



LIBERTY BATTALION **ARMY ROTC NEWSLETTER**

Spring 2023





Letter from the PMS & SMI

It is our pleasure to share an update on the Liberty Battalion, the direction the program is moving, and how our community partners and alumni can continue to assist and shape the future of the program.

We are quickly nearing the commissioning of our largest cohort in over 11 years. Our Mission Set 23 consists of 28 Cadets that will commission on 6 May, 21 May, and 20 August respectively at Northeastern, Boston College, and Wentworth Institute of Technology. I am extremely proud of the organizational leadership these senior Cadets have exhibited over the past year in making the program better and developing those Cadets coming behind them. Cadet leadership has implemented an internal mentorship program, leveraged alumni in that effort, and created holistic health and wellness events to take care of each other. Each of them are truly at the forefront of the Army's new slogan, Be All You Can Be.

We are fortunate to have a stable group of dedicated Cadre that continue to develop talented Cadets into leaders of character. Our center of gravity for the Liberty Battalion is the Cadre. Without them, nothing is possible. Thank you MAJ Grady Stebbins, CPT Sean Fitzgerald, SFC Andrew Wilson, SFC Mario Garza, and Mr. Dave Letellier. Welcome to MAJ Compagnone and thank you for the mentorship and coaching you are providing our compo 2 and 3 cadets. Congratulations to both CPT Fitzgerald and MAJ Stebbins for their selection to Major and Lieutenant Colonel respectively. Our stable core of civilians is the glue that keeps our program on track allowing our military Cadre to do what they do. Mr. Scott Lyons continues to lead the enrollment, recruitment, and scholarship efforts. Mr. Bob Dallaire repeatedly receives accolades for running the best supply operations in the brigade, while Mrs. Sheila Hutchins takes care of each and every Cadet action. She is the epitome of taking care of Soldiers.

The Cadre and Cadets of Liberty Battalion continue to be good partners in the community and on campus and facilitate opportunities for alumni engagement. From supporting local sports teams with color guard, Veteran's Day events, and local parades, Liberty BN Cadets and Cadre are making it happen. This semester we had the pleasure of bringing in alumni that are attending Naval ILE and War College for brown bag lunch leader development sessions. If there are alumni out in the field or local to Boston, feel free to reach out to us. Lastly, the recruiting environment is becoming increasingly difficult. If you have an enlisted or ROTC referral, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

I wish everyone a safe and successful summer and look forward to seeing you on the high ground.

Leading with Grace and Honor,
LTC Brian Slotnick and MSG Jesus Salas

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Cadet Summer Training (CST): Advanced Camp

Each summer, Cadets who have just completed their third (or fourth) year of college head to Fort Knox Kentucky to complete CST, Cadet Summer Training. Once you arrive, in khakis and a polo, which is a Cadet staple, you are in-processed. Over the course of the next two to three weeks, you complete events such as the ACFT, M4 qualification, chem training, and land navigation before heading to the field. I attended 2nd Regiment, so I arrived at the beginning of June.

On the first night there, we had a fire drill at 2 AM. I woke up very confused, and managed to throw my phone off of the top bunk onto the concrete floor below me and completely crack the whole thing. Luckily, after that absolute tragedy, things managed to turn around, and I successfully took the Army Combat Fitness Test, which was one of the first things we did, though dead lifting at 3:00am is not something I had planned on ever doing in my life.

I think one of the most intense parts of camp for me was the stress event at the shooting range. Having grouped and zeroed the previous day, we rucked to the pop-up ranges in small groups. Once there, we were rushed to drop our rucks and prepare to shoot as quickly as possible. I was incredibly stressed (per their intent) and got onto the range feeling terrified and out of breath. We had to shoot Table V, which is a faster version of Table VI that we were going to qualify on, and it was our first exposure to the pop-up targets at camp. It was the first time I had ever been rushed or under pressure at the range, so it was a very eye-opening experience for me, trying to remember all the aspects of shooting, but in a high pressure environment.

Another new one for me was the gas chamber. I was not a fan. It made me feel like my entire body was stinging. When they made us take off our masks and sing twinkle twinkle little star, I thought my throat was going to close, but I survived. Definitely made me have a higher appreciation for the chemical branch.

CDT Elizabeth Ergil (MSIV)



CADETS conquer their fears on the Rappel Tower

The most stressful day of activities for me besides the field was land nav. While I ended up being able to find my points, I did exactly what they tell you not to do, and got lost on the tank trail, which exists on your map, but is not a fully functional trail in real life. After stumbling around for at least an hour, I was able to find my point thanks to the group of Cadets doing the same thing. I made it back in time, so overall it was a success, but for a while, I wasn't sure, and I was absolutely exhausted by the time I returned.

My favorite part of the garrison phase was definitely the obstacle course and rappel tower, because it was something I knew I could do, and everyone was generally having a good time. We tied our own Swiss seats, and completed several rappelling progressions, including one against the tower wall, and one with no wall support.

Overall, CST was definitely an interesting experience. I made some friends, and had a pretty good time in the field. I learned some great MRE hacks which I will be continuing to use and determined that hot sauce can make every single meal bearable. At the end of CST, I had the best milkshake of my life at Sonic, and give the overall experience a 4.75/10 because you can't live on the top bunk for 30 days and give the experience above a 5. I was exposed to new things, and got to see how my training faired up compared to kids across the nation (I'd say pretty well). I enjoyed representing Liberty Battalion, and have already planned to see some of people I met while at BOLC this summer!

Cadet Summer Training (CST)

Advanced Camp, Field Training

I'm sure all who ask about camp are sick of people saying this, but I want to preface my bit by saying experiences throughout the field training exercises (FTX) are very cadre dependent. That being said, in general, each of the three FTXs follow the same path. The first phase, Wolverine, also known as the crawl phase, is a very VERY slow run through of lanes. I have heard many say this and I too agree, but Wolverine is probably the worst phase just because it drags on for so long and you are repeating the exact same objective for each iteration. Within this phase, all of the lanes are essentially Cadre lead, although they won't be your own Cadre. Each day, you do about 2 missions and for each of those missions you do 3 iterations. The first iteration is a walk through with Cadre (when I mean walk through I mean step by step), and the other 2 are with different Cadet leadership, again with the assistance of the Cadre. This is one of the best times to discuss and try out the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) you and your platoon have created. This is the first time you will really be seeing your whole platoon work together, so take note of what works and what you may need to look out for.

