

THE 1MC

NC State Naval ROTC



MIDN 1/C Seal addresses the Battalion as he replaces MIDN Butcher as the next Battalion Commander.

SENIOR SERVICE ASSIGNMENT

By MIDN 1/C Tristan Seal

This year, Service Assignment took place on Wednesday, October 5. All of the 1/C met in Reynolds Coliseum where CAPT Hertel, Commanding Officer of the NROTC Piedmont Consortium, gave us our assignments. Below is the list of 1/C who will commission in the winter or spring and their assignments.

1. Breadon Butcher: Student Naval Aviator
2. Alex Chaisson: Submarines
3. Julian Colvin: Submarines
4. Blake Daniel: Student Naval Aviator
5. Jesse Hines: Submarines
6. Joseph Melcher: Student Naval Aviator
7. Declan Miller: Submarines
8. Atlee Pool: Student Naval Aviator
9. Cassidy Scheuer: Naval Flight Officer
10. Tristan Seal: Submarines
11. Isabel Viado: Surface Warfare
12. Connor Walker: Student Naval Aviator
13. Chase Young: Submarines

Semester Highlights

Senior Service Assignment

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Transitioning From High School

MIDN 1/C Wild will be commissioning as a 2ndLt. in the Marine Corps. While not every student was assigned to their first choice service community, each one is excited and grateful for the opportunity to become a Naval Officer.

Even before I joined the unit as a freshman in 2019, I wanted to be a Submarine Officer. I grew up reading Tom Clancy novels and the movie, *The Hunt for Red October*, is still one of my favorites. More than anything though, going on the USS Washington for my 2/C cruise was confirmation of my desire to go subs. The hard work and dedication of the crew inspired me and reasserted my interest in serving as a submarine officer. Being a part of such a tight-knit community was truly exciting. In order to be selected as an 1170 (Unrestricted Line Officer in training for a submarine qualification) an NROTC Midshipman must be selected for submarines at Service Assignment as well as pass an interview at Naval Reactors in Washington D.C.

This “interview” is really an all day event where Midshipmen undergo multiple interviews. First you start the day with two or three technical interviews where you are asked STEM-related questions. These questions are mostly focused on Calculus and Physics. Once you finish these interviews, you end your day by interviewing with the Director of Naval Reactors. After that, the Admiral decides if you are accepted.

My interview preparation process took place over the course of approximately six months. Each week, myself and other Midshipmen preparing for their interview would get together and review basic concepts and questions that would be asked. As we got closer to the interview date, the intensity slightly increased. LT McCarren, one of our active duty advisors and a submarine officer himself, oversaw this process. I will say that while I was nervous about my interview, the months of studying helped me do well when I was there. Once I commission, I will go to Navy Nuclear Power School in Goose Creek, South Carolina which is just north of Charleston. Power school in Goose Creek lasts for about six months. Once I graduate from Power School, I will spend another six months in Charleston or Ballston Spa, NY where I will attend Nuclear Power Training Unit (NPTU) or Prototype. Before going to my first boat, I will spend about three months at the Submarine Officer Basic Course in New London, Connecticut. Finally, I will report to my first unit. At the moment, I am hoping to go to Hawaii or Guam. Regardless of where my first unit will be, I am thankful for the opportunity that I have been given and am excited to make the most of it.

MIDN 1/C Seal is from New Bern, NC. He is studying Physics. He will commission in the spring as a Submarine Officer.

NEW MOI INTERVIEW

By MIDN 2/C Nick Simon

I had the unique opportunity to interview Captain McNamara, an infantry officer in the United States Marine Corps. This is his first year with the NROTC Piedmont Consortium. He is the Marine Officer Instructor here at North Carolina State University. Captain McNamara was also a part of an ROTC Battalion at the University of Maryland. Captain McNamara was previously stationed at Camp Pendleton, California. He was stationed at 3rd Battalion 1st Marines where he spent a year as a rifle platoon commander. He finished up his tour as a Weapons Company Executive Officer.

