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MIDN 1/C Ali Grass
I have service selected Naval Nurse – not a surprise, but satisfying news after a long road to get to this point! My first duty station will be at a Naval Medical Center, with possible locations in Bethesda, MD; Portsmouth, VA; and San Diego, CA. I will spend this tour likely working on a medical surgical floor as an RN. From there I hope to specialize and transfer into an intensive care unit (ICU) setting. My current career plan involves going back to school after gaining experience in the ICU and becoming a certified registered nurse anesthetist. I am hopeful that I will get to do this in the Navy. I am very excited to graduate and commission alongside my fellow ROTC classmates, and cannot wait to see what the fleet has in store for us.

MIDN 1/C Salvatore Savarese
My name is Salvatore Savarese and I was service assigned Student Naval Aviator. Upon commissioning I will attend the initial phases of flight school in Pensacola, Florida. I would like to fly F/A-18E Super Hornets and eventually transition to the F-35C Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter. While I desire to fly jets, the needs of the Navy are first and foremost, and I will be content flying any platform the Navy desires. I have no idea where my career will take me, but my goal is to be the best I can be in whatever job I'm placed in by putting my sailors and the mission of the Navy first. Fly Navy!

MIDN 1/C Alexander Walden
This September I received the wonderful news that I was service assigned Naval Flight Officer (NFO). This was my first choice. A NFO can hold a variety of jobs for the Navy. While they do learn how to fly, they are not pilots, and therefore usually focus on navigation, radio, electronic systems, and weapons. My dream position would be what’s called an EWO or Electronics Weapons Officer. EWOs fly in the backseat of an E/A-18G, which is the same airframe of an F/A-18. I want to go fast, and jam enemy radar, communications and weapon systems. Think Goose from Top Gun, in a much newer and updated airplane.
MIDN 1/C Nancy Smith
This past summer, I conducted my 1/C midshipman cruise on the USS Carl Vinson (callsign "Gold Eagle"), current flagship of Carrier Strike Group One and one of the oldest American aircraft carriers still in service (Fun fact: this was the carrier where UNC and Michigan State played the first NCAA basketball game ever to be hosted on the deck of an aircraft carrier). My month of training - as we transited from Perth, Australia to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii - exposed me to a wide variety of opportunities to serve as an officer in the Navy - from Surface Warfare to Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Naval Aviation. The sheer number of unrestricted and restricted line billets amazed me, especially in seeing how they all came together aboard the Vinson to facilitate a successful deployment. Coming away from the experience, I felt qualified to make an informed decision on which community would best suit my own interests, as well as the needs of the Navy. In Surface Warfare, the ability to immediately hit the fleet as a division officer and begin developing leadership appealed greatly. The simultaneous challenges of caring for my sailors and getting qualified for my SWO pin seemed like something I could tackle; it would be hard, but definitely worth it. So I decided to put in for Surface Warfare Officer, a selection that came to fruition about two weeks ago. Currently, I am conferring on a weekly basis with LT Roaf, my academic advisor and himself a SWO, about my future in the community. As of now, I intend to select a cruiser or a destroyer out of Yokosuka, Japan for my first sea tour. Further on in my career, I would like to also serve on an amphibious assault ship, so that I can develop familiarity with both the carrier strike group and the expeditionary strike group. I aspire to have a long and fulfilling naval career, and I cannot begin to express my gratitude towards my peers, active duty mentors, and family who have helped me reach this point.
MIDN 1/C Briana Carter
As a Marine Option, the culminating point of our NROTC career is going to OCS with the hopes of earning the title of US Marine, and eventually commissioning and then earning the title of Marine Officer. I have been fortunate enough to complete Officer Candidate School, and am on track to commissioning in May. After commissioning, I take a slightly different route than my Navy counterparts. In stead of heading straight to the fleet to lead as Division Officers, I will attend The Basic School for six months. The Marine Corps believes that every Marine is a rifle man and every Marine Officer is a rifle platoon commander. With that being said at The Basic School I will learn the basic skills of how to be a Marine Officer which include land navigation, how to use and employ different weapons systems, and will also cover ethics and other general mandated training topics. During TBS we will also be exposed to the different communities within the Marine Corps, and eventually pick which Military Occupational Specialty code, or MOS for short, we would like to pursue. I would ideally like to look into Intelligence, but in reality I will go wherever the Marine Corps needs me. Shortly after completing TBS, I will attend my MOS school to learn the specifics of my speciality, and finally I will learn where I will be stationed at.

MIDN 1/C Christopher Pollenz
I have service selected as 1370, Student Naval Aviator. I am extremely excited to have been selected for this. My intent is to fly the P-8 Poseidon, a submarine hunting platform. My father flew the Poseidon’s predecessor, the P-3, when he was a naval aviator in the 80s. It will be nice to follow in his footsteps. Being an astrophysics major, I do not foresee flight school being very difficult, so I should hopefully be able to graduate high in the rankings and get my top pick.

MIDN 1/C Samuel Martin
I have been assigned Surface Warfare Officer as my service selection. I currently plan to ship select a smaller forward deployed ship out of Japan. The ships in Japan do a lot of training with foreign navies and that is an excellent opportunity for a junior officer. Beyond that I don't know what I will be doing but I am excited to get out to the fleet and started in my career.
This semester I have been assigned the billet of PTO. In this billet I have worked to challenge all of the midshipmen equally. I have done this through the implementation of ability groups which are given workouts that I have scaled to challenge them. This creates a system where everyone is challenged equally while doing a similar workout. I have also made a move towards a focus on proper warm up techniques which the midshipmen can apply to their independent training.

New for this year is the introduction of the CFI program. This program is to insure that midshipmen are in proper shape for the rigors of Pilot and Naval Flight Officer selection. On this program the midshipmen are held to a standard higher than FEP for the run portion of the PRT/PFT. This standard is the recommended time for junior officers to be running before they report to Aviation Preflight Indoctrination. The implementation of this program shows great promise and my effectiveness will be tested at the midterm PRT where the CFI midshipmen will run a second PRT to test if they now meet the new standard.

*Picture: MIDN 2/C Leiva helps MIDN 4/C Gill complete the run portion of an early morning PT session.*
This semester has been a busy one for community service. The Battalion has continued its partnership with Hope Community Gardens, where midshipmen volunteer on Saturday mornings each week. Tasks include digging plots, weeding, installing chicken wire around the garden, shoveling compost, and spreading wood chips. The garden has two functions: growing food for local soup kitchens and food banks, and renting out plots to members of the community.

In addition to our weekly service activities, the Battalion has had several one-time opportunities for service. Projects include assisting with a playground build for the Ronald McDonald House, participating in the Ruck for Hunger, in which volunteers hiked with backpacks to pick up donated food, and running in the Eve Carson 5K, the proceeds of which go toward the Eve Carson Scholarship at UNC Chapel Hill.

The Battalion looks forward to continuing to serve both in uniform and out.

*Picture: MIDN pose together during the Ruck for Hunger COMSERV event*
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