Eventful Year Comes to a Close

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MIDN 1/C Hodgin, USNR

Writing a closing message for the Battalion evokes bittersweet emotions. Relief for having completed the semester, sadness that my time in ROTC and at UNC has finished, and excitement for the beginning of my Naval career are all rushing through my head. I want to use this opportunity to thank the entire Battalion staff for the dedication they have shown throughout this semester. Their commitment to success ensures that the midshipmen are in the hands of new, strong leadership that is equally committed to the Battalion’s positive growth. They have also created an environment which fosters personal and professional development, as evinced by the Battalion’s solid performance in the latter half of a semester full of possible distractions. I could imagine no better a gift for the 1/C than a national championship AND a final half of the semester with very few disciplinary infractions.

I cannot encourage anyone enough to please make the absolute best of your time at Carolina. Do not forget, though, that the ultimate goal is to be a successful Navy or Marine Corps Officer. It is simple, in our idyllic bubble at UNC, to think that our time to lead Marines and Sailors is far off; however, it is fast approaching. Train physically, study hard, and take advantage of Carolina’s endless opportunities.

I certainly hope that everyone has learned as much this semester as I have, and I thank everyone for providing me the opportunity to do so as your Battalion Commander. Best wishes for a successful Naval career and I hope to serve with all of you in the fleet.

### Fall 2009 MIDN Staff

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battalion Commander</td>
<td>1/C Mary Beth Holder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sergeant Major</td>
<td>1/C Matthew James</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
<td>1/C William Tessmann</td>
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<tr>
<td>Platoon Commander</td>
<td>2/C Kaitlyn Williams</td>
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<td>Operations Officer</td>
<td>1/C Randall Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative Officer</td>
<td>SSgt Cesar Lopez</td>
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<td>Training Officer</td>
<td>1/C Alex Bowman</td>
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### Fall 2009 Squad Leaders

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<tr>
<td>1st Squad</td>
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<td>4th Squad</td>
<td>2/C Benjamin Keilman</td>
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### Fall 2009 Billets

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<tr>
<td>Supply/Finance Chief</td>
<td>SSgt Nicholas King</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academics Chief</td>
<td>2/C Erika Stratton</td>
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<td>Athletics Chief</td>
<td>2/C Fernando Perez</td>
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<td>PQS Chief</td>
<td>2/C Erin Hayes</td>
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<td>Community Service Chief</td>
<td>3/C Ryan Morris</td>
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<td>Public Affairs Chief</td>
<td>3/C Jeff Zeberlein</td>
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<td>MWR Chief</td>
<td>3/C Andrew Votipka</td>
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<td>Scholarship Coordinator</td>
<td>3/C Matthew Nemetz</td>
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<td>Newsletter Editor</td>
<td>3/C Karmann DeBurkarte</td>
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<td>Photographer</td>
<td>3/C Maggie Attayek</td>
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<td>Historian</td>
<td>3/C Scott Miller</td>
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<td>Color Guard Commander</td>
<td>2/C Erin Hayes</td>
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<td>Drill Team Commander</td>
<td>2/C Daniel Ballance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Event MICs</td>
<td>SSgt Cesar Lopez, 2/C Daniel Ballance, Fernando Perez, Lily Kantarakias, Erin Hayes, and 3/C Tyler Marva</td>
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The Return Of A Hero
And the Navy SEALs who rescued him
MIDN 3/C Benjamin Keilman

Not since the early 19th century has piracy been such a high-risk issue for American sailors. The United States has been the world’s leading protector of the seas, but not until recently the leading deterrent of piracy. Because of this, nations like Liberia, who have no navy but the second highest world shipping registry, can trust that their cargo ships will safely reach their destination. Off the Gulf of Aden, on the east coast of Africa, the situation has been deteriorating. The location is a popular shipping lane through which cargo passes through the Suez Canal, avoiding the trip around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa and greatly reducing costs of travel. As such, the rise of piracy in this area has become a growing and important threat to world shipping; however, until recently, American targets have been largely ignored.

