



Welcome back to the NC State NROTC 1MC for the Spring 2020 semester. In this issue, you will find perspectives from a 4/C Midshipman, a 1/C Midshipman, a STA-21 Officer Candidate, and a recent alumni. This issue also includes an article from a Midshipman currently studying abroad and a Q&A Session with the battalion's newest active duty advisor, LCDR Dickey. We have had a productive year of training, and look forward to 2020 as we continue to build our program in order to produce the Navy and Marine Corps' finest officers.



@NROTC.NCSU



@NCSTATE_NROTC

Contents

4/C Reflection	3
Battalion Fundraising	5
Midshipman Abroad	6
OC Spotlight	8
Featured First Class	10
Recent Graduate Perspective	11
Q&A with LCDR Dickey	12

4/C Reflection

Being granted the privilege to serve as a Midshipmen at North Carolina State University has been the opportunity of a lifetime. The last semester and a half has been full of memories and experiences that I will hold to for the rest of my college career and on.

My transition into college has been full of peaks and troughs. I was excited to leave home and start my own journey. I could make new friends and set my own schedule. With that, however, came many new responsibilities. I had to ensure that I was self-disciplined enough to complete my assigned course work, workout outside of ROTC, and attend my required ROTC activities. I experienced new stresses and a different schedule during the night and day. On top of that, my busy schedule, and lack of a car hindered me from seeing my family as much as I had planned.

There are two big lessons that I took away from last semester. The first is that time management is a necessity. Unlike high school and before, I find myself always needing to complete a task, whether it be homework, working out or even something as simple as hanging out with friends. Without a planner and calendar, it becomes incredibly easy to spend too much time on one task which can hinder you from completing the others or just outright forgetting a deadline.

My second lesson learned was to not stretch myself too thin. Coming from a small town on the Eastern Carolina Coast, I was awestruck by the amount of extracurricular activities in and out of the university. I wanted to take part in them all. Towards the middle of the first semester, I began to realize

that I was exhausting myself and taking away time from my number one priority here at NC State: academics.



If I had to give two pieces of advice to the upcoming fourth class midshipman, it would be the following. One, be prompt. The upperclassmen and active duty will be watching you, even if you do not think they are. Being prompt shows to them that you are disciplined, that you desire to be here, and overall is just a great way to keep you from being late for muster. This is a great way to set yourself up for future positions within the battalion.

The second piece of advice is to be healthy. Run as much and as often as you can. Anyone in the military will tell you that physical fitness is an important characteristic for good leaders. Tied along with that is to have a healthy diet. It is easy at college to have a horrible diet, but I promise you that it will hinder you. If you need help with this, reach out to someone in the battalion or utilize the university resources that will help you. There should be no excuse for lacking in physical fitness.

Some of my favorite memories with the battalion were the football Military Appreciation Day game, Fall Ball, and passing my PQS boards. All were times that the fourth class Midshipmen were able to get together and take part in some important milestones for our time here in the battalion.

MIDN 4/C Seal

Alumni Spotlight

2017 Graduate, LTJG Katie Spaeth, pictured bellow in Guam, earning her SWO pin.



If you are interested in reconnecting with the Battalion, please send an email to MIDN 1/C Alec Hunter with your name, service (Marine Corps/Navy), and graduation year.

nrotc.Wolfpack.alumni@gmail.com

Battalion Fundraising

Over the 2019-2020 academic year, the Battalion has worked diligently to raise funds for unit uniform items, command merchandise, and morale, welfare and recreation activities such as sending midshipmen to leadership conferences and command picnics. In the fall, the battalion volunteered to help staff the merchandise booths at NC State home football games and organized pre-orders for Battalion merchandise to be sold in the spring semester. Over the course of this spring semester, we have a few fundraising opportunities in the works. We have already hosted two events to include a percentage night at Chipotle, a local restaurant on Hillsborough Street where we raised \$100.00, and a campus wide blood drive where we collected 29 units, saved 87 lives and raised over \$600.00.

