

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

After a long and successful semester, we are proud to share our accomplishments of Spring 2011 with our family and friends.

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Greetings from the CO's Office. As predicted, this spring semester has gone by quickly and we are in the final preparations to graduate and commission 15 new Ensign's and 2nd Lieutenant's into the Navy and Marine Corps. I couldn't be prouder of these fine men and women, and I am very confident they will serve ably and effectively in defense of our national security.

Our Battalion Staff led by MIDN Jason Tucker has adroitly managed a wide range of events this semester, many of which are documented in this edition of the Newsletter. We started off the semester with Leadership Conferences at the Naval Academy and at Notre Dame, and then participated in the Memphis Drill Meet, the Texas A&M Endurance Challenge, and finally finished up with a Junior/Senior Mess Night and NJROTC Roundup. All these events were led by our very capable senior class with exceptional results. In between these major events we sent small groups of midshipmen to visit the Joint Strike Fighter production facility at Lockheed Martin in Ft. Worth. We also visited the Navy Advanced Flight Training Wing at Kingsville, TX; as well as a quick visit up the road to the Applied Research Laboratory at our JJ Pickle Research

## CO's Corner

### CAPT Dan Dixon

Facility here at UT. Many of these events were sponsored by our very dedicated and supportive NROTC Alumni groups, we are frequently overwhelmed by their generous support of our midshipmen via

scholarships and support of various training events.

We are honored to have amongst our graduating seniors 2 of the 10 Distinguished Graduates from the College of Liberal Arts. The College graduates over 2000 students annually so this recognition is especially impressive given the added demands of the NROTC program. The Distinguished Graduates are SSgt Stephen Mercer and Officer Candidate Nubia Betancourt.



Our 15 graduates are going on to Marine Basic School, submarine service, surface warfare, surface warfare – nuclear/oceanography, naval aviator, naval flight officer, information warfare, and intelligence. These Longhorn NROTC graduates will be serving in operational units starting this June.

I've had the pleasure of teaching Leadership and Ethics to the senior class, and as I told my class, I really believe that I learned as much from them as they could potentially learn from me. The maturity and eagerness

to hone their professional knowledge displayed by this group will certainly hold them in good stead as they approach the leadership challenges they will face in the months and years ahead.

The rest of the Battalion will be very active over the summer at COR-TRAMID, 2/C and 1/C cruises, Mountain Warfare Training, Officer Candidate School and ultimately with Freshmen Orientation starting 16 August. We look forward to the arrival of the Class of 2015 which looks to be a very large class of approximately 40 midshipmen. Our Orientation Team is led by MIDN 2/C Garcia who will transition these recent high school students into the NROTC program during the 5 days of extensive training.

Finally, I would like to pass along kudos to our Unit Staff who has now finished the first year on the job. As many of you know, our entire staff transferred in over the summer and we had little corporate knowledge of the normal operation of the unit. The dedication and professionalism of everyone on the staff, to include our very capable team of civilians – Elaine, Bernard and Ricky, has impressed me every day and I am confident they all have made an incredibly positive impact on the members of our Battalion and on the University leadership.

Thanks to all for a very successful academic year, and congratulations to our imminent commissionees!

Go Navy and Hook 'em Horns – Dan Dixon

# XO's Corner: Communications

CDR Vernon "Butch" Neuenschwander



My first year at UT is quickly coming to an end and it seems just like yesterday that I arrived on campus. I am a bit jealous of our graduating seniors as they earn their commission and set off on what promises to be a wonderful journey. I wish I could do it all over again.

We have been through a lot during this first year and we will take all of our lessons learned and apply them for years to come. The most important lesson this year, in my opinion, is good communications. I tried to explain to the Battalion early on that poor communications was usually the downfall of any organization. Every single member needs to know the plan, what to do if the plan changes and how to communicate up and down the chain of command during all phases of the mission.

I think the saying is "Bad news isn't wine. It doesn't improve with age." Part of developing as an officer in the Navy and Marine Corps includes the ability to deliver news, both good and bad, to the boss in a timely fashion. Some people fear the repercussions of delivering bad news but I can guarantee you the repercussions are far worse if you sit on the information.

Been there, done that, got the t-shirt.

We have found this past year that members of our unit were not clear on instructions, that students failed to discuss with their parents poor grades or poor performance and in some cases members of the unit failed to report important information to the chain of command. We have addressed these breakdowns in communications and everyone has a better understanding.

