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It’s a wrap for the 2017-2018 school year and another highly successful semester for the Panther Battalion. This spring semester saw some first-time events for the program that have set the stage for future years under the command of LTC Michael J. Harris, Professor of Military Science, and MSG Kristopher C. Verrett, Senior Military Instructor, both assuming their duties in July 2017 at the University of Northern Iowa.

First was the staff ride to Gettysburg Battlefield. ROTC requires military history as a commissioning requirement, and part of this includes doing a staff ride to analyze the decisions that military leaders made during a battle and how those decisions affected the outcome.

Due to no major battles taking place near UNI, cadets in previous years have conducted a virtual staff ride, which did not allow the cadets to walk the grounds. However, this year 20 cadets from both UNI and UD traveled to Gettysburg to not only tour the battlegrounds, but also analyze both the Union and Confederate leaders’ decisions in a pivotal battle. Being able to walk the land also developed the cadets’ understanding of how use of terrain plays an important role.

Another first for the Panther Battalion was sending ten cadets to an Air Assault School Mobile Training Team at Camp Dodge, sponsored by the Iowa National Guard. The training took place in the middle of the semester so the cadets not only had to endure the rigors of the Air Assault training, but also put their classes on hold for the 10-day course. Six of the cadets completed the demanding program and earned their Air Assault Badge.

The other first (at least for several years), was going to Fort McCoy, Wisconsin for the spring field training exercise (FTX). In previous years, we partnered with the ROTC programs in Iowa and Nebraska to do a Task Force FTX at Camp Dodge.

This year, we joined the Wisconsin programs to train our cadets for cadet summer training. The MSIII cadets focused on Advanced Camp skills, while the MSI and MSII cadets trained on what they would need at Basic Camp. As always, the spring FTX served to replicate the camp environment with the cadets working alongside other cadets they have not met before and under the supervision of different cadre members.

The Panther Battalion wrapped up spring semester by commissioning eleven more officers.
GETTYSBURG STAFF RIDE

On 22-25 March, cadets from the University of Dubuque and University of Northern Iowa conducted a Staff Ride at Gettysburg National Park. Cadets raised money to fund the trip which included eleven seniors and nine underclassmen.

Air Assault Training

The Panther Battalion sent ten cadets from the University of Northern Iowa and University of Dubuque to the Iowa National Guard Air Assault course from 4 April 2018 thru 15 April 2018. The course was sponsored by the Iowa National Guard who voluntarily offered the program ten training slots. This is just another example of many ways the Guard supports this program.

Cadet Morgan Jones of the UNI ROTC Program conducts repel training as part of Air Assault Training on Camp Doge, IA. Cadet Jones is a sophomore reserve scholarship recipient, one of five female course graduates, and was featured on the Iowa National Guard’s Web Site for her accomplishments during the training.

Six of the ten cadets in the program received their Air Assault wings after completing the training. The Air Assault course had over a 40% attrition rate and speaks highly the cadets that persevered. The cadets’ reflection on the training was positive. The experience introduced them to military training they will receive in the future and opened their eyes to what will be required once commissioned.

20 cadets from the University of Northern Iowa and University of Dubuque pose for a picture at General Lee’s statue in-between the Union and Confederate position at Pickett’s Charge.

Cadets had to endure the obstacle course in freezing temperatures. The course tested the cadets’ fitness, heart, mental toughness, commitment and resolve. The obstacles were timed and caused the largest number of failures in the course.
UNI SPRING COMMISSIONING

The Panther Battalion held its spring commissioning ceremony on May 5 and welcomed three new 2nd Lieutenants and program alumni. The guest speaker for the event was Brigadier General Warnstadt, the Deputy Commanding General (Maneuver) for the Iowa National Guard.