The situation became particularly obvious on 8 April 2009, when the MV MAERSK ALABAMA, an American-crewed container ship, was seized by four Somali pirates. The crew managed to override the bridge controls so that the pirates would be unable to steer, prompting them to abandon the ship. However, the ship’s captain, Richard Phillips, bravely surrendered himself to ensure the crew’s safety. A struggle ensued, and a pirate was captured; the crew attempted to trade prisoners, but the pirates failed to keep their end of the deal and ran off with the captain in the ship’s lifeboat.

On 9 April 2009, the USS BAINBRIDGE (DDG 96) moved to protect the ALABAMA and attempt to recover the kidnapped captain. The next day, USS HALYBURTON (FFG 40) and USS BOXER (LHD 4) linked up with the BAINBRIDGE. The pirates attempted to rendezvous with other captured freighters, using the captain as insurance of their safety. However, the Navy refused to allow it, leading to a stand-off.

To alleviate the standoff, the lifeboat allowed the destroyer to tow it and allowed a pirate on board to negotiate. At this time, when the three pirates were exposed on the lifeboat, three SEAL snipers from Seal Team Six fired from the ship’s fantail and killed the pirates and took the fourth pirate prisoner. Captain Phillips was rescued in good condition and unharmed.

Before this point, the pirates are reported to have made over $150 million in ransoms in the last year. They wanted another $2 million for Phillips, but this startling change of events will force them to alter their strategy. One Somali leader, Abdi Garad, threatened the United States with increased retaliatory attacks; President Obama insisted that Somali pirates will “be held accountable for their crimes.” This would imply that, in the face of four more hijackings as of 14 April 2009, the United States will increase its pressure on pirates, taking more initiative in their deterrence and destruction.

However, many argue that Somalis turn to piracy for lack of better options. For most, it is their only job. The failed state of Somalia has hardly any infrastructure or opportunities for economic growth in the Puntland region, the area where pirates base their operations. Most pirates are ex-fishermen who lost their jobs due to over fishing from foreign fish factory ships that outcompete; others are mercenaries or ex-militiamen that can only use their violent skills in this fashion. So long as piracy is a relatively safe enterprise for its gains, Somalis will continue to practice it.

Unlike the shores of Tripoli, Americans cannot simply rely on military action. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said that there was little need to increase military presence in the region (as Task Force 150 was already on it), and that a purely military engagement would not be sufficient. He said that efforts on the ground in Somalia to restore central government power and bring other opportunities to the Somalis would be necessary to effectively combat piracy.

It is difficult to diplomatically solve the situation because...
Fourth Class Voyage On Lake

Midshipmen set sail on Jordan Lake

MIDN 4/C Tyler Marva

Awaiting to shove off, MIDN 3/C Ben Keilman and 4/C Matt Nemetz take their Captain’s stances on the Laser sailboat. MIDN 3/C Keilman was the Midshipman in Charge, preparing the 4/C for their sailing task.

After being rescheduled once, 18 April proved to be a perfect day for sailing. The winds were strong, the air was warm, and the water...well, it was still cold. At approximately 1300, the 4/C midshipmen, along with a few upperclassmen, gathered at the shore on Jordan Lake to receive a quick review of the parts and mechanics of a sailboat. The midshipmen manned two-person Laser boats, and were instructed by LT Van Ho of Duke University. She went over the parts of the boat, direction of wind, and techniques for using the main sheet, the tiller, and resurfacing the boat after capsizing.

When asked what he thought about sail day, MIDN 4/C Miller responded, “It gave me hands on instructions from active duty and allowed me to utilize skills that that can be used in my career path and recreationally.”

After a quick refresher course, the eager midshipmen boarded their vessels and set sail, each boat occupied by two sailors. After getting the hang of the controls, each midshipman was required to prove their ability to jibe, tack, capsize, and reboard a sailboat.

MIDN 3/C Benjamin Keilman was the Midshipman in Charge of sail day, as well as preparing the 4/C and any others not already qualified for sail qualification test. When asked about the success of sail day he replied, “It was a lot of fun. I had a good time.”

