

Summer 2014

Panther Press, Summer 2014

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

Summer 2014

Commanders Corner

Panther Cadets continue to excel this summer, we had Cadets all over the United States and abroad. Seventeen seniors successfully completed the physically and mentally demanding Leadership Development Assessment Course (LDAC) at Fort Knox, Ky. and are on track to commission as Army officers upon graduation. Three sophomores seeking to join UNI ROTC as cadets graduated from the Leaders Training Course (LTC) at Fort Knox. Eight cadets completed Cadet Troop Leading Training (CTLT) internships with active-duty Army units throughout the United States. Finally, three cadets spent their summer in Kosovo as part of the Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency (CULP) program training and visiting with Iowa National Guard troops deployed to that region.

The Panther Battalion has seen a dramatic increase in enrollment this fall semester with the largest ROTC class in ten years. We are currently on track to exceed our yearly mission requirements beginning with a projected 18 Lieutenants between December 2014 and May 2015 graduations.

This fall semester is a busy one beginning with our first field training at the end of September at Camp Ingawanis, then our Ranger Challenge competitions in October, followed by the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge testing in November. In addition to these training events our Cadets are supporting sporting events, color guards, fundraising events, and a host of other activities.

We say farewell and good luck to SFC (Retired) Francis Chabotte as he moved on to other job opportunities in the Cedar Falls area and also to MAJ Kristy Rose who was reassigned to the 67th Troop Command in Iowa City. We welcome 2005 UNI alum, CPT Matt Parrino to the program. He is teaching the freshman and also serving as the Battalion S3 (Operations Officer).

MOLON LABE!

LTC Glen P. Keith

In This Issue

- Zero Week
- Alumni returns to ROTC
- CTLT Internship Experience
- CST Highlights
- Farewell to Instructors
- Leaders Training Course
- Alumni Spotlight

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Cadet McIntyre and Cadet Voorhees assemble bed lofts in support of move in activities. This event was a part of zero week activities for the cadets.

Zero Week

Senior Cadets in the ROTC program kicked off the school year before classes even started. LTC Glen Keith met with all the seniors on 19 August, he congratulated them on their success to this point and established his expectations for the school year. As an upperclassman in ROTC, students are expected to plan training events and mentor the underclassman.

Students were given their leadership assignment for the semester and told who their mentees would be and then provided time to work with the Instructors to prepare their plans for the year ahead.

Zero week is a new concept for the UNI ROTC program, but the Instructors agree that it will be beneficial to all the students. A lot of expectation is placed on the upperclassmen during the year, the extra few days of preparation before classes start allowed them to work together to develop good plans and prepare to lead others.

In addition to preparing for the demands of leadership, the students supported move-in activities on 21 August and volunteered at the Thunder in the Valley Airshow.

Alumni Captain Matthew Parrino returns to UNI

CPT Parrino returned to the Department of Military Science this August as an Assistant professor of Military Science, he will be teaching the freshmen classes. CPT Parrino enlisted into the Iowa Army National Guard in 2002 and served in C Co 1-133. In 2003 he contracted with UNI ROTC and was commissioned as an Infantry Officer in May 2005 with his degree in Criminology. After completing the Infantry Officer Basic Course he was assigned as a Platoon Leader in C Co 1-133 IN. While the 1-133 was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from March 2006 to July 2007, he served as the Battalion Public Affairs Officer, Anti-terrorism/Force Protection Officer and Battalion Safety Officer.

Upon redeployment, he began serving in a full time capacity in the G3 office as the IA-ARNG Antiterrorism Force Protection Officer and later as a national instructor for the US Department of Homeland Security and National Guard Bureau. During these tours he responded to the Iowa Floods of 2008 serving as a member of the Joint Staff and Parkersburg Tornado with C Co 1-133 IN. CPT Parrino served as the XO of A Co 1-133 in Afghanistan from October 2010-June 2011. Upon redeployment, CPT Parrino served as the Commander and was selected as the full time Training Officer (2OIC) for the 1-133 IN. After leaving command he was assigned as the Assistant S3.

