



**Naval Reserve Officers  
Training Corps  
San Diego  
Consortium**

*Fall 2018 Newsletter*



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# From the Commanding Officer's Desk



Battalion family and friends,

The fall semester was filled with tremendous growth by all of our midshipmen and active duty. We welcomed a new class to begin their journey as future officers of the United States Navy and Marine Corps. We also said farewell to an outstanding group of newly commissioned Ensigns and 2nd LT's during a joint commissioning ceremony which was attended by over 700 guests (a record number). The Special Operations Commander (SOCOM), General Brow, flew in from Tampa, Florida for the sole purpose of giving the commissioning speech and to administer the Oath of Office.

The successes we experienced this semester were made possible by our hard-working active duty and civilian staff, as well as a collective drive towards excellence among the entire unit. As we look forward, we continue to focus on developing future world class leaders, able to achieve mission success by inspiring others and aptly navigate the most complex situations. We are building the future of the United States Navy and Marine Corps.

Captain Edwin D. Kaiser



# Semester in Review

## *MIDN Spotlight*



**MIDN 1/C Thomas Sun**  
**University of San Diego**  
**Behavioral Neuroscience**

As a first class midshipman, you are given the most leeway in the program, but also the most responsibility. Being a first class has provided me with opportunities to take on battalion level billets to further my professional development and receive valuable training in preparation for commissioning. It has allowed me to work closely with the NROTC staff and has given me a new appreciation for how much work they put into the unit.

During my final year thus far, there have been many mixed emotions. While I am nostalgic about my time in NROTC and not yet ready to leave the picturesque landscape that is USD, I am anxious with anticipation for what is to come. As a first class, it is important to maintain a healthy balance between enjoying your final year in San Diego, while simultaneously preparing for the burden of leadership you are about to take on.

As a senior, you are in a unique position to mentor the underclass midshipmen and watch over their development. By now, you no doubt have friends in all classes, including the active duty marines and sailors. While your personal achievements may be summed up in a slew of various ribbons and awards, the real legacy you have in the unit is displayed in the younger midshipmen that you impact.



**MIDN 2/C Jared Hunt**  
**University of California, San Diego**  
**Aerospace Engineering**

As a second class midshipman at NROTC San Diego, quite a bit changed from my previous two years in the unit. The most noticeable change is a greater emphasis on how lessons learned here will help us succeed once we are in the fleet as commissioned officers. As graduation approaches, each and every piece of advice, no matter how seemingly minuscule, becomes extraordinarily important.

While on summer cruise, we had the opportunity to work first hand with enlisted sailors who we will be expected to lead someday. The realization of this is humbling to say the least and magnifies the importance of holding ourselves to a higher standard. This year, far more than previous years, we are expected to work towards perfecting our leadership abilities through assigned battalion billets and informal mentorships. The more we absorb now, the better leaders we will be for our sailors in the fleet.

However, not everything has changed from previous years. A constant has been the bonds and lifelong friendships formed while working together to not only survive the trials and tribulations of NROTC and college, but to excel through them. There will continue to be challenges on our journey to commissioning, but every step of the way we will have each other to depend upon, as we have since New Student Orientation over two years ago. 2/C year is where it counts, and we are all working hard to be the best we can once we hit the fleet.

# Semester in Review

## *MIDN Spotlight*



**MIDN 3/C Natasha Skrypek**  
**University of San Diego**  
**Sociology**

A lot changed for me between my fourth class and third class years. As a 4/C, I did not have a billet or any real responsibility. Occasionally, I would volunteer for a color guard or other event, but even then I was never in charge of others. Regarding PT, I was not where I needed to be physically and everyone knew it. Overall, I was an unremarkable midshipman.

Now as a sophomore, I have a lot more responsibility than I ever had as a freshman. I am part of the 4/C Drill staff and assist in training the new fourth class. I am also a mentor for MIDN 4/C Delon. While I did not have a primary billet, these extra responsibilities helped me grow as a leader. My physical fitness improved since I came to the unit, but I constantly strive to do better. During the Fall semester, I started to focus on what I need to do to get an aviation contract. I got LASIK and began studying for the ASTB-E.

I constantly say, “there’s always room for improvement.” The Fall semester was a time I used to further prepare myself for what is to come. While I have come a long way since NSO, there’s still a lot I have to learn before I step in front of marines for the first time.



**MIDN 4/C Isabella Lanca**  
**University of San Diego**  
**Biology**

This past semester has been a fun and challenging experience. It began in August with New Student Orientation (NSO) at MCRD. Having never been exposed to JROTC in high school, entering NSO was my first encounter with military protocols and procedures. At first, I was a bit overwhelmed with the intensity of the instructors regarding military bearing, uniform wear, etc. Because it was my first exposure to marching and preparing uniforms, my fellow midshipmen who had prior experience helped me reach the expectation.