The second phase is Panther, also known as the walk phase and first graded FTX. This is where Cadre become more hands off. Take everything you learned from Wolverine and apply what you learned to these lanes. Although you may want to do things the way we learned at Liberty BN, it's more important to see what your graders are looking for as some of the things we have learned may not be the way other programs run things.



CDT KO, CDT WORK, and MSG SALAS together at CST

CDT Kayli Ko (MSIV)

Lastly, you have the run phase also known as Grizzly. Grizzly is the most fast paced FTX with no real Cadre guidance. The Cadre will most likely be grading harsher during this time as you have had plenty of experience running through lanes the past few weeks. If you're in leadership, make sure you take advantage of the skill sets each individual has. You want to make sure you have a good point man, good radio telephone operator (RTO), and a good medic as you will potentially be able to choose who you want to fill those roles. Additionally, if you are not in a leadership role, and you are confident in one of those 3 positions, go for them. Once people realize that you are skilled in that position they will continuously try to pick you and peer rankings will go higher.

One of my favorite parts of camp was the last Grizzly lane. All of us were exhausted, soaking wet from the rain, and had been graded, so this lane didn't really count. That being said, our Cadre let us volunteer for these positions prefacing that it wasn't going to be graded. As a result, the "jokester" of the platoon volunteered and everyone was on board. Once he was given the mission of an attack at the top of a hill, it only took 20 minutes for him to dish out his operations order (OPORD). During this time, he basically gave a 5 minute war speech to the whole platoon and finished with, "we step off in 30 sec... FOLLOW ME!" and everyone shouts ready to attack. Our plan was for our entire platoon to charge up the hill at once, shouting and firing with our "notional bayonets". Everyone was so excited and it was the fastest we had moved all day. Although we disregarded everything we had learned from the past 3 years about tactics, it was a great way to cap off our time in the field. This story ties into my takeaway from camp. Camp is truly what you make of it. There will definitely be some lows, but try to get to know the people around you. You will be with them for the next few weeks and it makes things a lot more enjoyable, and a lot less stressful when you have people around you that you can lean on and joke with.

Air Assault School

CDT Quincy Sasson:

I had the privilege of attending the Army's Air Assault Course at Army National Guard Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning, GA this past summer. Air Assault School is an 11-day course where Soldiers, and Cadets, are trained and expected to become proficient in the Army's major rotary winged aircrafts, sling load operations, and rappelling. It has become infamous for being the Army's toughest 11 days where attention to detail is of the utmost importance.

The Air Assault course begins with the arrival day and in processing day. Before even being considered a student in the Air Assault School, Soldiers must first pass Day Zero where potential trainees will be tested on their physical capabilities with a 2-mile run in ACUs to be completed in under 18 minutes as well as a 9-part obstacle course with intermittent smoke sessions in the gravel pits following completion of each obstacle. Day Zero is where most Air Assault students drop out. Potential admitted students to the Air Assault School are allowed to fail one obstacle excluding the two major ones, the 'Tough One' and the 'Confidence Climb,' which eliminated almost 80 of the 340 Soldiers vying for chance at earning their air assault wings. In addition to the 2-mile run and the obstacle course, there was also a complete packing list inspection on Day Zero-- if any items were missing or forgotten in the barracks, you'd be immediately dropped from the school. Future packing list inspections were still present; however, single item spot checks were far more common. The nature of the impending course was exactly this: constant and rigorous attention to detail.

Following successful completion of Day Zero, Soldiers are admitted into Air Assault School and receive a personalized 3-digit number to be identified by for the remainder of the school by the Air Assault Sergeants (black hats). After Day Zero, there was little celebration and even less rest, early the next morning, the first phase began. The Combat Operations phase consisted of mostly classroom learning regarding the history of Air Assault Operations, the Army's rotary winged aircrafts, and their armaments, hand and arm signals, sling loading equipment, MedEvac operations, pathfinder operations, as well as the occasional smoke session. At the end of phase one, there was a written test in addition to a practical test on hand and arm signals and phase two was just over the horizon.



CDT QUINCY SASSON
at Air Assault School

Phase two, Sling Load Operations, is generally considered the most difficult phase of Air Assault School due to the sheer amount of attention to detail required. Beginning with an early 6-mile ruck to be completed in under 90 minutes, instructors jump right into additional classroom learning highlighting sling load ops as well as hands-on sling load inspections.

Sling loads refer to the various loads that can be hooked to the belly of a helicopter, equipped with cargo hooks and securely transported. Phase two was concluded with students receiving their rappelling gear which included a set of rappel gloves and a Swiss seat.

After completing, possibly, the most difficult parts of Air Assault School, it was time for some fun and excitement. On day seven, the first day of rappel phase, there was a company 4-mile run at a 9-minute pace, whose relatively slow pace was brightened with the sound of trainee lead cadences. Throughout the Rappel Phase, smoke sessions were a lot less frequent, aside from rifle PT, as the black hats wanted to ensure that safety procedures were followed to our utmost ability. Free fall from 30 to 90 feet due to a deficient Swiss seat or from a fatal hook-up would lead to serious bodily injury and unfortunately nearly happened to a fellow trainee if it weren't for the black hats' attentive hands. Rappelling from the UH-60 was by far the most memorable experience at Air Assault, between manning the rappel lines as fellow trainees came tumbling down the last 15 feet of rope, the continuous chirping of helicopter blades as they rose to 90 feet and back down again, and watching the psychedelic flow of grass 90 feet below due to the rotor wash.

