This past summer I joined my fellow 3/C midshipmen from UNC and other NROTC units around the country to attend Career Orientation Training for Midshipmen (CORTRAMID). CORTRAMID was four weeks long. Each week focused on a different community, exposing midshipmen to Surface Warfare, Aviation, Submarine Warfare, and the Marine Corps. I learned a lot in just one month. I shot a machine gun, went deep underwater, flew an airplane, and rappelled down a tower. However, my favorite part about CORTRAMID was getting to know the sailors and seeing the personalities of each community shine through its members. The pride emitted from each officer and enlisted personnel is something that I will never be able to experience from reading a textbook. Not only did they have an extensive knowledge of their rates and specialties, but the enlisted took their professions very seriously. As a midshipman, I was in a unique position: the enlisted sailors felt comfortable enough to talk to us and be brutally honest about their community and experiences. They also opened up about weaknesses their junior officers could improve upon and qualities they really admired.

The enlisted personnel across the communities taught me that the junior officers who really motivate the enlisted and keep morale high on deployments are the ones that genuinely care for their sailors and marines. In your future career, if there’s something that you don’t know, you cannot be afraid to admit it and you need to do everything in your power to learn and become an expert. By doing those things, junior officers will eventually gain respect from their subordinates and peers.
AVIATION WEEK

MIDN 3/C Matthew McPhail

After receiving a three-year side-load scholarship this past May, I was given the choice to either go on CORTRAMID or stay at home during the summer. I was unsure of what to do until several upperclassmen told me that I would be able to fly in a training aircraft with jet pilots during Aviation Week. Flying was an opportunity I did not want to miss.

Soon after arriving in Norfolk I learned I was part of Bravo Company. My company was scheduled for Aviation Week during our second week of CORTRAMID. Through squadron tours and flight simulators, I became familiar with several of the aviation platforms. I really enjoyed speaking with an MH-53E Sea Dragon pilot who shared with me what he enjoyed most about the mission capabilities of his aircraft. Due to severe thunderstorms throughout the first half of the week, the T-34C training plane rides that I looked forward to were cancelled. Finally, at the end of the week, the rain stopped and Bravo Company was cleared to fly in the T-34’s. I was one of the first midshipmen to fly in the plane, and my pilot allowed me to fly about three minutes after we took off. I had control for about twenty minutes before giving it back. It was awesome being able to roll and maneuver the plane around, above, and under the clouds.

Following Aviation Week, Bravo Company travelled to Camp Lejeune for Marine Week. This week was enjoyable in a non-traditional sense of the word. We participated in many of the same trainings that new Marines face during Marine Combat Training (MCT) at Camp Geiger – though to a lesser degree. This was enjoyable because events such as enduring the tear gas chamber allowed me to get to know the other midshipmen from different NROTC units. My favorite part of Marine Week was the mixer we attended at the Officers’ Club. Aside from learning about several of the MOS’s that I’ll be able to compete for after OCS, the Marine Officers set an extremely professional atmosphere and I was able to see some aspects of officer life that I’ll experience when I commission. All in all, CORTRAMID was a good exposure to the different communities in the Navy and Marine Corps and allowed me to see what I’m working towards for the next three years.
SUBMARINE WEEK

MIDN 3/C Daniel Berry

This summer, ten midshipmen from UNC and I joined hundreds of midshipmen from across the country in attending CORTRAMID East. Each week showcases different unrestricted line officer communities to help advise and persuade midshipmen to pursue each respective community. This summer we spent Surface and Aviation Week in and around Norfolk, Virginia; Marine Week at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina; and Submarine Week in San Diego, California. Anyone familiar with CORTRAMID East knows that sending midshipmen from East Coast universities to San Diego was a deviation from past Submarine weeks spent in Kings Bay, Georgia. Midshipmen inquiries about the sudden switch were answered with a variety of reasons, most of which boiled down to “don’t worry about it”. Whatever the cause might have been, no one complained about a free trip to San Diego for Submarine week.