CPT Parrino's awards include: Bronze Star Medal, the Army Commendation Medal w/ 3 OLC, the Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal w/ M device, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal w/ 2 campaign stars, Iraqi Campaign Medal w/ 2 campaign stars, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Overseas Ribbon 2nd Award, and the NATO Non-Article 5 Medal w/ ISAF Clasp. He has also been awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge and the Pathfinder Badge.



CPT Matthew Parrino

CTLT Internship

The Cadet Troop Leader Training (CTLT) internship provides Cadets the opportunity to serve in a lieutenant-level leadership position on active duty for 3 weeks. To participate in CTLT students must be nominated by the Professor of Military Science and successfully complete LDAC. Senior History Education major Chris McIntyre was selected for this opportunity and completed his internship at Fort Riley, in Kansas with Bravo Battery 1/7 Field Artillery.

McIntyre enlisted in the Iowa National Guard (IANG) in 2011 and serves with C Co 1/33 IN BN. He said it was a great experience being on active duty and he “definitely recommends this training for anyone considering going active duty, it’s a good experience to see how ‘big Army’ works.”

During his time at Riley he was able to train with tanks, Bradleys, and Paladins and spend a day with an armor unit and an engineer unit. He was able to get a broad perspective of military equipment and units, which he said is very different from his experience in the IANG.

McIntyre said he enjoyed attending BN Staff meetings, “it was really interesting to see how training is planned at the BN level and filters down to the Platoon Level.”

His biggest take away from this experience was the importance of building relationships. Being at Riley reinforced that good relationships, not just with those who you work with directly, but all the way down to the lowest ranking Soldier are very important.



CDT Jack Dee (center kneeling) explains military utilization of terrain at Fort Knox, KY

CST Highlights from Fort Knox, KY

Cadet Summer Training (CST) saw big changes this summer and the changes will keep coming over the next several years. 2014 saw the move of this training from Joint Base Lewis-McChord in WA to Fort Knox in KY, this is just the first of many historic changes that the Army is making to CST. New evaluation standards will require increased rigor of curriculum focusing on “how to think” not “what to think”. Critical thinking, problem solving and decision making will have more emphasis over military tactics.

17 Seniors completed CST this summer and all felt that they were adequately prepared, especially in terms of tactics, but there were areas of emphasis that they hope to spend more time on this year with the underclassmen. It will be their responsibility to mentor and prepare the Juniors to complete CST next year and to meet the new standards, several students want to focus more attention on ‘garrison’ leadership roles and responsibilities. These are higher level leadership positions that focus less on tactical maneuvers and more on planning and preparation for future operations.

CST is a fast paced environment and when students are dealing with heat and fatigue it can be difficult to think clearly and make decisions. CDT Dee said that the biggest thing he wants to teach the Juniors is “Critical thinking and solving problems on the fly.” Adapting to the harsh environment adds to the stress of the training, CDT McIntyre said his biggest take away from CST is that “No plan survives first contact, just roll with the punches”.

In addition, almost everyone felt that integrating with Cadets from across the country was very beneficial. Not only because it challenged their communication skills to clearly articulate a plan to strangers, but also because it was a terrific networking opportunity to cross pollinate information and ideas from other Universities.

Overall, all UNI ROTC Cadets excelled at CST and this group of future Lieutenants is eager to train the next generation of leaders.



Major Kristy Rose accepts new position with the Iowa National Guard

Major Rose was assigned to the UNI ROTC program during the Fall semester of 2011. During her time at UNI she taught the freshmen ROTC courses and served as the Enrollment and Scholarship Officer. She was very active on the UNI campus, serving on multiple committees to support not only the Military Science Department but other organizations and Departments across campus.

While at UNI Major Rose completed all of the coursework towards a Doctorate in Educational Leadership. She hopes to complete her dissertation in 2015.

Her next assignment in the Army will be serving as the S1, Administrative Officer, for the 67th Troop Command, Headquartered in Iowa City.