Rappel Phase as well as Air Assault School concluded on day 10 with a 12-mile ruck march and packing list inspection, training area clean-up, and graduation ceremony. Of the roughly 340 soldiers present on in processing day, just over 180 remained by the conclusion of graduation day with a pair of silver wings. The Air Assault course, like most other army training schools, was designed for trainees to pick up useful skills and ultimately pass; attention to detail, preparation, and mental endurance are all 100% necessary, but the amounts required of each are no doubt present in each ROTC Cadet. Air Assault was a worthwhile experience and one that I wish the best of luck for future Cadets ready to take on the challenge the toughest 11 days in the Army, Aerosol!



CDT SASSON rappelling out of a Black Hawk

What's it Like Being a Student Athlete in ROTC?

CDT Shakirah Ketant (MSIII)

I am CDT Shakirah Ketant, a junior studying Psychology at Emmanuel College. During my enrollment in the ROTC program, I simultaneously participated in two varsity sports, basketball and track and field. Thus, leaving me to balance three major things: sports, academics, and ROTC. Through the years I have learned to balance all three, giving me the opportunity to become an even more well-rounded student, athlete, and Cadet.

My weekdays tend to look the same; the days usually feature an ROTC related activity, classes, practice, and on occasion, work. My days begin with PT or LLAB. After the activity is over, I walk back over to Emmanuel's campus and go through my classes for the day. After the end of my classes, I will see the athletic trainers in order to get ready for practice for that day. Practice usually begins around 3:30 PM. During track season, my weekdays are about the same; however, our practices begin later than basketball does. Once practices are over, I will usually go eat with my friends or teammates in the dining hall. Afterwards, I will end my days completing any homework, studying, or readings. The basketball season is a lot more strenuous than the track season, only because we can have up to 2-3 games a week, as opposed to track, where we practice all week and have one track meet on a Saturday. Gamedays require a little bit more focus and attention because we often end up traveling to schools that are hours away from us. In order to stay on top of my work, I try to get things done prior to our departure, but if not, then I complete my work or study on the bus. My overall experience with balancing all three of these things has been the development of a strong work ethic, time management, and maintaining a balanced schedule. The biggest and most consistent challenge that I have faced throughout this process has been getting overwhelmed by the number of things that occur at once and trying to bring my best to every arena. What I have found in moments like that is the importance of the Cadre members of Liberty Battalion that have been able to help me as well as my peers in both ROTC and at Emmanuel.

The best advice that I could give for any future student athletes that want to join ROTC is to learn how to balance your time in a way that best fits you and your schedule. Furthermore, do not neglect studying the tactics we learn for ROTC, allot enough time to learn and understand these things and do not be afraid to lean on Cadre or peers in the program for help. And lastly, these years fly by, so enjoy every single moment!



CDT KETANT at the CFTX



CDT KETANT at Emmanuel College



CDT KETANT in action at a basketball game

Army Medical Opportunities

CDT Thomas O'Rourke (MSIV)

My name is CDT Thomas O'Rourke, and I will be attending the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine beginning in July 2023. I come from a family devoted to public service, where serving those in the community around me is second nature. As a high schooler, I started a program, "Snow Warriors," through which my team of students would shovel snow from the homes of elderly veterans. I found great satisfaction in helping these veterans as they always had a story to tell. For similar reasons, I've also found tremendous satisfaction in serving the Boston community as an EMT with BCEMS as well as an oncology patient care technician at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. As an undergraduate, I've discovered that I deeply appreciate learning about all aspects of my surrounding communities and serving them to the best of my ability. When I commission as an Army officer in May 2023, the military community will be a part of my new home. My career goal is to serve as a physician in the Army, where I will work to ensure that service members and their families receive appropriate preventative and diagnostic medical care.

Army ROTC has helped give me the chance to pursue this goal. I've always had an interest in medicine, but being in ROTC inspired me to take a deeper look into military medicine. I began listening to a podcast called WarDocs, led by two retired Army physicians who bring a new military physician on each week to discuss their journey and experiences. Listening to these stories was inspiring, but they weren't enough for me to make such a big commitment to the military yet. Our battalion had a retired medical service corps colonel give a talk on her experiences with running the Javits Center in NYC for a COVID-19 relief operation. I was once again inspired, and reached out to her to ask about potential shadowing opportunities. She connected me with Keller Army Community Hospital at West Point, where I was then able to shadow a physician in the ER. It is there that I found a mentor, Dr. Neomie Friedman, who has played a pivotal role both in solidifying my desire to become an Army physician and in giving me sage advice and confidence when it came time to interview for medical school.

The leadership education I've received through ROTC has laid a strong foundation for my future as a physician. The principles of leadership that apply to the battlefields of war also apply to medicine. I will undoubtedly find myself leading teams of doctors, nurses, PAs, NPs, CNAs, etc. My missions could vary from taking care of a wounded soldier directly off the battlefield to setting up a vaccination clinic in a rural American town. I'll also serve as a leader for my patients and my peers. One aspect of being a military professional that was emphasized to me throughout ROTC is physical fitness. In the Army, lack of fitness makes it challenging to garner respect from your battle buddies. A similar concept goes for physicians. A physician who prioritizes high-quality nutrition, sleep, and exercise for themselves will be better suited to take care of their patients than one who fails to. As a future military physician, physical fitness is critical, especially if I want to lead by example for the fittest population in the United States. I look forward to the experiences that will come both in the Army and civilian world as a physician.



CDT O'ROURKE assisting with Range Day operations



CDT O'ROURKE, CDT BYRNES, CDT WANG, and CDT KNIGHT at the CFTX

Green to Gold Program

CDT Derick Sizemore (MSIV)

My name is Derick Sizemore, and I am a Green-to-Gold Cadet at Northeastern University. The Green-to-Gold program is designed for enlisted soldiers who want to transition into officer roles through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). Before joining this program, I served as an Information Technology Specialist (25B) and later as a Career Recruiter (79R) in the United States Army.

My military journey began as an Information Technology Specialist (25B), stationed in South Korea and Alaska. I was responsible for maintaining and troubleshooting the Army's computer systems and networks. This experience taught me the importance of clear communication, teamwork, and adaptability, as the fast-paced technological landscape demanded constant learning and flexibility. I had the opportunity to earn industry certifications with CompTIA and Cisco. I also had the opportunity to complete training at the Northern Warfare Training Center and earn my Arctic tab.