Events that the Battalion has coming up include sales of command ball caps and command belt buckles to be worn in uniform around campus to show off our unit



pride. There will be another campus wide blood drive through The Blood Connection in the Brickyard on Wednesday, April 22nd. Everyone is welcome and we hope to see you there! To round out our spring and hit the ground running in the fall, we are in the planning stages of putting together a golf outing fundraiser open to Alumni, Battalion members and Raleigh area individuals! We are shooting to kick off this event early in the Fall '20 semester and make it a recurring yearly fundraiser. We think it would be a great way to meet and shake hands with some of the gracious donors to our awesome program and a fun way to show the community what NC State NROTC is all about.

Alumni engagement is very prevalent semester after semester. We received over \$450.00 in alumni contribution this academic year and we can't say thank you enough! The link to donate to the Battalion is <https://www.paypal.me/NCSUNROTC>.

OC Kinter
Fundraising Officer

Midshipman Abroad

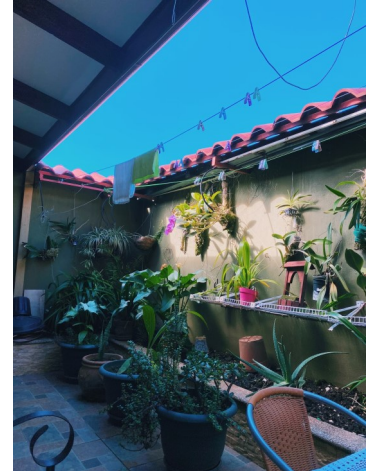
For the past month I have had the opportunity to study abroad in Heredia, Costa Rica. So far my experience has been very eye-opening. I've been staying with a host family who only speaks Spanish, which has really been a great way to improve my skills in the language. The characteristics of host families vary from student to student, but mine consists of an older couple and their granddaughter who is just a few years older than me. My host mom is an amazing cook, and she has been teaching me how to make many traditional Costa Rican dishes. The granddaughter works long hours, so I don't interact with her much. There is also another student in my program who I share a host family with, a sophomore at UNC Wilmington. We had the option to either stay with a host family or to get our own apartment, but in my opinion staying with a host family is an important part of the study-abroad experience.



rience. Additionally, all of my classes are taught in Spanish, which has been challenging, but rewarding.

Three out of four of my classes are only with people in the program, which allows for a lot smaller and more personal learning experience. My fourth class is with locals, just like a regular exchange program. My weekly routine is pretty much the same from week to week. On Monday, I only have one class, so I usually study a bit and go to the gym afterwards. Tuesdays are long, I have three classes back to back, from 11 am to 7:30 pm. Wednesdays and Thursdays are pretty similar to Mondays, I only have one class each day. Usually every week our program advisor

plans a cultural activity for the group. So far we have had a tour of the city center, a dance class, a cooking class, and a tour of a sustainable farm. There are only eight people total in my program, all girls, and the small size allows for us all to get to know each other a lot better than in bigger programs. Outside of my classes, which are only Monday through Thursday, I have had many opportunities to travel and interact with the local culture. So





well-rounded military officer when I commission.

MIDN 2/C Burcher

far, I have been to a few volcanoes, Monteverde Rainforest National Park, and Jacó beach. Each of these trips has allowed me to become more and more familiar with the country, as well as see and experience a new culture and interact with local people. The most rewarding part so far has been being able to practice my Spanish speaking skills. Before arriving, I would not have considered myself fluent at all, but by the end of the four month program I hope that I'll be able to converse without any problems. For anyone considering studying abroad, I would highly recommend it. Before planning this experience, I thought it would definitely conflict with my NROTC obligations, but there are many ways to accommodate study-abroad programs. I know that this experience will help me become a better, more



OC Spotlight

As a student at the Naval Nuclear Prototype Training Command (NNPTC), my acceptance into the STA-21 program was the start of my transition into a completely different perspective of the nuclear Navy and of the Department of the Navy as a whole. Looking from the outside in it would seem as if the transition from one student environment to another would be easy and that there would be some similarities that would make the transition somewhat seamless. While there are some similarities, the two worlds are markedly different in the environments they take place in and the overall goal of the programs. These differences contribute to and encourage a different mindset and general state of



being that has essentially made me more cognizant of my place in the world and the United States Navy.