I am impressed with the camaraderie that my class is already beginning to display and I know it will only continue to grow. When school began, I found it a challenge to balance both academic classes and NROTC obligations. I have found that effective time management is vital to success in this program and will definitely help prepare me for future responsibilities as a Naval Officer.

This past semester, I have expanded my knowledge of the United States Navy through Naval Science courses, ship tours, and battalion events. For the approaching semester, I am looking forward to building upon the knowledge I have learned, as well as continuing friendships I have developed with my fellow midshipmen.



# New Student Orientation

## *MIDN 2/C James Pala*



New Student Orientation (NSO) is the mandatory introduction of the incoming 4/C midshipmen to NROTC San Diego and the United States Navy and Marine Corps. NSO gives the new students a basic understanding of customs and traditions of the military, as well as tools to be successful in NROTC and college. Led by MIDN 1/C Andrada and LT Fritts, the training evolution reached all of its goals and encountered few issues.

Both the new midshipmen and the entire NSO staff, performed admirably, giving their best effort. Lasting 4 days,

the training consisted of briefs, a Physical Readiness Test, and a Physical Training session. The new students also had the opportunity to learn drill movements and formations that emphasized teamwork and discipline.

Meanwhile, it laid the foundation for additional development of 4/C Drill practice later in the year. In addition, many 4/C midshipmen were able to get their swim qualification, a requirement for commissioning. The different training evolutions built up to the Oath Ceremony, led by Captain Kaiser, in which the new members of the battalion were sworn in as midshipmen and future officers of the United States Navy and Marine Corps.

# 9/11 Memorial Ceremony

*MIDN 3/C Chris Colandene*

On the 17th anniversary of September 11, 2001, the battalion took part in the 9/11 Memorial Ceremony hosted at the University of San Diego. Battalion members SSgt Perez, MIDN Kwon, MIDN Soriano, and MIDN Colandene stood watch over the 9/11 Memorial on the USD campus in a sign of honor, respect, and remembrance for those who were lost and gave their lives that day. The battalion members acknowledged each plane impact with reflective descriptions and salutes honoring all those who passed on that day.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, a small prayer was said by a university minister and the members of the battalion retired the colors. The ceremony was attended by other battalion members as well as staff, students, and people of the school's community. The collective observers of the ceremony reveal how this day has affected a multitude of people with various backgrounds and beliefs. The value of life and those lost that day will never be forgotten. We Remember.



“Even the smallest act of service, the simplest act of kindness, is a way to honor those we lost  
a way to reclaim that spirit of unity that followed 9/11.”

- President Barack Obama

“What separates us from the animals, what separates us from the chaos, is our ability to mourn  
people we’ve never met.”

- David Levithan



# Fleet Week - SDSU

*MIDN 3/C Isabella Cobarruvias*



The March On is an event that takes place during the Fleet Week celebration in San Diego. During Fleet Week, military families have the opportunity to attend a San Diego State University football game. The March

On takes place during the pregame and showcases future officers of all branches in the military. The midshipmen, officer candidates, active duty marines, and cadets enter the field, salute the flag for the national anthem, and exit the field in one unified formation. The annual event is planned and coordinated by the respective Navy, Army, and Air Force ROTC units in San Diego. The March On emphasizes community outreach and unity between the future officers of the military, regardless of their branch of service.



# Navy & Marine Corps' Birthday Ball

*MIDN 3/C Xavier Brenza*



After taking their seats in the grand ballroom, midshipmen, officer candidates, active duty marines, the unit's staff, and assembled family members and friends observed the traditional Marine Corps Birthday Ball ceremony. The ceremony included the reading and presentation of the Commandant of the Marine Corps' annual video message, and the time-honored reading of the First Birthday Message by Gen. John A. Lejeune. Messages from the Chief of Naval Operations were also delivered and the ceremonial bell was rung to welcome in the next year of naval excellence for both the Navy and Marine Corps.

The event was hosted by NROTC San Diego Commanding Officer, Captain Edwin D. Kaiser who welcomed Guest of



Honor, Brigadier General Stephen D. Sklenka, Commanding General of 1st Marine Logistics Group. BGen Sklenka delivered the evening's speech, which paid homage to the extraordinary efforts of troops and the war reporters who delivered their stories to the globe during World War I. The ceremonies were followed by the traditional cutting of the birthday cake and the night's festivities proceeded.