UNI ROTC bids farewell to Mr. Francis Chabotte

After more than a decade serving as an Instructor with UNI ROTC, Mr. Chabotte left a lasting impression on hundreds of Cadets. He was assigned to UNI ROTC in 1999 while he was still on Active Duty, when he retired from the military he accepted a position as a contractor with the program and continued to mentor and guide over 200 Cadets to commission into the Army. As an instructor and the training NCO he spent a lot of time working individually with students, providing guidance and mentorship. In his office he proudly displayed dozens of silver coins, tokens given to him by Cadets as part of a military tradition to recognize the NCO who had the biggest impact on their career development.

While at UNI Mr. Chabotte completed his degree in Electrical Engineer Technology and was recognized for his work on an Unmanned Ground Vehicle. UNI ROTC wishes Mr. Chabotte much success as he moves on to a career in Electrical Engineering.





Tyrei Lofton (front right) holding the Guidon in formation at Ft. Knox, KY.

Leader's Training Course at Fort Knox, KY

Two UNI students took advantage of the Leader's Training Course (LTC) this summer, LTC is an intense four-week introduction to Army life and leadership development. It is designed for college students, typically between their sophomore and junior years, who have not completed all of the ROTC Basic courses and want to qualify for the Advanced ROTC courses.

Tyrei Lofton (Criminology) and Alec Krekel (Education) attended this course and both students stated that the one Military Science class they took at UNI put them ahead of their peers. Alec said that often times he was able to answer questions and explain concepts to his peers that he learned from MSG James Dyer during leadership labs on campus. Both students were given the opportunity to serve in small group leadership positions which was new, they felt that this is where they learned the most and where they wanted to focus on improving. They are eager to be assigned leadership positions on campus so they can continue to cultivate their leadership skills.

Alec said the most challenging part of LTC was Combat Water Survival Training, as an experienced life guard he was surprised how difficult it was to swim in uniform with his equipment. Tyrei on the hand said the most challenging part was just getting used to sleeping outside, prior to this training she'd never been 'camping', but she said after a two or three days outside she was fine.

Alec Krekel (3rd from the left) conducting tactical movements with a team at Ft. Knox, KY



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Alumni of the UNI ROTC Program, we want to hear from you! The UNI ROTC Program is always updating our 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 featured let us know!

Information can be sent to
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continued support!**

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ROTC ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Lieutenant Colonel Mike Olson - Class of 1987

LTC Mike Olson graduated and commissioned from UNI ROTC as an Ordnance officer in 1987, and graduated with honors from the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2003. His entire military career has been with the Iowa National Guard, serving in various command and staff positions in the 734th Maintenance Battalion, 554th Quartermaster Battalion, and Joint Forces Headquarters at Camp Dodge. As a member of the Joint Staff during the floods of 2008, he served as liaison to the city government in Cedar Falls, and recalls many UNI students helping in the effort. He's currently assigned to Joint Forces Headquarters, Iowa National Guard and serving on a tour as the Strategic Planning officer at the National Guard Professional Education Center. He is married to Erika and has two daughters. Their home is in Pella.

He has worked for several banks in Iowa and just concluded a four year term as one of the congressionally nominated members of the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee (CCAC), which advises the Secretary of the Treasury on the themes and designs for all United States coins and Congressional Gold Medals, having received the recommendation of then House Minority Leader John Boehner. During his term on the committee, he had involvement with the designs for the Army, Medal of Honor, Infantry, 5 Star Generals US Mint commemorative coins, and over one hundred others. In addition, several Congressional Gold Medals honoring military service members were reviewed by the CCAC during his tenure, among them the Code Talkers (including the Meskwaki Tribe), Nisei Soldiers, and the First Special Service Force. As the only member of the CCAC with military experience, it was quite an honor for him to provide recommendations for military designs in particular as well as meet some of the recipients of the Congressional Gold Medals.



LTC Olson with wife Erika

Advice to Cadets?

Have a plan for coordinating your further civilian and military education that takes into account future family and personal plans. Make sure that you allocate appropriate time for each without attempting to do all at once. Networking is one of the most important skills that you need to practice now and throughout your civilian and military career, and not just social networking. Get to know others on a level where there is mutual trust and respect for what all parties can bring to the table. Never pass on an opportunity to add to your network, and make sure you are someone who adds value when asked.