After each sailor proved that they could command a boat successfully, we were given free time to sail around and enjoy ourselves. All was going well until a crew of marauders, commanded by LT Gerrig, attempted to commandeer another vessel. When the victims refused to go without a fight, their ship was boarded, and, after a hard struggle, the attacker managed to climb the mast and capsize the innocent sailors’ boat.

Overall, the sail day was a mission accomplished as midshipmen, some of whom have never sailed before, were given the opportunity to learn first hand the techniques of sailing and have a fun and relaxing time doing it.

A Fifty-Year Reunion

Commissioning class of 1959 to visit Battalion

MIDN 4/C Jeff Zeberlein

The year 2009 brings many Carolina Alumni back to school, as the class of 1959 celebrate their 50th class reunion. Among that group, about twenty-one are NROTC alumni who commissioned fifty years ago. The Battalion was much larger in those days, boasting approximately 300 total, forty-six of whom commissioned in 1959, a number larger than the entire Battalion today. The visit is scheduled for the weekend of 8-9 May 2009, also the weekend of senior commissioning.

The atmosphere of NROTC in 1959 was much different back then, but some things never change. The Battalion still had a color guard, competed in drill competitions, and fostered camaraderie among its midshipmen. However, with its size, it was also able to accommodate three companies, a Drum and Bugle Corps, and a shooting team (the area where the library and wardroom are was once a shooting range). The Battalion was very active, even placing 1st in a National rifle and pistol competition.

And all this without females. Yes, in fact, there was a day when girls were scarce to come by. COL Dick Cashwell (Ret.), former Director of Admissions at Carolina, remembers a day when they had to travel to schools such as UNC-Greensboro to find female companionship, a problem the men of Carolina no longer face. The few girls who did attend Carolina would surely not have been found in the NROTC unit.

The size of UNC has been one of the biggest changes in the last fifty years, growing from an undergraduate size of about 7,000 to the 16,000 students today. COL Walter Fitts (Ret.) remembers a day when midshipmen would walk through the woods to get to their field, a place that, although it was named and made for NROTC, is no longer used by the Battalion. However, as the size of Carolina exploded, the size of NROTC has inexplicably shrunk.

Though many things have changed, the brotherhood that unifies midshipmen will not. The alumni have been supporting the UNC NROTC Battalion for many years. They have hosted a commissioning seniors’ dinner, visited at the fall pig-picking, and support the students financially with a scholarship fund. The Alumni Association has about 300 members, a number which will hopefully continue to grow.
Looking A Step Back
A look back at the 2008-2009 school year for the midshipmen
MIDN 3/C Daniel Ballance

Another academic year at UNC-Chapel Hill has come and gone and with it the numerous and varied challenges for the midshipman Battalion. I, MIDN 3/C Daniel Ballance, will be your guide as we step back in time to last August and revisit some of the midshipmen’s most memorable moments from 2008-2009:

Cleaning Kenan Stadium, Fall 2008
Ask any midshipman what they hate about Naval ROTC most and the response will be (generally) unanimous: stadium cleanup. Somewhere between getting up at 7 a.m. on a Sunday to sifting through the mountains of dip cups, empty airplane bottles and other unmentionables to carrying 40-pound leaf blowers like backpacks for eight hours while combating the Great Peanut Shell Hurricane of 2008, the midshipmen developed a loathing for Kenan Memorial Stadium and the “townies” that rush campus to watch football.

We subject ourselves to this torture for the same reason most people willingly endure horrible things, which is money. With Fall Ball, the Tulane University Drill Competition and commissioning (and other manly, macho military things, like ice skating), we keep busy, and keeping busy demands a good amount of cash. Stadium cleanup provides the unit with all necessary funds and a little extra (which goes to buy extra PT uniforms and battalion polos) in just a week’s work. We work generally from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m., not even working the normal 40-hour work week but yielding over $4,000.

Who is going to argue with that? The midshipmen.

Fall Ball, Fall 2008
Every year (alternating annually between the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps. birthday), the midshipmen, MECEPs and active duty from UNC-CH, Duke University and N.C. State University gather to celebrate the births of our naval services by going to a hotel in Cary, N.C. and throwing a huge party.