After completing my tour in Alaska, I transitioned into a Career Recruiter (79R) role based in Boston. In this position, I was responsible for identifying, recruiting, and retaining high-quality candidates for the Army. This role allowed me to develop strong interpersonal and leadership skills as I guided potential recruits through the enlistment process and helped shape the future of the Army.

My decision to pursue the Green-to-Gold program was driven by my passion for public policy and my desire to contribute more significantly to the strategic direction of the Army. Northeastern University, a world-class institution, offered the perfect opportunity to deepen my knowledge of public policy and leadership.



CADET SIZEMORE during his time in Alaska



Transitioning from an enlisted soldier to an officer through the Green-to-Gold program allowed me to build on my existing military experience while gaining new skills to make me a more effective leader. Becoming an officer would provide me with a broader perspective and enable me to shape better the policies and strategies that impact the lives of those who serve.

At Northeastern University, I have immersed myself in the study of public policy and leadership. My academic journey has provided me with a strong foundation in the principles of public administration, policy analysis, and decision-making. Additionally, the university's focus on experiential learning and its connections to various industries and organizations have given me invaluable real-world experience and networking opportunities.

With commissioning just a few short weeks ahead, I have reflected on my time in Liberty Battalion. ROTC helped me develop my leadership and military skills. The Army emphasizes the importance of strong moral character, physical fitness, and professional competence in future officers. After my time here, I feel prepared for the challenges ahead as a future AG officer. My ultimate goal is to utilize the knowledge and experience I gained during my career so far to create meaningful change within the Army and contribute to its ongoing success.

My journey from an enlisted soldier to a Green-to-Gold Cadet at Northeastern University has been both challenging and rewarding. My experiences as an Information Technology Specialist and Career Recruiter have shaped me into the person I am today, and I am excited to continue growing as a leader and public policy expert. I look forward to making a lasting impact on the Army and the lives of the Soldiers who serve our nation.

Range Day

CDT Margot Sonia (MSI)

The Fall 2022 Range Day took place at Camp Edwards, Cape Cod. Cadets braved the high winds and frigid temperatures to learn and train on weapon safety and marksmanship. Marksmanship is a key component of ROTC. When Cadets go to Advanced Camp they will have to undergo a marksmanship qualification using the standard issue M4 Carbine, which will contribute to their OML ranking. Due to the availability of resources, all MS levels were welcome to attend range day this fall.

Prior to Range Day, Cadets received instructional classes on weapon safety and the fundamentals of marksmanship. Key points were briefly reviewed after weapons draw by MSIVs. Cadets were also given the opportunity to practice and receive advice on their shooting positions.

Cadets took their weapons to a 25m range to configure and confirm their shot grouping and zero their sights. This means shooting a group of rounds and then adjusting the sights according to where the group landed on the target. We used only iron sights to aim and shoot for the day. At Advanced Camp, Cadets will also utilize red dot optics. MSIVs and Cadre provided Cadets with instruction during the zeroing process to help them obtain a more condensed grouping. Key fundamentals such as body position, breathing, and trigger squeeze can greatly affect consistency, so it is important Cadets find the best strategies that work for them.



CADETS prepared for a great day at the range!

After their weapons had been zeroed, Cadets moved to the 300m qualifying range. The qualification consists of 40 rounds in which they start in the standing position, then go to the prone unsupported, prone supported, kneeling supported, and finally, standing supported. The targets pop up at different distances varying from 50m to 300m along the range and they must hit 23 of them to qualify. To do this, Cadets must master smooth magazine and position changes, as well as keep in mind the arc of their bullets as they aim at different distance targets.

Cadets were also given the chance to take part in hands-on familiarization with the M240B and M249 weapons' systems. These are both belt-fed gas-operated machine guns. The Ranger Challenge team was given extra time to focus on the steps to assemble these weapon systems and perform their respective functions checks, as they would have to perform them at their Ranger Challenge competition.

The Battalion ended the day by doing thorough cleaning of all weapons before heading back to campus.

Cadets and Cadre worked together to remain focused and ensure a safe range. The day was overall effective in giving underclassmen Cadets a foundation of knowledge and skill while helping MSIIIs prepare for qualifying at camp this summer.



CPT FITZGERALD issuing a safety brief



MAJ STEBBINS provides advice to a cadet

Battalion Fall FTX

CDT Louis Mills (MSII)

During the Fall 2023 FTX (Field Training Exercise), Liberty Battalion cadets were tasked with land navigation, STXs, and experienced an FLRC. An STX (Situational Training Exercise) lane is a type of military training exercise that involves simulating real-world combat scenarios to help Soldiers develop and test their tactical skills. The format and goals of an STX lane can vary depending on the unit and the specific training objectives, but in ROTC, it involves a platoon size element conducting a mission while being in a simulated combat environment. The Fall 2023 field training exercise (FTX) consisted of a number of STX lanes such as an ambush, react to fire, and raid to name a few. The atmosphere of an STX is tense and exciting as all levels of ROTC Cadets are given tasks and times to execute their orders. The time we spend in the training environment running lanes allows Cadets to implement the skills and knowledge they have been learning in the classroom.

Land navigation is the process of determining your current location and navigating to a desired destination (point) using maps, compasses, and other tools. It involves using a combination of skills, including map reading, terrain association, and a pace count, to determine your location, plan a route, and stay on course while getting from point to point. During the first day, Cadets completed two rounds of land navigation, once in the day, and once at night. All Cadets are given four points in day and two in the night, with the goal of finding at least three in the day and one at night. As the FTX was my first time doing land navigation, me and another Cadet were paired up and we managed to find five out of six points given to us throughout the day.