# Medal of Honor Run

*MIDN 1/C Tiffany Roberts*



Every year, Alpha Company conducts a Medal of Honor run for Physical Training in honor of the Marine Corps and Navy Medal of Honor recipients. The Medal of Honor is the highest United States military decoration a service member can be awarded for his or her acts of valor. We remembered the recipients by reading aloud their citations to both learn from them and to keep the history of the Marine Corps and Navy alive.



Alpha Company split into its two platoons and ran approximately three miles, stopping to read five citations along the route, and executing ten Marine Corps push-ups following the reading of each citation. This run showcases the Marine Corps' physical fitness and promotes the high standards and discipline of the Marine Corps.



# Aviation Club

*MIDN 1/C Logan Watkins*



The NROTC San Diego Aviation Club provides opportunities for midshipmen, marines, and officer candidates to be exposed to the various aircraft the Navy and Marine Corps have to offer. We have events to introduce the battalion to different aircraft and the officers who operate them. We also help educate club

members on the necessary steps to become a naval aviator, such as taking the ASTB, service selection, or getting a flight contract for marine options. Finally, we provide opportunities to get motivated about aviation. We host camaraderie building events such as a screening of *Top Gun* and go to public events such as the Miramar Air Show.

In the Fall 2018 semester, the Aviation Club had a total of six events including the Miramar Air Show, a short presentation and Q/A session with a Navy P-8 Pilot, an opportunity to operate a fleet H-60 simulator, an ASTB familiarization brief and study session, and tours of three separate Marine Corps squadrons on MCAS Miramar including F-18s, CH-53s, and C-130s. In total, about 150 marines, midshipmen and officer candidates attended the events put on by the Aviation Club in the Fall 2018 semester.

# Semper Fi Club

## *MIDN 3/C Emerson Giesbrecht*

This past semester the Semper Fi Club hosted the California State San Marcos Men's Basketball team at MCB Camp Pendleton and led them through the Combat Fitness Test (CFT) in order to build the team's camaraderie and the unit's relationship with the campus community. As volunteers, marines and

do anything we didn't do ourselves.

It was rather amusing to see everyday college students, with no fear of the wrath of a Gunnery Sergeant, hooting and hollering as they competed against one another for bragging rights. Upon finishing the maneuver under fire, the final grueling part of

another club event—a MECEP panel in order to transfer some of the experience and wisdom from the MECEPs to the midshipmen.

The panel consisted of several of Alpha Company's active duty marines who introduced themselves then shared which community they were from and a little bit about their career. This was a great opportunity for the midshipmen to peel back the curtain of the fleet Marine Corps, and get a small glimpse into their future.

One group spoke with a sergeant from the infantry who was more than willing to level with the midshipmen and tell it like it was. Many questions revolved around personal leadership strengths and flaws of the officers, as well as what areas we should prioritize in order to be successful officers. It was insightful to speak to an NCO who could share their personal experience, something that isn't always revealed in books. The MECEP panel was a solid opportunity to gain some exposure to the fleet that is best conveyed by marines themselves.



midshipmen of Alpha Company arrived early to set up the course for the test and gave the team a brief warm-up and walkthrough of the CFT.

Throughout the warm-up and CFT, marines and midshipmen participated alongside the team to show that they weren't making them

the test, one player bellowed "I. AM. A MARINE!"

By its conclusion, it was clear that the event left the volunteers and players alike with a smile on their face, if nothing else.

Following the close of the battalion's November drill, Alpha Company hosted



# Special Warfare Club

*MIDN 2/C Shane Hadley*

The SpecWar Club was more active than ever this past semester. We had four workouts every week, comprised of a field workout on Mondays, pool workout on Tuesdays, beach workout on Wednesdays, and another pool workout on Thursdays. We had additional workouts on the weekends, including conditioning runs up to eight miles long. On top of this, members of the club occasionally gathered on the weekends to play a competitive game called speedball.

Aside from workouts, the SpecWar Club took different opportunities to familiarize its members with the communities in which they are looking to enter. MIDN Salvador attended an EOD Exposure weekend in October, which took place at the Dive

School in Panama City, Florida. In addition, MIDN Norian, MIDN Daly, and MIDN Doris attended a SEAL Forum in December, which took place in Coronado. These programs were designed to challenge midshipmen, as well as teach them about the career fields that they are looking to enter.

Members of the club also met with active duty SEALs and EOD technicians on a few occasions to ask any questions or get valuable contact information. There were several opportunities to learn more about each of the Special Warfare communities, and everyone that took place found these experiences worthwhile.

3 of 15 selected to BUDS/SEAL training which is a 20% selection rate from SD NROTC out of 82 commissioning officers.