Lessons Learned at UNI ROTC?

The faculty and staff were top notch, and it was a great experience to learn from them; many were veterans of Vietnam. They were great mentors and provided a solid foundation for our military education and life in the business world. I would like to thank them for their dedication to us, and service to UNI ROTC and the Country.

Major Zachary Irvine - Class of 1997

My name is MAJ Zachary Irvine and I currently serve as Chief, Syrian Foreign Fighters Branch - Counter Terrorism Division, European Command and I am honored to write this article. I hope that I can lend some insight and advice to our commissioning cadets and the future leaders of our troops. My family and I are currently stationed outside Cambridge at Royal Air Force Base Molesworth, UK. Mindy and our children, Audrey and William, love our adventures on the Island and on the European Continent. Over the past two years we have visited Germany, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Scotland, and Wales. We have even been to the Shetland and Faroe Islands and we plan to visit more countries before we move back home.



MAJ Irvine with wife Mindy and children, Audrey and William

I attended UNI from 1994 to 1997 and I majored in Biotechnology and Chemistry. I was also varsity member of the swim team. I was commissioned active duty Medical Service Corps on December 21st, 1997 and have remained on active duty. My past duties have included Platoon Leader Medical Company, Medical Logistic/Operations Officer Special Forces Group, and Company Commander, Combat Support Hospital.

After my command I branch transferred to a Functional Area (FA) Officer, FA-52, Nuclear Weapons and Counterproliferation, Functional Area Officers are highly specialized and serve in niche' roles on Command Staffs and agency liaisons. As a FA-52 I completed a Master of Science dealing with Chemical and Biological Weapons and Radiation Physics. My FA-52 assignments include Nuclear Disablement Team member, USSTRATCOM Airborne Command Post crew member handling our nation's nuclear launch codes (some of my ROTC classmates might not sleep well after reading that statement) and 3-Star Aide-De-Camp Deputy Commander (now current Commander) USSTRATCOM. I have three short tour deployments, one of Operation Enduring Freedom - Philippines, and two Iraqi Freedom rotations.

Favorite Memory: CPT O'Regan 'breaking me out of Advanced Camp' on graduation day. CPT O'Regan drove up to the barracks, where all the holdover cadets were placed, and told the Desk Sergeant he was "here to collect one of his cadets." When I returned the next day the rest of the cadets looked at me in awe and jealousy. I was the cadet who escaped! According to legend, the day after my escape, CPT O'Regan was called to the carpet by the Camp Commander and took a few HEAT rounds for that incident. Sir, if you are reading, thanks for everything, it was a great day.

Advice: Pick mentors, good or bad. If bad, watch from afar. Do not be afraid to take that hard job; S-3, Ops, Exec, or Aide. Spend 20 to 30 minutes per day reading foreign policy articles. Invest immediately! Roth/Traditional IRA, buy a Dave Ramsey Money book. Four books I think you should read, well three and you can audiobook the last one. Once an Eagle, Starship Troopers, The Forever War, and read/listen to The 4TH Star.

I see real similarities to the Army I entered as a Second Lieutenant and the Army our UNI ROTC cadets will enter. Today there are differences however, the main difference being today's operating environment, it is far more complex and dangerous than the one my peers and I entered. In the late nineties the army was rebuilding post Desert Storm. We were a fiscally conservative, peacetime, cold war era, garrison army. After September 11th, we rapidly transitioned to a lethal, fast moving, forward deployed force. Asymmetric warfare and COIN replaced massive force on force theory. Today we face a slowly recovering economy, large scale personnel reductions, and a shift back to a garrison force with combat tested leaders who have never known fiscal constraints. Do you see a similarity?