The most memorable experience of the weekend for me was the Field Leadership Reaction Course (FLRC). During this activity, our group of underclass Cadets were divided into smaller teams, and we had to work together to solve complex, puzzle-like challenges that required effective communication, teamwork, and physical strength. Although it was mentally and physically demanding, the FLRC provided a valuable opportunity for the underclassmen to demonstrate their leadership skills, while also allowing us to build stronger relationships with each other. Overall, it was an excellent team-building exercise that helped us develop critical skills for our future military careers.



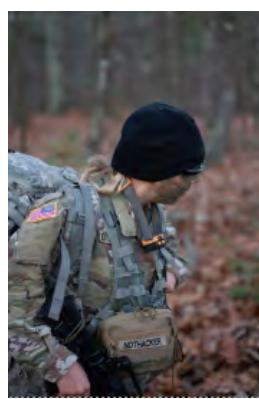
CADETS transport their notional casualty during the initial stress event



CDT MILLS completes an obstacle at the FLRC



CADETS plotting their points during night land navigation



CDT NOTHACKER examines her surroundings during an STX lane



A micro terrain model made by cadets during the planning phase of their mission

ROTC Project GO

CDT Amy Cantu (MSIII)

Project GO (Global Officer) is a program dedicated to the study of critical languages and culture, created and funded by the Defense Language and National Security Education Office where Army, Air Force, and Navy cadets have the opportunity to study one of 19 different languages, either domestically or abroad.

I was lucky enough to receive a scholarship from Project GO to study Russian in Lithuania through the College of William and Mary. Unfortunately, the program was moved domestically due to safety concerns about the Russia-Ukraine war. Despite this setback, the program was still an extremely rewarding, educational, and fun experience! The month and a half long summer program took place in Williamsburg, VA at the College of William and Mary and we lived in the dorms for the duration. The program covered our meals, housing, education, and travel. There were a total of nine Cadets in the program from a variety of schools across the country.

We had Russian classes 5 days a week from 9 am to 4pm. The professors were extremely helpful and by the end of the program our language skills had improved immensely. On the weekend, we went on cultural excursions in the area where we saw Russian art exhibits and went to museums. One weekend, we went to Washington D.C. where we had the opportunity to tour the Pentagon and listen to a former Foreign Affairs Officer discuss her experience in the Army and how her foreign language knowledge assisted her in her career. Although the program was domestic instead of abroad, it did not impede on our experience and what we had the opportunity to learn in the program. I would highly recommend this program to any Cadet interested in learning a new language and experiencing a different culture. I also believe that this program is incredibly beneficial in terms of preparing Cadets to be globally minded officers and possibly preparing them for opportunities in the area of service. Not only did my language skills improve, but so did my cross-cultural skills as well.



CDT CANTU (5th from left in bottom image) and her fellow cadets at various Project GO events

MSIV BRANCH AND COMPONENT RESULTS



Theophilus Addomills

Northeastern University

Master of Science in Organizational Leadership

Active Duty: Ordnance

Favorite quote: "Airborne All The Way!" Favorite Army memory: Airborne operation - jumping into France.



Tommy Bushway

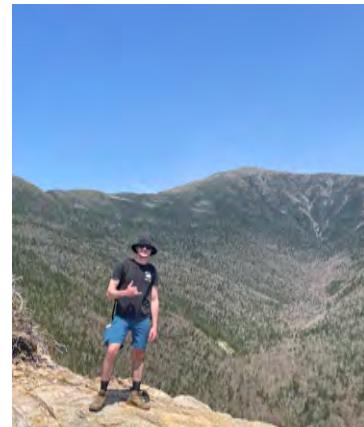
Wentworth Institute of Technology

Bachelor's in Cybersecurity

Active Duty: Signal Branch Detail Armor

Favorite quote: "LFG" - Christopher Hughes

Favorite memory: The ACo company run along the Charles during a snowstorm.



Cooper Byrnes

Boston College

Bachelor's in Film Studies

Active Duty: Transportation

Favorite quote: "What's...tatoes, precious?" - Gollum

Favorite memory: Mossing Cullity at Ultimate Frisbee sports PT



Alexandria Cresci

Boston College

Bachelor's in Biology

Army Reserve: Signal

Favorite quote: "Bitterness keeps you from flying. Always stay humble & kind." -Tim McGraw

Favorite memory: Watching my sister get contracted



MSIV BRANCH AND COMPONENT RESULTS



Ryan Cullity

Boston College

Bachelor's in Finance

Active Duty: Military Intelligence Branch
Detail Infantry

Favorite quote: "If you ain't first, you're last." -
Ricky Bobby

Favorite memory: Breakfast after PT



Liz Ergil

Northeastern University

Bachelor of Science in Cell and
Molecular Biology

Active Duty: Medical Services

Favorite quote: "That slaps" - LTC Slotnick
Favorite memory: Steast Brekkie



Will Ganim

Northeastern University

Bachelor's in Finance, Entrepreneurship
& New Venture Management

Active Duty: Infantry

Favorite quote: "When we are no longer able to
change a situation, we are challenged to change
ourselves." - Victor Frankl

Favorite memory: SGT Scotina handing me a
McDonalds cheeseburger at mile 23 of the 2019
Boston Marathon Tough Ruck



Dean Hanlon

Boston College

Bachelor's in Philosophy

Active Duty: Military Intelligence Branch
Detail Infantry

Favorite quote: "The only man who never makes a
mistake is the man who never does anything." -
Theodore Roosevelt

Favorite memory: Freshman Year Breakfast



MSIV BRANCH AND COMPONENT RESULTS



James Heavey

Northeastern University

Bachelor's in International Affairs

Army Reserve: Military Intelligence

Favorite quote: "He who serves his fellows is, of all his fellows, greatest." - E. Urner Goodman

Favorite memory: CCTLT at Ft Bragg!



Gage Higgins

Boston College

Bachelor's in International Studies and History

Active Duty: Military Intelligence Branch Detail Infantry

Favorite quote: "And I need not tell you that character counts for a great deal more than either intellect or body in winning success in life." - Teddy Roosevelt

Favorite memory: Seeing Tom Lick's hand extend out of his sleep system grasping at a Hi-Chew in the middle of the night during the CFTX last year.