Now, this is a military party, mind you, so there is structure: Show up two hours before the actual meal to visit your friends from other schools, finally sit down to eat a very fancy, albeit small, meal and then proceed to prove your total lack of coordination on the dance floor. That wasn’t me (naturally), but you get the picture.

Tulane University Drill Meet, Spring 2009
As any freshman midshipman’s parents undoubtedly heard, UNC-CH NROTC competed in the annual NROTC drill meet hosted by Tulane University. During Mardi Gras, UNC-CH performed admirably (and better than our peers at Duke and N.C. State) and was rewarded with liberty to explore the city. The midshipmen all had a great time and every midshipman came back emotionally sound, in one piece and with a clear arrest record.

Consortium Field Meet, Spring 2009
In our last consortium-wide event of the year, all three universities gathered at Field 571 at Duke University to prove superior manliness through games like ultimate frisbee and dodgeball. By this point, everyone knew who could dance and drill the best (i.e., us), so it was N.C. State and Duke’s last chance to put us to shame.

And, well, they pretty much did just that. N.C. State fielded two teams (one of which finished dead last), with N.C. State’s A-team winning, followed by Duke and finally us. We didn’t take it too hard, however, considering the real victory that awaited us in the NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament.

Midshipman out and about, 2008-2009
This year, sending midshipmen out and about has been a priority. Initially, MIDN 2/C Alex Bowman and Randall Martin were sent to the U.S. Naval Academy Leadership Conference, a two-day shotgun of briefs, lectures and roundtables on theoretical and practical leadership. MIDN 4/C Grant Morine even trekked to Washington, D.C. and braved the crowds to see the most historic presidential inauguration of our lives. In the spring, the battalion itself took to the streets in the form of community service, going as far as Fayetteville, N.C. to lend a helping hand. And finally (and, arguably, most importantly) several midshipmen made the journey to Detroit to watch Roy and his boys bring home UNC-CH’s fifth NCAA National Championship.

And that, ladies and gentlemen, has been a brief recap of this year at UNC-CH. Honestly and truthfully, the midshipmen had a great time here this year, despite unpleasant stadium cleanups and cumbersome military commitments. However, these are all a part of the 英语 seem to be missing in this text. The midshipmen's experience was made memorable not just by the challenges they faced but also by the camaraderie they shared. Each year the seniors commission, the juniors take command of the battalion and a new group of bright-eyed and oblivious freshmen will think it’s okay to walk in the ROTC Armory through the Army or the Air Force door.
Seniors Prepare For Battle

NAVS 401 capstone course shows battalion what they’ve learned

*MIDN 4/C Jeff Zeberlein*

Every senior ROTC midshipman must take NAVS 401, the senior capstone course which prepares future Naval officers for the fleet. The class is designed to provide a deeper understanding of the Naval warfare doctrine, culminating in the “Battle Scenario.” The battle scenario gives the seniors a chance to prove to CAPT Matts, LT COL Nichols, and the rest of the Active Duty staff that they have gained an adequate knowledge of Naval warfare. MIDN 1/C Evan Bower, the intelligence officer for the project, stated, “This project allows us to apply our learning to a real scenario.”

The 1/C were given a scenario in which the enemy “Orange” had taken over part of “Yellow’s” territory. The United States (“Blue”), under President Obama’s authority, did not condone such actions and wanted to take measures to see that Yellow would get its territory back. The mission was to assault the beach and push Orange back north as far as their previous borders. Having drawn billets out of a hat, the 1/C each took charge of their particular command, ranging from Intelligence to Strike, Surface to Submarine, and more.

Taking anywhere from 5-12 hours outside of class, each senior researched and prepared a brief on his or her section. Even while doing their own work, the seniors met as a class together for about seven or eight hours to collaborate on the briefs and the overall battle strategy, making sure each understood how his or her part worked in relation to other parts and the entire mission.

To add an extra challenge, LT Gerring, professor of the NAVS 401 class, sent out intelligence updates throughout the project duration to see if the seniors were able to adapt to changing situations such as enemy movement or resource updates. The project was very detailed, with each senior taking into account many aspects of a battle, such as missile ranges, enemy missile ranges, enemy counter-attack measures and resources, positioning of submarines, surface ships, and helicopters, SEAL allocation, and even the weather.