For most midshipmen, this was their first time to San Diego; for others, it was their first time traveling west of the Mississippi River. For me, Submarine week was special because it meant I was going home. I grew up less than a PRT 1.5 mile run away from Submarine Base Point Loma. I’ve read Blind Man’s Bluff and watched The Hunt for Red October more times than I care to admit. Before CORTRAMID, I thought I understood what submariners do and what the United States’ most lethal vessels are capable of doing. By the end of the week, I realized my knowledge was only surface-level. I still don’t know a lot of what submarines do, but sub week did show me more of what the Submarine community is all about. Throughout the week we toured a fast-attack submarine, drove simulators, participated in damage control exercises, and explored San Diego. For me, the highlight of the week was getting to spend 24 hours underway on the Ballistic Missile Submarine, SSBN-743 Louisiana. Onboard we had the opportunity to explore every inch of the boat on our own, from the sail, to the reactor, to SONAR, and even into the very end of a torpedo tube. Talking with sailors on the submarine gave me a more focused understanding about the submarine community and what life is like as a submariner. The level of professionalism, camaraderie, trust, and competence shown by all the sailors, officers, and enlisted spoke volumes of the silent service. My appreciation for the Submarine Warfare community has reached a new depth.
Stories had circulated from other companies that Marine Week would be a true change in pace in comparison to the previous weeks on CORTRAMID. Midshipmen that had already attended Marine week at Camp Geiger, North Carolina advised my company, Charlie, to buy some items prior to departing for our last week of training. Among the extra items my company packed were baby wipes to clean up sweat when showers were not an option and plastic bags to protect phones from brutally heavy rains. Even with the benefit of three weeks of advice and preparation, my company could not have prepared for what was to come. Events such as the Combat Fitness Test and the confidence course proved challenging and hazardous. However, many of the difficult evolutions had great benefits for the midshipmen. Pugil sticks allowed for an exciting cutthroat competition between sister platoons that needed to relieve some tension. Entering a gas chamber filled with tear gas developed team spirit and camaraderie among the platoons when it was needed the most. Midshipmen had a physically-rigorous, action-packed week that ended as quickly as it started, and everyone was beyond thankful once the buses returned to Norfolk and were able to clean up and recover from the week.
Surface Week of CORTRAMID was structured towards exposing midshipmen to the various platforms that compose the backbone of the Navy. Midshipmen went underway on Arleigh-Burke-class destroyers, received fire arms and damage control training, used a Riverine Command Boat (RCB) simulator, and toured Assault Craft Unit Two in Little Creek, Virginia. The midshipmen were also able to spend a substantial amount of time using ship simulators and received several confidential briefs. Overall, midshipmen left CORTRAMID with an appreciation for the vast Surface community and a sense of excitement for the increasing opportunities for junior Surface Warfare Officers.

- MIDN 3/C Mikayla Patrick
This past summer for my Second-Class Cruise, I was fortunate enough to embark on the Guided Missile Destroyer USS O’Kane (DDG 77). During my time on board, I took part in Operation Pacific Dragon (PACDRAGON). It was a ballistic missile defense operation in coordination with the navies of South Korea, Japan, and Australia to showcase our readiness and capability to defend against potential Chinese and North Korean nuclear attacks.

PACDRAGON had many exciting evolutions. For example, we sailed in formations with ships from the United States, South Korea, Japan, and Australia. We also took part in a Mk 45 5-inch/54 caliber gun shoot. I spent time with the gunner’s mates and learned that they had named the gun “Sophie”, which I thought was funny. The culminating event of the exercise was to track and simulate shooting down a drone that was playing the part of a ballistic missile launched from land. I was able to observe this evolution in the Combat Information Center, where the weapons are launched.

My biggest takeaway from the cruise is that everyone has a different leadership style and I need to be true to my own personality. For example, some officers are able to be more friendly with the enlisted sailors under their direction while still maintaining authority, and others are more like coaches. I think my leadership style is more like the latter. I also learned that in the end, I as an officer will be working for my sailors, not the other way around.

Another lesson I learned on my cruise is what enlisted sailors look for in a junior officer when he or she first reports to the ship. Be humble and hardworking and your division will respect you. This is advice I will definitely remember for when I commission.

My ship had a great command climate and it was interesting to see the dynamic between the officers and the enlisted. Since this was my first time being underway for more than a day, I was very excited to see what the fighting edge of the Navy is like. I went in with high expectations and I was not disappointed.
This summer Naval Service Training Command (NSTC) began a pilot program for rising 2/C Midshipmen to receive training in fundamental skills in the U.S. Navy. The objective was to meet the Professional Core Competencies (PCC) established in a joint effort between the Naval Academy and NSTC. The PCCs were created to ensure that every officer that enters the fleet has received training in the standard responsibilities of the Navy. The pilot program, formally known as Sea Trials, consisted of eleven days of firefighting, damage control, ship handling, physical training, and rules of the road training. The program also focused on mental toughness and how to handle stress to be an effective decision maker. All of the time spent in the classroom, simulators, and trainers led to a culminating event which required sing all of the knowledge gained over the week and a half. The event itself was an eight-hour physical test starting from the moment midshipmen stepped out of their racks at 0400 until we finished with qualifications in the pool. During those hours, there were fires to fight, flooding and leaks to fix, crawling and running to push through and work to finish as a team. The training time was short, but full of valuable lessons and certainly an improvement in NROTC training that will help create more capable Naval Officers for our future.