Christopher Hughes

Wenworth Institute of Technology

Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering

Active Duty: Engineer

Favorite quote: "Fudge Brownies" - Mr. Lettelier

Favorite memory: The Spring 2023 CFTX; it was my last FTX in ROTC and I got to spend it with the ACo command team and we had an enjoyable and successful weekend at a rainy and muddy Camp Edwards.



Matthew Knight

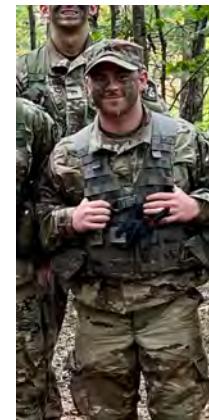
Boston College

Master of Business Administration

Army National Guard: Military Police

Favorite quote: "We must all either wear out or rust out, every one of us. My choice is to wear out." -Theodore Roosevelt

Favorite memory: Runs around the Reservoir during ACFTs



MSIV BRANCH AND COMPONENT RESULTS



Kayli Ko

Boston College

Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and Applied Psychology

Active Duty: Adjutant General

Favorite quote: "Don't look at your feet to see if you are doing it right. Just dance." - Anne Lamott

Favorite memory: When we were all stuck and miserable together at our MSIII FTX to the point where we were all delusional and laughing at everything.



Nicole Kraemer

Northeastern University

Bachelor of Arts in Communications & Media Studies

Army Reserve: Adjutant General

Favorite quote: "All that I know is no matter how far away, this is the place we were made." - Maisie Peters

Favorite memory: Contracting next to my battle buddy at second year orientation.



Tom Lick

Boston College

Bachelor's in Management

Active Duty: Signal

Favorite quote: "There are a million geniuses in the world. Be the one people want to work with."

Favorite memory: Jumping out of planes!



Kieran Mullen

Northeastern University

Bachelor's in Computer Engineering

Army National Guard: Cyber

Favorite quote: "Grace and honor"

Favorite memory: Finishing the 12 mile at camp and being done



MSIV BRANCH AND COMPONENT RESULTS



Tommy O'Rourke

Boston College

Bachelor of Science in Biology

Army National Guard: Medical Services

Favorite quote: "You could pull a diamond out of that rear" - Agus

Favorite memory: Watching the sunrise on FTXs



Cameron Rocheford

Northeastern University

Bachelor of Science in Economics

Army National Guard: Field Artillery

Favorite quote: "Leave the artillerymen alone, they are an obstinate lot" - Napoleon Bonaparte

Favorite memory: Starting a pretty big forest fire from an arty sim at CFTX 2022 and losing all our potable water.



Derick Tyler Sizemore

Northeastern University

Master of Public Administration

Active Duty: Adjutant General

Favorite quote: "Gentlemen, you can't fight in here! This is the War Room." - Dr. Strangelove

Favorite memory: Laughing about the rainy days after LLAB.



Agustin Tornabene

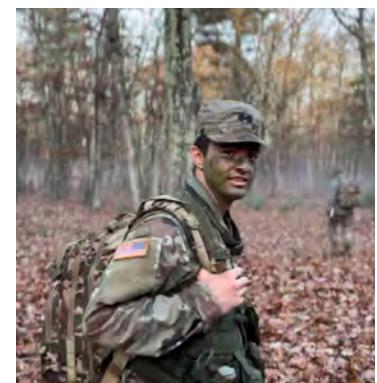
Boston College

Bachelor's in Political Science and Islamic Civilization

Active Duty: Field Artillery

Favorite quote: "Books and bullets have their own destinies" - Ernst Junger

Favorite memory: Scott Etchechurry's mid-run mishap



MSIV BRANCH AND COMPONENT RESULTS



Brian Wang

Boston College

Bachelor of Science in Biology

Active Duty: Infantry

Favorite quote: "I love sleep. My life has the tendency to fall apart when I'm awake, you know?" - Ernest Hemingway

Favorite Memory: Seeing Agus chain smoke on every FTX



Robert Whiton

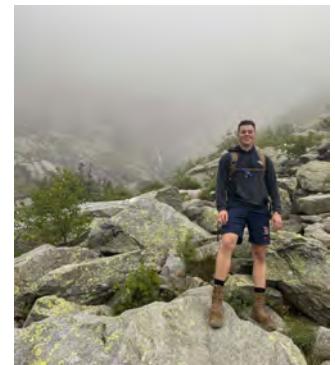
Wentworth Institute of Technology

Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering

Active Duty: Engineer Branch Detail Field Artillery

Favorite quote: "Why don't you knock it off with them negative waves" - Oddball

Favorite memory: Playing OPFOR on the CFTX



Charlie Work

Boston College

Bachelor of Science in Management and Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics

Active Duty: Infantry

Favorite quote: "Everything in moderation, including moderation" - Oscar Wilde

Favorite memory: The best (and worst) time I had in ROTC was in my junior year when I rucked a marathon with Caleb Herskind and Ryan Cullity from midnight to 7am in the pouring rain



Zhenyuan Zhang

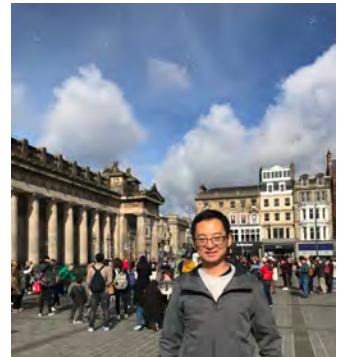
Northeastern University

Bachelor's in Information Technology & Master's in Computer Science

Army Reserve: Signal

Favorite quote: "Be the change you wish to see in the world." - Mahatma Gandhi

Favorite memory: The day I first rode a bicycle without training wheels, feeling the wind in my face and the thrill of newfound independence.



Letter from a Liberty Battalion Alumni

2LT Scott Etchecury

After commissioning from Liberty Battalion in May 2021, I received my undergraduate degree from Boston College and subsequently enrolled at Boston College Law School. Knowing that I have always wanted to serve my country as a judge advocate, the Educational Delay (Ed Delay) program was a no-brainer.