When asked about her opinion as to the relevance of this project, MIDN 1/C Holly Santos stated that she “definitely thought this project was useful because this was the kind of thing [she] did while on [her] 1/C cruise.” While aboard the USS COMSTOCK, stationed outside of Hawaii, 1/C Santos worked on hypothetical battle scenarios, in constant preparation for a real life mission.

Training True Warriors

Marines show Battalion how to step up

*MIDN 4/C Kyle Olson*

The NROTC lab on 16 April 2009 was fun-filled and exciting, consisting of the riveting and well-prepared 1/C battle scenario and the perennially popular warrior PT lab. After the battle scenario, the midshipmen prepared to head down to Battle Park. After a brisk run to Battle Park led by the MECEPs, the Battalion was split into squads, which competed in relay-style events. Staff Sergeant King briefed and demonstrated the events with the stated goal being “fast-paced and combat-oriented events.”

Events included combat roll, fireman carry, pistol belt drag, a solo buddy run and other functional fitness. After these events, it was time for the squad maneuver. This consisted of each squad running a course with two 30-pound ammo cans. This event was timed, and finished when the last MIDN in the squad passed the finish line. Having to run through the quickly changing terrain, Midshipmen worked their way through the tough course, consisting of hills, tall steps, high-knee running, multiple push up stations, and two-footed jumps with much difficulty. There was some great effort from all the squads, but 4th squad pulled off an amazing victory, despite missing their illustrious squad leader, Staff Sergeant Lopez. After the event, the Battalion formed up for the run back, this time having to carry back the equipment used at the event.

After an exhausting run by the Battalion, a bit smaller than it was when it left for Battle Park, Staff Sergeant Davis imparted motivating words to the Battalion, urging them to push beyond their limits, especially with commissioning and the final PRT coming up.
Recognizing Battalion Merit

Battalion Awards Day 2009
MIDN 3/C Erika Stratton

Thursday, 23 April saw the last Navy leadership lab of the year, and with it came the celebration of achievements, the recognition and celebration of our graduates, the end of one year’s worth of NROTC memories, and the beginning of a new year. The Awards Day ceremony was held at the Newman Center Parish and recognized the achievements and service of midshipmen throughout the course of both the semester and the 2008-2009 academic year. The National Defense Industrial Association Award and the Secretary of the Navy Outstanding Graduate Award recognized and honored midshipmen’s involvement and service in the community.

The American Legion Scholarship Medal and American Legion Military Excellence Medal honored those midshipmen who maintain high academic standards, while serving the community and displaying military leadership. Other awards honoring high academic achievement and outstanding leadership included the American Veterans Association Award, Tony F. Clark Oceanography Award, Military Order of the Purple Heart Leadership Award, National Sojourners Award, the Scottish Rite Award, the National Defense Industrial Association Award, the Daughters of the American Revolution Award, and the Sons of the American Revolution Award.

Several awards honored midshipmen who contributed to the unit through service, model leadership, and morale, including the Commander Mills Award, Reserve Officer’s Association Award, and the USAA Brass Clock Spirit Award.

Awards recognizing outstanding achievements by Marine Option midshipmen included the Marine Corps Association Award and the Richard S. Johnson Memorial Award.

The battalion was honored by the attendance of several special guests and alumni to present awards. Mr. Robert Patton of the American Legion presented the American Legion medals; Mr. Larry Bradsher presented the Veterans of Foreign Wars Award; Lieutenant Commander Michael Cissell presented the Military Officers Association of America Award; Mr. James Hicks presented the Military Order of the Purple Heart Leadership Award; and Mr. Bob Smith presented the Patrick Connor Aviation Watch Award.

Those midshipmen achieving the community service ribbon for their service above and beyond the battalion requirement were recognized in addition to the midshipmen who scored the highest for males and females on the final PRT held earlier in the week.