# Submarine Club

*MIDN 3/C Corey Sizemore*



Being part of NROTC San Diego gives Submarine Club a huge advantage that other units across the country may not have. Naval Base Point Loma is within driving distance so we are able to schedule awesome events such as submarine tours, Under Water Rescue Command tours, and monthly luncheons with current and retired submarine officers.

On top of these events, we also have info briefs going over what it's like to be a nuclear officer (Sub or SWO Nuke). The briefs discuss how to stand out as a midshipman and be more competitive for the Nuclear Officer selection board.

The NROTC San Diego Submarine Club hosted a variety of different events this past semester. We kicked it off with an informative Q&A starring our very own ENS Jenkins and ENS Woestman. LT Lee started this event with a short run down of the application process all midshipmen go through to become a Nuclear Officer. ENS Jenkins and ENS Woestman then shared with us their personal experiences and how they prepared for the numerous interviews. This was a great event for our club because it gave our members an accurate image of what they might go through if they choose to go into the nuclear community.



Another event we hosted was Sub Club Movie Night, which was a great way to bring together our club and the unit. Together we watched *The Hunt for Red October*, while chowing down on some pizza. Additionally, the Naval Submarine League hosts a luncheon and invites our unit to meet active duty and retired Submarine Officers. While enjoying a delicious meal, we have the opportunity listen to high ranking officers speak about a variety of different topics.



# Surface Warfare Club

## *MIDN 1/C Katie Dallmus*

During the Fall 2018 semester, the Surface Warfare (SWO) Club held numerous events to provide the battalion more information and access to the SWO community. Midshipmen, Officer Candidates, and MECEPs alike attended two ship tours to learn more about different platforms and their different roles in the surface Navy. Such ship tours provide students insight into the onboard systems and living conditions that they will experience in the fleet. This semester, students toured the USS Ralph Johnson (DDG-114), a destroyer, and the USS

Portland (LPD-27), an amphibious transport dock ship.

In addition to ship tours, the SWO Club hosted a question and answer dinner with LT Delavega and LT Arnold. Students were able to ask them questions about their experiences as SWOs and discuss the diverse career options found in Surface Warfare.

SWO Club also held a movie night event to build a sense of community within the club by watching the movie *Captain Philips*.

The SWO Club took advantage of NROTC's COVE

(Conning Officer Virtual Environment) ship handling simulator to practice their ship driving skills, as well as learn specific techniques employed during events such as UNREP (Underway Replenishment) and man overboard. Early use of the COVE simulator helps build confidence in ship driving that will be useful both on summer cruises and in their future careers in the fleet. The COVE simulator is identical to ones they will use during the Basic Division Officer's Course (BDOC), should they choose to enter the surface warfare community.



# Fall 2018 Commissioning



## United States Navy

ENS Petrus Boets  
ENS Joshua Canty  
ENS Patrick Farney  
ENS Robert Jenkins  
ENS Caleb Kramer  
ENS Jewel Mendiola  
ENS Sylvester Schaner  
ENS Konrad Woestman

## United States Marine Corps

2nd LT Phillip Haly  
2nd LT Bryanna Kessler  
2nd LT Augustine Onyango  
2nd LT Steffawn Payne  
2nd LT Richard Zarate

***Congratulations to our newest Ensigns and Second Lieutenants!***





## Unit Staff

CAPT Edwin Kaiser, USN, Commanding Officer

CDR Jason Langham, USN, Executive Officer

CAPT Kenneth Vingua, USMC, Marine Officer Instructor

LT Zachary Arnold, USN, Senior Officer Instructor

LT Matthew DelaVega, USN, Junior Officer Instructor

LT Philip Lee, USN, Sophomore Officer Instructor

LT Danielle Fritts, USN, Freshman Officer Instructor

LT Kelly Wehle, USN, SDSU Officer Instructor

LT Casey Arnold, USN, SDSU Officer Instructor

GYSGT Tommie Tate III, USMC, Assistant Marine Officer Instructor

Chief Joshua Grant, Supply Officer

Mr. Oscar Albano, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Rodolfo Espiritu, Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Brianna Bouton, Administrative Assistant

Amanda Ford, Supply Assistant

Sara Saragosa, Executive Assistant



# Upcoming Events

**19-21 February**  
Ship Selection

**16-17 March**  
SULE

**20 March**  
Combat Leadership Panel

**23 March**  
Battalion Drill / Sports Day with RADM Bernacchi

**03 April**  
Pass in Review

**13 April**  
Final Drill / Awards Ceremony

**27 April**  
Sea Trials

**24 May**  
Spring Commissioning Ceremony