As for our enemies... they seem to have multiplied. For almost two decades we ignored Russia. We shifted our focus to the Pacific. Russia modernized and annexed Crimea. We also, arguably, toppled three governments; Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya and in the wake of the Arab Spring we have done little in Africa or Syria; locations both rife with Sunni extremist. Now those same Sunni extremists have retaken several cities in Iraq. Are these events tied to one another (why you need to read foreign policy articles)? How will you make sense of this environment? How will you lead your troops? How will you advise your commander? How will your actions make the world safer? If you are asking yourself these questions then I believe you are on the right path.

Major Cory E. Schowengerdt - Class of 1998

I graduated from UNI in May of 1998 with a Physical Education BA and was branched Field Artillery. Following OBC, my wife and I moved to Baumholder, Germany where I was assigned to 4-27 FA. After 3 years with 4-27, I attend the Special Forces Qualification Course, followed by the Infantry Captains Career Course and the Special Forces Qualification Course. I have served for 7 years with 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) as a Operational Detachment Alpha Commander, Commander of 3 Special Forces Companies, and a Battalion S3. I've also been an instructor at the Special Forces Qualification Course and am currently an instructor at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Advice to Cadets: If it is worth doing, it is usually worth overdoing.

Best memory from my time at UNI: We did 2 ski trips to Minneapolis during Christmas breaks. Our class was really close and we had a blast just relaxing and enjoyed spending time away from class together.

Lesson learned at UNI ROTC: Save half of every pay increase you get during your career.



MAJ Schowengerdt with wife Jackie.

LTC John Perkins - Class of 1990



I commissioned as a 2LT in the Infantry in May of 1990. I received my degree in Political Science in 1991. My first assignment was as a Rifle Platoon Leader with A/1-410th IN of the USAR. After the USAR gave up their Combat Arms in the mid-nineties, I transferred to the Iowa Army National Guard, first as Platoon Leader, XO, and then Commander of A/1-168 IN. I then served as Commander, D/1-168 IN, and after that, on to Brigade as Commander HHC/2-34th BCT.

Upon promotion to Major and service as the Brigade S1, I returned to the 1-168 IN as the Battalion S3. I deployed with the 2-34th BCT HQ to Kosovo from 2003 to 2004. Returning back to Iowa, I became full time with the Iowa Army National Guard, serving in a series of assignment which included Anti-terrorism Officer, Provost Marshal, Strategic Planner, and then J5/J7 for the Joint Staff.

In 2009, I became Commander of the 334th Brigade Support Battalion, and deployed with the 2-34th Brigade Combat Team to Afghanistan from 2010 to 2011, (with the additional duty of Commander of Base Operations for Bagram Airfield). Since returning, I have been assigned as the S3 and later XO of the 734th Regional Support Group and am currently the Deputy Construction and Facilities Management Officer for the Iowa Army National Guard. So, I guess in 24 years of commissioned service I have been Operations, Logistics, and now an Engineer, serving at various times in the USAR, ARNG, and on Active Duty. Semper Gumby!

Advice to Cadets: A great phrase I learned at the NTC is "Chop the wood in front of you". In other words, you will be evaluated not on the task that you think you should have been given, but your mission accomplishment of the task you are given. Respect and authority go to those who can get the hard jobs done. Remember, "If you take more than your fair share of hills, you will be given more than your fair share of hills to take". It just comes with the territory. Step up!

Lessons Learned at ROTC: You will conduct small group leadership for the rest of your career. Don't come under the illusion that you actually have control over anything more than a squad of people. You may have influence over more than that, but your maximum effective span of control is about six to eight individuals. You can't do it all yourself. Give your subordinates a right limit, left limit, and direction of fire. Assigned sector sizes vary depending on talent and experience.

Best Memory with UNI ROTC: During the Spring FTX, as a MS-4, I was charged to add a station to "challenge" (i.e. irritate) the MS-3s. Using a role of barb wire, an e-tool, a bayonet, and some local vegetation, I built about 10 feet of tangle foot for the MS-3s to crawl under. And yes, they were irritated with the additional task! If memory serves me correctly, two of the most irritated were Steve Boesen and Steve Kramer, who served with me as fellow Battalion Commanders during the 2-34th BCT's deployment in Afghanistan.