05, 2007-08).

Since then, Major Helgerson has attended and graduated the Command and General Staff College (2012) and simultaneously earned his Masters from Kansas State University. He is currently stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA as the Battalion Operations Officer in 2-3 IN.

Advice to current cadets: "Keep in shape. A good way to set yourself apart from your peers is over physical fitness."

Lesson: "One lesson I took from the UNI ROTC program is to trust your Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs), they are the backbone of the Army."



Major Joel Helgerson on one of his many deployments

UNI ROTC FACT CORNER:

Did you know that the UNI ROTC program placed 3rd overall in the Brigade this past year? This ranking included performance at LDAC, evaluations at home station and overall GPA. In our Brigade we also compete against the number one ranked school in the Nation.

Go Panthers!

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Church

LTC Thomas Church graduated from UNI and commissioned in December 1986 through the Early Commissioning Program in 2001. While in the ROTC program at UNI, LTC Church also partook in the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP) with the National Guard.

Since then, LTC Church has spent over 32 years in the Army. The last 27 years have been in the Military Police Corps as a Platoon Leader, Executive Officer, Commander, Battalion S-1 and S-3 Brigade Deputy Commander and Division Operations Officer. He was mobilized for the Gulf War in 1990 and Iraq in 2004 and 2005. LTC Church also served 21 years in a Troop Program Unit and has spent the last 11 years in the Active Guard and Reserve (Fort Hayes, OH/Fort McCoy, WI/Fort Meade, MD). LTC Church is retiring in September 2014 and plans to return to the Midwest and resume his civilian career as a Correctional Supervisor.

Advice to current cadets: “My advice to any Cadet is simple; do not let what you do in the Army or your rank define who you are as a person.”

Lesson: “Leadership is not tangible.”



LTC Thomas Church (right) poses during an event

A Farewell to Cadre Member 2LT Bryce Meier



1LT Meier during a sling load operations while at the US Army Pathfinder School

For being cadre for one semester, 1st Lieutenant Bryce Meier has left a lasting positive impression from the relationships he built with the cadets. Since commissioning in 2012 from the Panther Battalion, 1LT Meier knew straight forward what this program needed to succeed. The first day he arrived with goals and an overall mission for the Panther Battalion. While 1LT Meier was here, he helped increase recruitment for the program and amplified the awareness of our program on campus.

1LT Meier participated in every morning workout session, nearly all Ranger Challenge workouts, took the Gold home for the GAFFB, had a presence in each MS class, and outfitted the Battalion with new apparel.

The Panther Battalion will surely miss our most memorable cadre member as he serves as the Executive Officer for E Co 334th. 1LT Bryce Meier is certainly a role model for our future officers.

-Cadet Maggie Maher
S5 PAO