The Law School Ed Delay program allows ROTC Cadets the opportunity to attend law school in lieu of immediately serving after commissioning, so that these cadets may later serve as Active Duty judge advocates. While participation in Ed Delay does not guarantee that an officer will later be selected for the JAG Corps, ROTC experience is viewed favorably by the selection board. Like everyone else in my commissioning class, I was assigned to a branch (mine was Armor). However, instead of receiving Active Duty orders to report to Armor BOLC, I received orders that placed me on the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). There is no drill requirement on the IRR, which means that while in law school, I have had the luxury to focus solely on my studies.

Like most rewarding things, law school is challenging. However, I have had the opportunity to do some extraordinary things so far. I have already represented clients, made arguments in front of classmates, attorneys, and judges, and, most importantly, advocated for others in need. This year, I am working as a clinic student with the Boston College Innocence Program to help exonerate wrongfully convicted people in Massachusetts. I help draft legal arguments, investigate cases, interview witnesses, and do legal research to help move our clients' cases forward.

Outside of classes, clinics, and internships, I have also made plenty of new friends while also staying close with many of my college friends who stayed in the Boston area. Given that my junior and senior years were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, it has also been nice to have more time in Boston and experience a few more Boston College football games before I eventually move on to my military career



2LT ETCHECHURY at a formal law school event

Next fall, I start my final year and the process of officially applying to the Army JAG Corps. The application process is straightforward, consisting of submitting a resume, personal statement, letters of recommendation, and transcripts. Applicants are also interviewed at their law school by a Field Screening Officer (FSO) prior to their application being processed. All applications are reviewed by a selection board and selected applicants are notified of their appointment sometime in the winter.

The most daunting challenge for any aspiring lawyer and judge advocate is the bar exam. This is a grueling two-day exam that any lawyer seeking to obtain a bar license in any state must pass. The bar exam is only offered twice a year, and most law students take the July bar exam immediately after graduation. While passing is important for any lawyer, it is especially important for judge advocates. The JAG Corps will not allow you to work as a judge advocate without a bar license, meaning that failing your first time can seriously affect your entry into the JAG Corps.

My advice for any Cadet interested in the Ed Delay program is to start prepping for the law school application process as soon as possible. As many readers will already know, MS3 year is often the toughest year in ROTC with the most demands on your time. Unfortunately, this is also the time when you should start your law school application process. In particular, most law schools still require an LSAT score and it is recommended that you study for this exam for a few months before taking it. Additionally, the process for being considered for an Ed Delay starts earlier than the branch selection process. All application materials need to be ready to go by August, meaning letters of recommendation, essays, and LSAT test results need to be finalized by then. While all of this early preparation is hard, especially while trying to balance MS3 year and Advanced Camp, this preparation does allow you to submit your law school applications as soon as they open, which should increase your chances of getting accepted to your school of choice, since most schools offer rolling admissions.

I am forever grateful for all the amazing people I have met through Liberty Battalion. Some of my best friends, mentors, and memories are from my four-year experience with this program, and I would not trade it for any other commissioning program in the nation. I am looking forward to joining my friends from the program in the Army soon!



Letter from a Liberty Battalion

Alumni

2LT Thomas Flanagan

Greetings from the Officer Corps!

Salutations, and good tidings.

In the eleven months, one week, and four days since commissioning, my career has been full of life and flavor. I have earned many titles: Cadre, Student, Excess, Overstrength. I have seen many climes: Kentucky, Texas, Tacoma, Texas. I have learned from many a field-grade and E-5 alike. I've drafted many CONOPs (2); I've earned many leave days (4).

On the ride out from Advanced Camp back in 2021, I believed I was leaving the gates of Fort Knox for good. As the hills of Kentucky shrank in the distance, I couldn't imagine a reason I would ever return.

Come the summer of 2022, the Army had found one for me. No more than a month after commissioning, I reported to Fort Knox to serve as a Platoon Training Officer for 2nd Regiment, Basic Camp. Still sporting my ROTC patch, I stood up in a classroom with a batch of freshly minted Second Lieutenants and recited my second Oath of Office — only this time, in the Regular Army. I was officially on Active Duty.

We weren't off to the races just yet, however. The first two weeks crawled by, with days filled with marking off blocks on our in-processing checklist. We sat in briefs, drew gear from CIF, and got acquainted with the DFACs that were at our disposal. I got a new CAC, and a license, too: driving a 15-pax van would apparently be one of my primary duties. The guidance from the instructor who ran our drivers training was simple — "Don't flip."

On the first of July, the Cadets arrived. Some 250 MSIs and MSIIs formed 2nd Regiment, hailing largely from programs like Valley Forge and Georgia Military College. Basic Camp was a crucial hurdle for many of these Cadets, the deciding factor for remaining enrolled and securing a scholarship. As Platoon Training Officers, our job wasn't actually to be the primary trainers; that duty would fall to the Drill Sergeants, tasked with keeping the Cadets in line. Rather, I and the other lieutenants were responsible for coordinating the training, refining plans, and assigning troops-to-task so that the mission was executed to standard. Along with our MSIII counterparts, we worked up to eighteen hours a day, seven days a week, ensuring the Cadets had meals to eat, water to drink, and the tools to be successful. The Drill Sergeants were models of professionalism, and they mentored us as much as the Cadets. Being Cadre wasn't so bad.

After a month and a half, however, I was ready to take on BOLC. On August 17, I left Kentucky for San Antonio, Texas, the home of Fort Sam Houston. There, at the Medical Center of Excellence, I began my initiation into becoming an AMEDD Officer. Along with doctors, nurses, PAs, and other providers, the Medical Service Corps Officers like myself learned the fundamentals of the Army Health System. We memorized the ten medical functions, studied the roles of care, and developed an understanding of how medical assets fit into the larger operating force.

With the weekends to ourselves, me and the friends I had made at Fort Knox went out to explore San Antonio. We descended on the River Walk, devoured local barbecue, and learned to line-dance at local music halls. Even with a curfew, there was always time to see more.