I had the pleasure of training on the MTS 626 at the Nuclear Power Training Unit (NPTU) in Charleston. Charleston, SC is a beautiful city. The neighborhoods are quiet but the downtown areas and busy beaches in the summer provide for a fun escape from the demanding schedule of the many sailors and airmen stationed there. NPTU Charleston operates on a strict five crew shift schedule. Depending on what crew you're assigned to, you spend 12 hours a day 7 days a week reading, studying, and practicing the steady state operation of the ship-board nuclear plants as well as the immediate actions to take in the event of a plant casualty. The ascension from civilian to qualified nuclear plant operator takes approximately 18 - 24 months. This type of time crunch lends itself to a very tense, fast-paced, knowledge-based, anxiety inducing environment. For some this doesn't affect them at all, but for me, learning under a time limit was stressful, but I eventually got used to it. Transitioning to NC State from this type of learning environment proved to be more taxing than I assumed it would be, but it did lend a few positive traits.

College life in general is much more relaxed and self-paced. The curriculum is set by you and you have the pow-



er to decide what you want to learn and how you want to learn it. You set your own schedule and you decide how long you may or may not need to study. Subjects like heat transfer and fluid flow that are taught in a matter of 6-8 weeks at NNPTC are expanded and taught over the span of 12-week semesters allowing for a more in depth, however less hands-on, understanding. As Raleigh, NC is home to me, it feels more comfortable than Charleston ever did. While not a beach city, Raleigh is as vibrant and enriching as Charleston, if not more due to its large size and population. Coming from the fast pace of NPTU to NC State was difficult in that I become impatient with myself as well as the process. The curriculum is less specific and therefore leaves a wider range for assumptions and mistakes to be made. These mistakes and assumptions are allowable being that the goal is to obtain a degree as opposed to maintain the operation of an entire ship and all the lives onboard. It is

immensely less stressful and thus aids in a mindset that is more conducive to learning such dense subjects.

In addition to the basics of mechanical engineering, coming to NC State has taught me that anyone and everyone has the power to contribute to their society. The navy provides a way to do that and my fellow midshipmen are prime examples of who and what can be given. I've been exposed to so many different perspectives and mindsets and with each interaction I gain a better understanding of myself and the responsibilities I carry not only as a woman in the world but also as a future commissioned officer in the US Navy.

OC Bynum



Featured First Class

My time at NC State and in the NROTC unit has flown by. It seems like yesterday I was a 4/C Midshipman reporting in for New Student Orientation, thinking I had my life all figured out. Like many others have before me, I quickly learned that college will make you rethink just about everything. I ended up changing my mind on a great deal of things, including my major and what I desired for service assignment. Thankfully, I was not going through it alone; many of my friends in the unit were going through the same things, as did many of the upperclassmen at some point in their college careers. This is probably one of the most beneficial aspects of being a member of our Battalion, as opposed to just being a regular college student. We are able to rely on one another, learn from each other's experiences to make our own more streamlined, and help push each other towards success. None of us would be where we are today, or be headed in the directions that we are, without each other.

For me, this direction will be Surface Warfare, Engineering Duty Option. When I first came into the unit, my mind was set on submarines. Following my major change to Civil Engineering and a summer cruise onboard a fast-attack submarine, my mind was much less made up. This is where being in this unit was extremely helpful. I was able to draw from the fleet experiences of the Active Duty staff, as well as reach out to various alumni, to help me figure out exactly what I wanted to aim for with my preferences. Without a doubt, I knew now this is what I wanted to do, and thankfully the Navy agreed with me on this one!

As for the future, who knows what will happen; we live in an ever changing world, and in a few short months, I will be an officer in a Navy that rapidly responds to those changes.

Going the surface route, however, I do get somewhat of a say when it comes to my first duty station. Ship selection—which should be its own national holiday—is fast approaching, on 26 February (for those that aren't familiar with it, all of the NROTC Surface Warfare Midshipmen in the nation are ranked against each other and pick in order off a list of available ships stationed around the world). I plan on selecting a ship out of Mayport, Florida, for my first ship, provided there is still a spot there when it's my turn to pick! Overall, I've enjoyed my four years in the unit, the different leadership opportunities I've experienced, and the awesome memories I've made with my friends (especially the Military Appreciation Football Games), and I'll always remember those experiences and lessons as I take on my next task of leading a division of Sailors in the Fleet.

Go Pack!!!