Captain McNamara says, "I like that there is a lot of motivation to be Navy and Marine Corps officers throughout the students." Captain McNamara says he made this observation after being in the fleet where some aren't equally as motivated or open to experience as Midshipmen at NC State. Another observation Captain McNamara made while transitioning to the unit was the Wolfpack Battalion's family atmosphere. In his transition to NC State University, he has greatly appreciated this. He recognizes the determination of the Midshipmen in the battalion and appreciates their devotion themselves as well as each other.

As a Marine Corps Officer his experience and leadership has helped prepare Marine Option Midshipmen in the NROTC Program for Officer Candidate School, which Marine Option Midshipmen will undergo the summer before their senior year. Furthermore, his infantry experience gives insight for MECEPS to be successful at The Basic School. To further build himself as an educated officer and leader, Captain McNamara is currently pursuing a Master's in Natural Resources here at North Carolina State. If he was not a Marine, Captain McNamara says he would most likely be a park ranger.



Captain Derek A. McNamara, USMC, joined the unit this semester as the new Marine Office Instructor.

MIDN 2/C Simon (Marine Option) is from Tampa. He is studying Finance.



Admiral Michelle Howard receives her four star shoulder boards (July 1, 2014).

WOMEN IN THE NAVY

By MIDN 4/C Rachael Mullins

As we begin to wrap up the year, it's important we take time to reflect on our history as a Navy, acknowledging those that have come before us and paved our paths. Women have been a part of the armed forces since the beginning, serving in medical roles throughout every significant conflict. However, it wasn't until the 20th century that women could officially enlist in the Navy or serve as officers. While women have made profound impacts on the success of our fleet they are still experiencing many "firsts" well into the 21st century.

In 1972 Adm. Elmo Zumwalt officially opened the NROTC program to female candidates and successfully graduated the first woman from the program as an aviator in 1974. The following year of 1973, Officer Candidate school was integrated to teach men and women and the Women's Officer School was closed. In 1976, eighty-one women were admitted to the Naval Academy for the first time, this three year time span creates immense opportunities for women to begin the path to commissioning and marks a turning point in women's naval history.

Today, women continue to break the glass ceiling, advancing their skillset and rank throughout the department of the Navy. In 2010, female officers were allowed to begin serving on Ohio class submarines and female enlisted personnel in 2016.

The first female submarine XO, Lt Cmdr. Amber Cowan was appointed in November 2022 to lead on the USS Kentucky (SSBN 737). In 2015 the special warfare community opened their doors to women allowing them to pursue the SEALs and SWCC pipelines after the laws barring women from combat positions were removed. So far eighteen women have attempted to complete the NSW training with the first completing the SWCC pipeline in 2021. It's also important to note the accomplishments of female officers such as Adm. Michelle Howard who served as the first female Vice Chief of Naval Operations in 2014 and was the first woman to achieve the four star rank.

Taking a look at women by numbers as of 2021, nine out of every 100 marines are female and twenty out of every 100 sailors are female. Within NROTC 28% of midshipmen are female and at the United States Naval Academy 20% are female. Finally in the fleet female officers make up around 19% of the total number of officers. This coming spring we look forward to the graduation of two more female officers to our fleet, MIDN 1/C Isabel Viado who will be commissioning as a surface warfare officer and MIDN 1/C Cassidy Scheuer who will be commissioning as a naval flight officer.

MIDN 4/C Mullins is from Evanston, IL. She is studying Environmental Science.

SUMMER CRUISE IN BAHRAIN

By MIDN 1/C Blake Daniel

This summer I had the privilege of being attached to the USS Sirocco (PC-6) out of Naval Support Activity Manama, Bahrain. The Sirocco falls under Commander, Naval Surface Squadron 5, and its primary mission is Maritime Interdiction Operations within the 5th Fleet Area of Responsibility.