Toward the end of the course, the 70Bs parted ways with the providers for "track phase," a two-week crash course in the basics of being a MEDO. Despite the condensed timeline, we tried our best to absorb all the information we could. We honed our mission analysis skills, and learned how to develop a Medical Concept of Support. We war-gamed on terrain models, plotting battalion aid stations, ambulance exchange points, and evacuation routes. We learned the difference between being MEDO in a MED Brigade and one in a BCT, with those headed for the latter often envying the luck of the former. In the end, however, nobody really knew what to expect. We could only speculate, and trust we were up to the task.

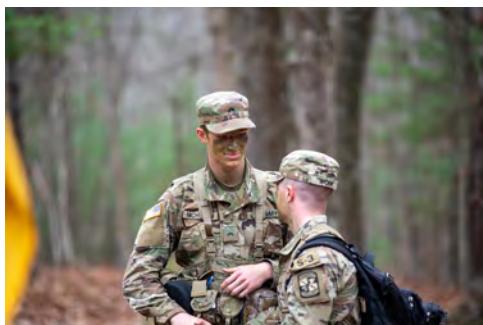
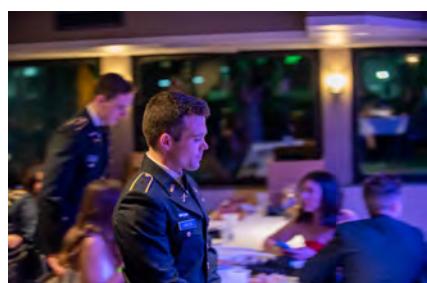
Following graduation, I was back on the road, this time bound for JBLM. Since arriving in November, I've served as a staff officer within the 56th Multifunctional Medical Battalion, 62nd Medical Brigade. Agile and versatile, the 56th MMB is a battalion like few others, composed of nine medical companies and detachments with mission sets of varying scope and complexity. These direct reporting units (or "DRUs") provide capabilities that touch nearly every medical function, from blood support and preventive medicine to patient treatment and evacuation. As a part of the Medical Logistics section, I spend my days managing CL VIII across the battalion and ensuring our units are ready to deploy. Whether it's a medical set that needs filling or a defibrillator that needs fixing, we never seem to have a shortage of projects.

To be honest, it feels strange to write and try to scrounge together the "wisdom" I've garnered throughout my "extensive" career. I've neither served as a platoon leader nor an XO, and haven't thought of TLPs since before I even graduated. If I've learned anything, however, it's this: whatever job you end up having in the Army, you better believe it's the best job there is. However green the grass may seem on the other side — whether it's on a different post, in a different unit, or outside of the military altogether — the energy you bring to what you're doing right now means multitudes to the greater mission. Combat arms or not, you're a part of the fight. Act like it. Be intense in solving problems, be aggressive in mastering your craft, and be humble in admitting where you've failed. The Army of today finds itself in a window of peacetime; don't be deceived that it will last forever.

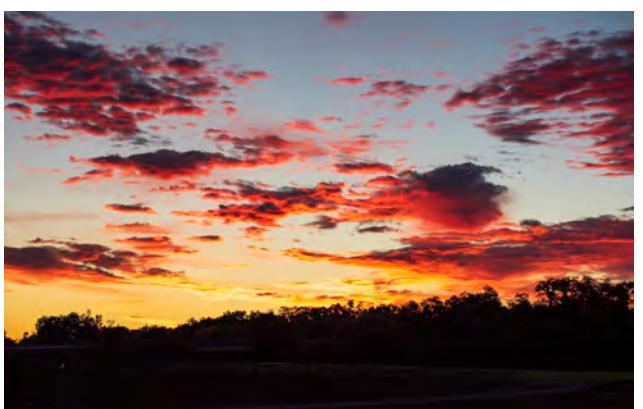
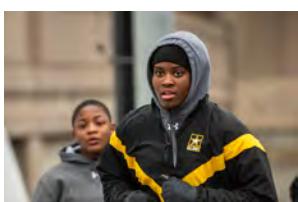
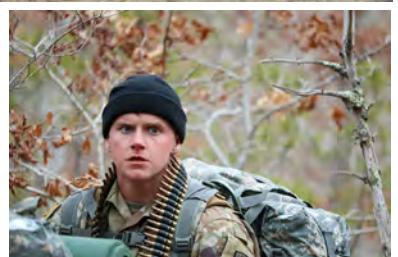
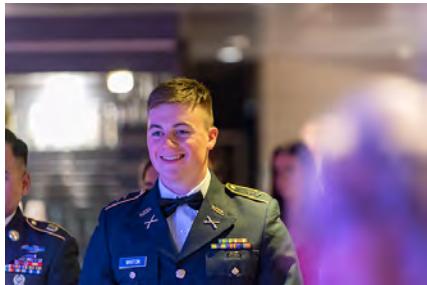
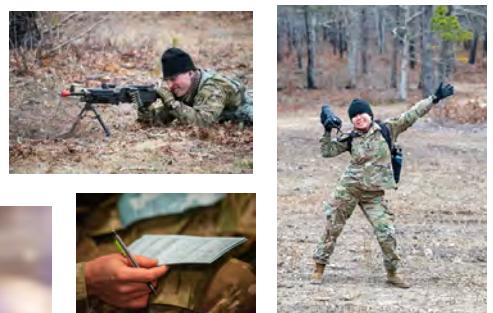
To the MSIs, IIs, and IIIs, continue to make the most of your time in school. Dual-hatting can be demanding, but strike a balance between training hard and making time for yourself.

And to the soon-to-be-Second-Lieutenants: the Army is about to get bigger than you ever imagined. Stand out. Make a name for yourself. You're coming from a program that breeds excellence in abundance. Take that energy wherever you go. I look forward to running into you — on a rotation, at an exercise, or even in Kentucky.

Liberty Battalion Photo Gallery



Liberty Battalion Photo Gallery





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Berklee College of Music
Emmanuel College
Emerson College
Framingham State University
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
Regis College
Simmons University
Suffolk University

Recruiting Operations Officer

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