After all awards had been handed out, the Battalion change of command ceremony took place, passing the command of the unit from this semester’s battalion commander, MIDN 1/C George Hodgins, to next semester’s battalion commander, MIDN 2/C Mary Holder. The change of command was represented by the passing of the battalion colors.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, midshipmen, active duty, special guests and family and friends made their way to the Naval Armory for a small reception. During the reception, midshipmen honored the graduating seniors through a senior slideshow, complete with pictures, superlatives, and the reading of the Last Wills and Testaments of the seniors.

The NROTC battalion thanks the graduating seniors for their hard work over the past four years and wishes them luck as they move on to become Ensigns and Second Lieutenants in the US Navy and Marine Corps.

### Spring 2009 Awards

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<td>Battalion Commendation for outstanding work</td>
<td>2/C Matt James, 3/C Daniel Ballance</td>
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<td>American Legion Military Excellence Medal: GOLD</td>
<td>1/C Evan Bower, 2/C Alex Bowman, SILVER: 3/C</td>
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<td>American Legion Scholarship Medal: GOLD: 1/C George Hodgins, 2/C Mary</td>
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<td>Military Order of the World Award: GOLD: 2/C Peter Tessmann</td>
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<td>American Veterans Association Award:</td>
<td>1/C David Pardue</td>
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<td>Veterans of Foreign Wars Award:</td>
<td>1/C Christen Hayes, 2/C Randall Martin, 3/C</td>
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<td>Reserve Officer’s Association Award:</td>
<td>1/C Jordan Kennedy</td>
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<td>USAA Brass Clock Spirit Award:</td>
<td>3/C Erika Stratton</td>
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<td>Tony F. Clark Oceanography Award:</td>
<td>2/C Mary Beth Holder</td>
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<td>Commander Mills Award:</td>
<td>1/C Holly Santos</td>
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<td>Daughters of the American Revolution Award:</td>
<td>1/C Elizabeth Van Cott</td>
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<td>Sons of the American Revolution Award:</td>
<td>4/C Jeff Zeberlein</td>
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<td>Marine Corps Association Award:</td>
<td>1/C John Powell</td>
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<td>Scottish Rite Award:</td>
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<td>National Defense Industrial Association Award:</td>
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<td>Secretary of the Navy Outstanding Graduate Award:</td>
<td>1/C John Powell</td>
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<td>Patrick Connor Award:</td>
<td>1/C Evan Bower</td>
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<td>Wolfe Award:</td>
<td>1/C Draonnie Johnson</td>
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<td>Community Service Award:</td>
<td>1/C Holly Santos, 3/C Daniel Ballance, Elizabeth</td>
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<td>Kamranakias, and Erika Stratton, 4/C Matthew</td>
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Meet the Staff

Thanks to those who contribute to the success of the UNC NROTC Battalion from behind the scenes

Margaret Scarboro

**Hometown:** Suffolk, VA

**Position at the Battalion:** Personnel Specialist II

**Prior work experience:** I served in the United States Army for about seven years. During that time, my Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) was Administrative Specialist or 71L. As far as civilian jobs are concerned, I have worked in administrative positions since 1989. I worked for the Department of the Army, Department of Veterans Affairs, Research Triangle Institute (RTI), and UNC Healthcare System. Now, here I am, with the Department of Naval Science.

**What brought you to Carolina?** A job transfer brought me to North Carolina in 1997. At that time, I lived in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Since my mom lived in Virginia and she was sick and alone, I asked to transfer so I could be closer to her. Virginia wasn’t an option then, so I settled for North Carolina instead.

**What is your favorite thing about working at Carolina?** My favorite thing about working at UNC is the people. This is a great place to work, since everyone is so nice and down-to-earth. You couldn’t ask for better co-workers, students, etc.

Janis Carter

**Hometown:** Burlington, NC

**Position at the Battalion:** Office Manager

**Prior work experience:** I worked at the UNC registrar’s office for 6 years, and I’ve worked at the Armory for 6 years. I’ve had many jobs throughout the years; my favorite was managing a small oceanfront motel at Carolina Beach.

**What brought you to Carolina?** A friend suggested we apply to Carolina after we were laid off from AT&T in Greensboro, when the manufacturing plant closed and our jobs were sent to Mexico.