MIDN 1/C Olson IV

Graduate Perspective

After commissioning, I got accepted into the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA. This was part of a program I applied to that allowed me to get my Masters in Business Administration prior to going to flight school. In the NPS environment, it is not like a ship or flight school; there are not strict muster times, formations, or people to lead. It is essentially grad school with a military aspect to it. However, it has given me opportunities to learn about different communities and interact with officers that have been in for 4-5 years, and learn how to conduct myself as an officer in the U.S. Navy. Although my experience in the military thus far has been untraditional compared to many of my classmates, I think the challenges that come with being a newly commissioned Ensign at my first duty station remain the same. I would say the biggest transition from 1/C to ENS is that no one is holding your hand anymore. You are expected to know how to be professional. If you get your haircut, wear the correct uniform, get to work on time, and are open to learning everything you can (all things you should know from ROTC), you'll be fine. You will also be interacting with individuals that have been in the military for a long time, but that doesn't mean you have to be intimidated by them. O3's and O4's can be your biggest mentors and help you navigate



your first duty station. They have a lot of experience, and you will never learn unless you talk to them and are not afraid to go out on a limb. As far as my situation goes, a lot of mid-level officers use my experience in technology to help them study for their classes. All in all, the best advice I could give to the 1/C about to commission is to learn all you

can about the specifics of being in the Navy (such as paychecks and leave policy), because the rest will come from experience. I am by no means very experienced, but because I prepared for commissioning and was not surprised by all the responsibilities, the rest has come very easy for me, and I know it will for you too.

ENS Haritan

Q&A with LCDR Dickey

We are excited to have LCDR Dickey as a new active duty advisor at NC State NROTC. He grew up in Pennsylvania right outside of the city of Philadelphia where he began his career in the Navy as an Aviation Ordnanceman with intentions of going through the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training pipeline. After completing Dive School and EOD school, he served nine years as an enlisted bomb technician. After this, he attended college at the Citadel where he earned a commission as an EOD Officer. After becoming an officer, LCDR Dickey had many unique opportunities being an EOD Operator. Over his career, he has been able to work with Army Special Forces, a Carrier Strike Group, Foreign SOF (Special Operating Forces), NSW (Naval Special Warfare), and various other billets. His diverse background includes working not only across various branches of the US Military but also alongside foreign militaries. During my brief conversation with him, I learned much about his time acting as a ground force commander (18A) of an Army SF ODA (Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha) squad, various EOD bomb disposal assets such as Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs), his time at Naval Dive School in Panama City, and a handful of exciting parachuting jump stories. We are extremely lucky to have LCDR Dickey at our battalion as there are only a handful of schools across the nation that even have a billet for an EOD advisor,

and even luckier that his wife is an NC State alumni, although I'm sure this didn't influence his decision. There are many valuable lessons we can learn from LCDR Dickey, and we are all excited for his next three years with us! GO PACK!

Q: What has been your favorite part of your career as a Navy EOD officer?

A: Definitely operating with an Army ODA (Special Forces) as their acting Ground Commander. Small Unit leadership was extremely difficult but equally rewarding.

Q: What's one thing that you would tell your past self if given the option?


A: Enjoy everything that you're doing and be sure to live in the moment. As Naval Officers, we're often hardwired to be looking at the long-term goal 2, 5, even 10 years out. But we rarely take the time to enjoy living in the moment, yeah I would definitely tell myself to enjoy the moment.

Q: Have you ever had ordnance explode that wasn't supposed to?

A: Oh yes, literally all the time... especially IEDs

Q: If you weren't in the Navy, what job would you most likely have/want to have?

A: I would probably be doing something such as finances or banking.



Q: What is your favorite thing to do in your free time? (Favorite Hobby)?

A: Changing dirty diapers and watching Disney movies thanks to my kids, but seriously surfing, hiking, and golfing are also hobbies of mine.

Q: What is your favorite book and favorite movie?

A: My favorite book is *Ghost Wars* by Steve Coll, and my favorite movie is “The Fog Of War.”

Q: What would you say was the most difficult part of the EOD pipeline for you?

A: The most difficult of the training was Dive School. Although I didn’t have any issue with the swimming part, over-unders definitely gave me a run for my money.

MIDN 3/C Lieske

Contact Us



103 Dunn Ave
Reynolds Coliseum
M-F 0800-1600
(919) 515-8931



nrotc.Wolfpack.alumni@gmail.com

Edited by: MIDN 3/C O'Connor and MIDN 3/C Milano