I flew out to Bahrain via Frankfurt, Germany which was an exhausting ordeal on its own, complicated by delays and rescheduled flights. Upon arrival in Bahrain, I met three other Midshipmen who would also be going underway with the Sirocco. We met the ship and prepared to get underway for our month-long patrol in the Gulf of Oman. We sortied from Manama with three US Coast Guard Cutters and another Cyclone-class patrol ship for 2 days of certification exercises including VBSS Drills, High Value Unit Defense, and a GUNEX. At this point, the four Mids were split into a four section bridge watch, so that we could spend time learning from the OOD and CONN on watch.

After the conclusion of the exercise, we made an overnight port call in Jebel Ali, UAE. After a relaxing night off, we transited the Strait of Hormuz outbound for our first week of patrol with the cutter *USCGC Baranof* (WPB-1318). We conducted anti-smuggling operations in the Gulf of Oman, boarding a dhow suspected of drug smuggling. We also gave chase to a skiff along with the *USS Momsen* (DDG-92) and her attached helo.



MIDN 1/C Daniel on Summer Cruise in Bahrain.

We then pulled into Muscat, Oman for a three day port call, where we were able to explore the city and get more acquainted with Middle Eastern culture. We spent a day at the beachside Ritz-Carlton, a great break in our schedule. We sortied back out to the Gulf of Oman to escort a US Flagged RO-RO through the Strait of Hormuz, before returning to station in the Gulf of Oman. We stayed on station for 4 more days, before pulling in for a final port call to refuel in Fujairah, UAE. After refueling, we began our last Strait of Hormuz inbound escorting the USNS Choctaw County. After exiting the traffic separation scheme, we encountered three IRGCN Fast Attack Craft, which repeatedly maneuvered aggressively within fifty meters of the ship. After the Sirocco fired warning flares, the FAC/FIAC departed. At this point, we made best speed back to Bahrain, concluding a successful patrol.

This cruise was an eye opening experience for me. While I was recently designated as a Naval Aviator, summer cruise was an opportunity to broaden my horizon both within the Navy and as a citizen. Having grown up in a small town, I had never traveled abroad other than to the Bahamas. Middle Eastern culture was very different, but I learned a lot. As far as my cruise, I had the opportunity to stand upwards of 100 hours of bridge watch, where I was allowed to conn the ship, plot courses in VMS, and make 1MC calls to the ship. I spent much of my time on watch looking through the MAR-FLIR imaging, looking for surface contacts unseen on radar. I was actually the one to spot the FAC-FIAC during our last Strait of Hormuz transit, and called the crew away to gun quarters. Experiences like this will have a lasting impact on my development as an officer in training. I thoroughly enjoyed my time on the *USS Sirocco*, and have a great appreciation for the role these ships play in our navy as a whole. Go Pack! Fly Navy!

MIDN 1/C Daniel is from Hillsborough, NC. He is studying Biological and Agricultural Engineering Technology. He will commission in the spring as a Student Naval Aviator.



MIDN 3/C Gray and MIDN 1/C Wild pose after PT.

LIFE IN THE BATTALION: THE WOLFPACK FAMILY

By MIDN 3/C Dakota Gray

When speaking to a recruiter about life in an ROTC Battalion, it's likely that they will boil down the experience to the three or four battalion events a week. You are told about the military lifestyle you will be introduced to: learning proper bearing, discipline, and leadership. Although all these things are important for the development of Naval Officers, our battalion has a lot more value than PT, drill, and a few leadership courses. I truly believe that I couldn't have found a greater sense of comradery in any other organization on a college campus, which is what makes life in the battalion special.

Something that tends to get overlooked as a benefit of joining ROTC is the student to student mentorship that we all receive in our time here. The upperclassmen have taken the time to share experience and knowledge with the new midshipman that I have undoubtedly benefited from. Whether it be advice on college life from the upper class midshipmen, insight on the fleet from the OCs and MECEPs, or conversation about everyday life, the interactions that take place between students are often what we learn the most from and what make us friends rather than just colleagues.