**What is your favorite thing about working at Carolina?** At UNC NROTC I have the privilege of working with the most excellent students and staff! I love walking around campus (especially in the springtime), the restaurants on Franklin St., the friends I’ve made, and basketball. Go Heels!
NC(SW/AW) Tommy Thompson

Hometown: Kinston, NC

Position at the Battalion: Consortium Administrative Officer

Prior work experience: 22 Years in the Navy, Haze Grey and Underway

What brought you to Carolina?  THE TAR HEELS

What is your favorite thing about working at Carolina? Beautiful campus, outstanding students, and great atmosphere.

Angela Miller

Hometown: Raeford, NC

Position at the Battalion: Supply Technician

Prior work experience: 12 years 8 months in the Navy; When I was discharged I was a SK1.

What brought you to Carolina? It's close to family

What is your favorite thing about working at Carolina? The Tar Heels.

A Test Of Strength

Marine Ironman challenge at N.C. State University

MIDN 3/C Fernando Perez

On 18 April 2009, two Marine-Option midshipmen and two USMC staff sergeants participated in North Carolina State University’s Ironman Challenge. MIDN 4/C Kyle Olson, MIDN 3/C Fernando Perez, SSgt Cesar Lopez and SSgt Nicholas King, along with two Duke Marine-Option midshipmen, formed the UNC-Duke team for the competition.

To start off the Ironman competition, all teams took a 9-mile forced march, carrying approximately 40 pounds of gear each. The march lasted for a little under three hours, and ended at the IM fields where the Combat Fitness Test (CFT) took place.

After a few minutes of rest, the teams ran the CFT, already tired from the march before. Shortly after the CFT, the teams then ran the Physical Fitness Test, consisting of pull-ups, curl-ups, and a 3-mile run.

Upon completing these events, the teams were treated to a “delicious” lunch, which consisted of MREs (Meals, Ready-to-Eat). The teams participating then learned rifle familiarization, where members learned how to disassemble and assemble the M16A2 service basic drill, and basic fireteam tactics. These skills are critical for completing Officer Candidate School, which all Marine options go to in order to be commissioned as a Marine Corps officer.

After these evolutions, the teams were treated to pizza from Little Caesar’s, and listened to a motivating sergeant major speak about the roles and expectations of second lieutenants.

The UNC-Duke team finished third overall, second only to two Platoon Leaders Course (PLC) teams, which did not participate in the initial 9-mile forced march.
During the warrior lab, MIDN 4/C Scott Miller and the rest of the 4th squad finish the last leg of the obstacle course, involving carrying 30-pound ammo.

Receiving the 2009 Richard S. Johnson Memorial Award, MIDN 1/C John Powell stands with his newly awarded sword, presented to him by MAJ Mick Fleming. "A Marine officer’s sword is presented annually to the graduating NROTC Marine-option midshipman who has demonstrated the highest achievement in both aptitude for service in the United States Marine Corps and Marine Science courses" (quoted from award ceremony).

Battalion in Action

Out on gorgeous Jordan Lake, MIDN 4/C Grant Morine and 2/C Matthew James apply their recently learned knowledge of the seas to the test. Midshipmen showed their aptitude on the water by performing maneuvers such as tacking, jibing, and capsizing on sail day.

SSgt Nicholas King, for his exemplary performance in planning and executing the annual Piedmont Consortium field meet, held at Duke, receives a commendation from CAPT Matts, given by MIDN 1/C George Hodgin.
After a 6-mile hump near the Eno River, the Marines and Marine Options take their boots off and listen to a motivating talk by MAJ Mick Fleming.

Briefing the Battalion on the battle plan, MIDN 1/C George Hodgin describes the zones, ranges, and capabilities of the allied and enemy forces. All Navy MIDN seniors had to participate in the NAVS 401 final project, which included a thoroughly detailed brief on a battle scenario assigned by LT Gerring.

Carrying equipment back from the warrior lab, the battalion runs back to the Armory for the conclusion of lab.

Marking the official change of command, MIDN 1/C George Hodgin passes on the colors, relinquishing his command to new Battalion Commander MIDN 2/C Mary Beth Holder.
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