LTC Michael Harris administered the oath to 2LT Nolan Cook, 2LT Michael Casey and 2LT Tyler Reagan. 2LT Cook commissioned as an active duty Infantry Officer and will head to Fort Benning for the Infantry Basic Officer Leader Course. 2LT Casey commissioned as an active duty Military Police Corps Officer and will head to Fort Leonard Wood for his BOLC before going to Hawaii.

Finally, 2LT Reagan commissioned into the Army Reserve as a Military Police Corps Officer. We extend our congratulations to these three graduates and thank them for the hard work they did as a small cohort during the 2017-2018 school year.

University of Northern Iowa

PANTHER BATTALION CONGRATULATES THE NEWLY COMMISSIONED OFFICERS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE

On Thursday, May 17, the Panther Battalion held its final commissioning ceremony of the 2017-2018 school year. LTC Harris administered the oath of office to eight cadets from the University of Dubuque, swearing them in as 2nd Lieutenants in the Army. COL Timothy Glynn, the current G1 for the Iowa National Guard was the guest speaker. UNI ROTC congratulates the following new 2LTs on their completion of ROTC, their graduation from college, and their upcoming service to our Nation.

2LT Anthony Reed, active duty Infantry
2LT Johnathan James, active duty Medical Service Corps
2LT Reymoi Jno-Lewis, active duty Medical Service Corps
2LT Jordan Hamling, active duty Transportation Corps
2LT Jacob Johnston, active duty Engineer Corps
2LT Grace Kovarik, Army National Guard Chemical Corps
2LT Dequan Reed, active duty Engineer Corps
2LT Adam Wright, Army National Guard Ordnance Corps

LTC Harris Administers the oath of office.
The UNI ROTC Panther Battalion was honored to host a visit by Command Sergeant Major (CSM) John Wayne Troxell, the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. CSM Troxell is the senior enlisted member in the Military and serves as the voice for the joint enlisted force to the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense. CSM Troxell’s visit gave the Panther Battalion cadets an outstanding opportunity to learn about the workings of our National Defense at the highest level. He also gave the cadets practical advice for when they become commissioned officers by stressing the importance of leading by example, setting conditions so high in training that combat becomes relatively easy, striving for excellence in everything, and being able to communicate a vision, priorities and intent to the enlisted Soldiers.

Command Sergeant Major John Wayne Troxell was our honored guest speaker at the annual 2018 ROTC Military Ball.

Even with the school year complete, cadets will be heavily involved in summer training and other events throughout the school year. Prior to ROTC Advanced Camp, the MSIII cadets participated in a super-lab at Camp Dodge, Iowa to hone the skills they will need at camp. Throughout the summer, these 8 cadets will then go through Advanced Camp at Fort Knox.

Additionally, nine more cadets will attend the ROTC Basic Camp. Besides Fort Knox camps, eight more cadets will visit foreign countries as part of the Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency (CULP) program. Cadets will go to Thailand, Peru, Senegal, Morocco, Paraguay and Guyana.

CULP is a great way for cadets to learn the importance of partnership with other nations, as they will spend three weeks in country training with their military. Other cadets will participate in internships or other Cadet Advanced Individual Trainings, including one cadet going to Hawaii for the Jungle Operations Training Course.

Recruiting does not stop over the summer as cadre and cadets at both UNI and UD will meet with incoming freshmen to encourage them to enroll in fall ROTC classes. Both schools will have freshman and transfer student orientations going on throughout June and July.

We also want to congratulate the incoming National Scholarship winners who will be part of the Panther Battalion in the fall. These incoming students are:

Payton Hart, UNI
Dylan Jackson, UD

Nathan Fernandez, UD
Ty Chrisman, UD

GOVERNOR’S OUTSTANDING CADET AWARD

Receiving the Governor’s Outstanding Cadet Award for 2018 held at Camp Dodge on 24 April were C/LTC Nolan Cook from the University of Northern Iowa and C/LTC Johnathan James from University of Dubuque.

SUMMER TRAINING

MILITARY BALL

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