As a member of Charlie Company, I have learned first hand the bonds that can be built when putting yourself through mentally and physically strenuous situations. Rolling around in the dirt and getting yelled by Sergeant Instructors at Parris Island for three days doesn't sound like most people's idea of a fun weekend, yet the Marine Options often look back and laugh about it and are ready to go back this year. What we've chosen to do is inherently hard, but when you look a challenge in the face with your brothers and sisters next to you, it just becomes another day at work with your friends.

The invaluable relationships that I have built since I have arrived here have transcended rank and status, which, I have found, after speaking to Midshipman in other units, isn't always the norm. This speaks to the power of creating a strong student command climate and putting people first. I'm proud to be a member of this battalion and wouldn't trade my spot in it for the world. Go Pack and Semper Fi.

MIDN 3/C Gray (Marine Option) is from Newport, North Carolina. He is studying Economics.



MIDN 3/C Gray this past summer at Cortramid during a field exercise.

OPINION: RECOVERING FROM COVID'S ISOLATION

By MIDN 2/C Stephen McGuinness

Think and do," this is the mantra of NC State that leads to success, but what is it that we must do, to improve our chances for that success? While the past two years have been full of isolation and hardships on mental health for all, there is a need to start rebuilding bridges and skills in socialization to end the remoteness in our community. NC State feels robotic and is running on the pandemic-damaged status quo. To end the status quo the Pack must support each other to embrace positive change and reverse the impact of prolonged isolation.

Social media was a temporary fix of dopamine for the losses of relationships in lockdown. Now, we face a new pandemic of being robotic from the addiction to social media. The addiction degrades college student's social skills and yet, no one is willing to be the one to step away from it. Together as a Pack we can limit and/or cease the use of these media outlets that bring us down with negative self-reflection. Let us take this first step as soon as we can, a social experiment that makes it a goal or a challenge as a group to see how long we can go without Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitter etc. Text friends, gather with others and talk instead. Then afterwards, see if we were truly, "missing out." I doubt we'll miss much. Let's pick up a little bit of news or book reading, and/or joining a new club or activity with this newfound time.

Involvement in clubs, NROTC, organizations, and work has given me the strength to finally feel like a fully involved college student and in return reduces my desire to check up on social media (as much). I see the waves of loneliness at our university, and it is disquieting. So, I urge all of us to follow this path of rebuilding those social bridges. Try a range of clubs, reach out and ask others to recommend something, NC State has 658+ clubs, and there is bound to be one you'll like. Most importantly, remove from the phone, it is a far better study break to lose yourself in hobbies to reactivate your brain.

With greatness, opportunity, and diversity here at State, there is so much potential in each to heal. Our great Wolfpack nation is full of inspirational alumni, and we must acknowledge that we have got to work to help those who might need more. By reaching out to draw ourselves back together we can initiate that pay it forward effect! Let us maintain thinking and doing, while also going out and participating in person with the Pack!

*MIDN 2/C McGuinness is from Holly Springs, NC ,
studying Polymer and Color Chemistry.*

OPINION: IMPROVING NSI

By MIDN 4/C Kenneth Cates

Talk to any 4th class midshipman for long enough and they will inevitably bring up NSI. It is a relatively new program which acts as an introduction to NROTC for all incoming students. NSTC claims that NSI acts to standardize the NROTC indoctrination period which was previously left up to each individual unit, but within this standardized experience there is a vast discrepancy depending on your platoon. The experience ultimately hardened most of us into much more composed individuals but there are a few major ways this program could be improved.

One of the main purposes of NSI is to condense as much of Navy basic training as possible into 18 days. This means that the program is bound to feature rigorous discipline, long days, and high stress, but that is to be expected from challenging military training. The main problem, however, lies with how poorly candidates were often treated. Despite wearing masks and regularly sanitizing our compartment, my entire platoon was sick by the second week. This was due to a lack of basic hygiene standards that we were told wasn't something they would take away. 200 seconds for 75 people to shower is not nearly enough time, especially when those seconds are counted off at triple speed. There was never enough time to truly hygiene and use the head until after lights, which meant cutting into your already precious time to sleep.