For my summer training I had the incredible opportunity to spend the month of June participating in the Midshipman Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) summer cruise in Little Creek, Virginia. This training is unique in some ways in that it is designed to be a test of a candidate’s physical fitness, mental acuity, personality, and overall fit for the EOD Community. The experience as a whole was amazing, and it taught me valuable lessons that I will take with me during my time in the fleet, regardless of which community I am assigned to. The most important lesson I learned during this time was how important it is to put the team and others first, even when you want to shine as an individual. This summer cruise functioned essentially as a tryout, meaning that there was always a pressure on us to succeed and shine for the instructors. But when it came down to it, the people who were most successful on the cruise were those who always worked hard to help their shipmates out, who took a little extra time holding the weight while we were treading water, who dropped back a little on the run to speak words of encouragement even if it meant not finishing first. It was those people that earned the respect and admiration of their cruise mates and truly exemplified the principles of putting others before yourself. As I prepare to enter my final year as a college student, I am humbled by the quality of individuals I met during my summer training who share the title of Midshipman.

Photos: 2/C MIDN on Sea Trials trained in basic damage control, water survival, and firefighting.
TWENTYNINE PALMS

MIDN 2/C Michael Carreiro

This summer, I was attached to Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion 4th Marine division located at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, California for summer training. During this month long period, I shadowed company and platoon level commanders in all aspects of their job. Highlights from my training include live fire platoon maneuvers, screening for Marine Corps instructor water survival, and desert patrols totaling roughly 24 miles per week.

As Midshipmen in a peer-rich environment, the unique nature of officership is often muddled. We ardently discuss its principles, yet are rarely forced to live them in our academic atmosphere. This summer I was reminded that we, as midshipmen, are not just earning degrees but preparing for commissioning as officers in the Navy and Marine Corps. Attaching to Kilo company as they prepared for deployment gave me a chance not only to understand the technical aspects of an infantry officer’s job, but to grasp more fully the weight of what we are doing in NROTC. Our profession of arms is a historic one, and to some seems idealistic. However, the values of honor, courage, and commitment instilled by our forefathers must be upheld in every aspect of our lives to ensure we remain ready to lead those enlisted Marines and Sailors we are privileged to serve. We as midshipmen should never forget what we are doing here.

“THE VALUES OF HONOR, COURAGE, AND COMMITMENT INSTILLED BY OUR FOREFATHERS MUST BE UPHeld IN EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES TO ENSURE WE REMAIN READY TO LEad THOSE ENLISTED MARINES AND SAILORS WE ARE PRIVILEGED TO SERVE.”
Welcome to our new members of the Tar Heel Battalion! We look forward to getting to know and train these future officers of the United States Navy and Marine Corps.

NEW FACES

MIDN 4/C CHARLES ANSPACH
Efland, NC
Peace, War and Defense
Marine Option

MIDN 4/C JOSHUA HEARD
Lagrange, Georgia
Exercise and Sports Science
Marine Option

MIDN 4/C ALBERT SCHMIDT
Charleston, South Carolina
Mathematics
Interested in: Submarine Warfare

MIDN 4/C SOPHIA SHERMAN
Long Island, New York
Biology
Undecided

MIDN 4/C JAMES SLAGHT
Apex, NC
Statistics and Analytics
Interested in: Aviation/Special Warfare

MIDN 4/C JOHN TRIPP
Wilmington, NC
Biology
Undecided

MIDN 4/C DREW WARLICK
Charlotte, NC
Chemistry
Interested in: Special Warfare

SGT DANIEL DELAPURETA
Hammonton, New Jersey
Political Science
MECEP

SSGT DAVID FRY
Missouri
Computer Science, B.A.
MECEP
Thank you to all the UNC-CH midshipmen who contributed to this issue of Anchors Aweigh, including:

MIDN 3/C Allison  MIDN 3/C Strong
MIDN 3/C Berry  MIDN 2/C Antolini
MIDN 3/C Gholson  MIDN 2/C Carriero
MIDN 3/C McPhail  MIDN 2/C Verwoert
MIDN 3/C Protze  MIDN 1/C Gill

Enlisted Cruise photo (p. 8):
MIDN 2/C Justice Felton  
Arizona State University NROTC

Sea Trials photos, (p. 9) top two:
Petty Officer 1st Class Michael D. DiMestico,  
Navy Public Affairs Support Element East

Sea Trials photo, (p. 9) bottom:
Petty Officer 1st Class Amanda Kitchner  
U.S. Navy Recruit Training Command

This page, top left:
Lance Corporal Nicholas Lubchenko  
Marine Corps Installations East

We encourage Alumni to reach out to the Battalion!  
Please contact the Anchors Aweigh Editor:

MIDN 3/C Patrick  
pmatrick@live.unc.edu

For more information and updates, visit us online:  
https://nrotc.sites.unc.edu/  
Facebook: UNC-Chapel Hill Naval ROTC  
https://www.facebook.com/UNC.NROTC  
Instagram: @uncnrotc

Clockwise from left:
UNC’s Assistant Marine Officer Instructor (AMOI) MSgt Aguilar briefs midshipmen at Camp Geiger during CORTRAMID East; MIDN 3/C Gholson tries on EOD gear during a Special Warfare static display at Little Creek, Virginia; MIDN 2/C Verwoert poses next to a WWII-era gun; midshipmen approach a V-22 Osprey carefully before boarding it for a brief flight.