Aside from poor hygiene standards, there was a blatant lack of cohesion in the leadership structure. Almost every time anyone gave us an order it contradicted another order from another instructor, so we never really knew which one was correct. The result was candidates getting yelled at and punished just for following orders. This is unacceptable in a program designed to instill military discipline and introduce you to NROTC as a whole. We were told from the beginning that if you do what you are told you won't have any problems but that turned out to be false. I came in expecting some level of introduction to the Navy and ended up seeing a faulty chain of command that gave out impossible orders that never lined up.

NSI could be a fantastic program and a great way to introduce incoming 4th class to the NROTC program. Instilling a high level of discipline is absolutely necessary and without NSI, the NROTC program for Navy option midshipmen lacks any sort of basic training equivalent. NSI also acts as a way to expose enlisted service members to future officers and their training. Some of the best learning experiences I had at NSI were interacting with recruits or being sat down by an RDC and talking about the struggles we will face in the fleet. These experiences prepared me well to handle a lot of the stress of college and taught me about basic aspects of the Navy. By improving hygiene standards and giving instructors (from the Midshipman Staff to the Marine Drill Instructors) better direction, NSI could become a much more educational and valuable program but in its current state, candidates mostly gain a skewed view of life in NROTC and the fleet as a whole along with a few stories that are much funnier in retrospect than they were at the time.



New Candidates are welcomed to NSI at Naval Station Great Lakes.

MIDN 4/C Cates is from Raleigh, NC. He is studying chemistry.



TRANSITIONING FROM HIGH SCHOOL

By MIDN 4/C Caileb Duval

As I neared the end of my high school career, I was tasked with a decision. I always knew I wanted to serve in the military but I had to choose which branch I would join. I found myself most interested in the Marine Corps and decided to apply for the NROTC Marine Option Scholarship to become an officer in the Marine Corps. Upon applying myself both physically and mentally towards my goal of earning the scholarship, I realized dreams only become reality when you put in hard work.

Roughly two months later, I was awarded the scholarship and was sent to various appointments and procedures to prepare for what was to come the following summer. Then the time came... I was boarding an airplane to go to New Student Indoctrination (NSI) in Great Lakes, Illinois. NSI was one of the most challenging things I've ever done. While at NSI, midshipmen candidates underwent mental and physical exercises. Along with the other candidates, I engaged in physically demanding exercises and was granted leadership opportunities like being a squad leader, all while learning resilience and discipline by carrying out the commands of those appointed over me. After seventeen long days, we headed home, excited to have completed the program and reminiscing with family and new friends.

MIDN 4/C (Marine Option) Duval is from Grantsboro, NC. He is studying Political Science.

Soon after returning home, I was presented with my next challenge: New Student Orientation (NSO) at NC State. I found myself challenged yet again by mental and physical exercises similar to those at NSI. At NSO, 4th class midshipmen had to endure stressful drills that were physically demanding and required tactical decision making. We were also required to go through an obstacle course and a confidence course. The confidence course consisted of high, layered platforms, rope repelling, and the "stairway to heaven" which was made out of two long vertical logs with boards fastened to them from the bottom to the top. This was made even more challenging by the fact that, as you descend, you must lean back and let go until you are caught by a thick foam pad.

Completing the confidence course was my hardest challenge at NSO because it challenged me to do things I wasn't comfortable with, causing me to grow as a person. Despite my fear of heights, I persisted in moving forward to finish the job at hand. During the confidence course, SSgt. Mazza told me "There are two options in life, you can either push forward and grow as a person or turn around and be the same person you showed up as... The choice is yours." SSgt. Mazz's wise remark made me stop and think. I realized that a leader must rise to a challenge and meet it head-on and that I couldn't lead people if I wasn't willing to do what I was asking of them. Upon completion of NSO, we moved into the battalion as 4th class midshipman and were welcomed to our new home at NC State.



NSI Drill Instructor leads candidates in PT.