Please don't take this message in a negative way. This has been a banner year for our team, highlighted by the great effort to win the President's

trophy over the Army and Air Force. I am addressing this topic because we are entering a very hectic part of the year. Graduation, commissioning, summer cruises and freshman orientation are upon us and good communications will allow for smooth sailing. Everyone should know what our contact information is and what to do in case a plan goes awry.

I want to wish our graduates "fair winds and following seas", and even though you have left the nest of Austin, you can call me anytime if you need assistance. I am your shipmate.

***"Every single member needs to know the plan, what to do if the plan changes and how to communicate up and down the chain of command during all phases of the mission."***



# MOI's Corner

Maj. Ty Kopke

This is an exciting time for the Naval ROTC. We will be commissioning 12 ensigns and 3 second lieutenants this month bringing our total this academic year to 22. The juniors joined the graduating seniors and staff on 29 April to celebrate their tour at UT with the traditions of Mess Night. By all accounts it was not only a success but an enjoyable occasion for all who attended. A thank you goes to Dr. Mark for his inspiring words as the guest speaker. As the seniors embark on their careers we have our largest freshmen class in years reporting for orientation later this summer. They will be greeted by MIDN I/C Goodrich, MIDN 2/C McKinney, and SSgt Thompson as the new battalion leadership. As the staff departs for their

various summer training commitments (CORTRAMID, OCS) I believe that not only the new officers, but the remaining midshipmen have grown significantly this year. After making the conscious decision to "give them the reigns" they have performed admirably. Their abilities were displayed through their planning and execution of Mess Night, the Cars-2-Go fundraiser, as well as the NJROTC Round Up. The students used their imagination and raised more money this spring semester than any other in the battalion's history. The Cars-2-Go event was completely planned and coordinated by the students. They moved nearly 300 cars throughout the Austin area raising \$10,000 for battalion events. The students seized the

initiative with the Round Up, contacted all the schools, planned the events, instructed classes, ordered trophies and food, and presented awards to their high school brethren. They did both these events with very little guidance needed from the staff. Feedback from the retired Naval Instructors that attended was positive as they were impressed with the professionalism, initiative, and attention to detail of our midshipmen. The talent and raw leadership abilities of the students make me believe that the future of the battalion is bright. I have no doubts that our 15 new naval officers will make the Navy and Marine Corps team an even better place to serve.



*"The talent and raw leadership abilities of the students make me believe that the future of the battalion is bright."*

## Guest Speakers: Real World Experience Comes to Our Battalion

By: MIDN 4/C Joe Barone and MIDN 3/C Carley Tadlock

This semester, we had many outstanding officers come and visit our battalion. They shared their real world experiences, engaging us and motivating us for our future careers in the Navy and Marine Corps.

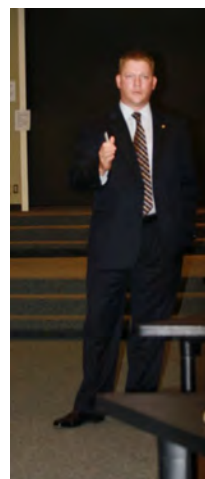
The first of our guest speakers was Rear Admiral Garry J. Bonelli, who is currently serving as the Deputy Commander of the Naval Special Warfare Community. During the Admiral's visit he spoke to the battalion about the current general tasks Navy SEALs around the world are performing, and outlined what characteristics any well-rounded SEAL should have. Admiral Bonelli explained that being a warrior is the easiest part of SEAL life, however the ability to think critically in any given situation, and to be a diplomat for the United States are traits that

make today's Special Warfare troops the most elite fighting force in the world. He also explained several initiatives that Special Operations would be taking to diversify the SEAL community, include more women in the program as well as making individuals fluent in more than one language.

Major Jeff Broaddus, who commissioned into the Marine Corps in 1999, shared his experiences in the military and how it transferred over to his civilian career. He spoke of many lessons he learned throughout his career as an infantry and recon officer. Two leadership principles that he shared with us are: lead by example, and look before you leap. Maj Broaddus made it clear that as an officer you should never ask your people to do something you would never do yourself. "Look before you leap" is kind of a twist on "don't bite off more than you can chew". He stressed that taking chances is necessary, but leaps of faith are not recommended.



CAPT Jenkins



# Leadership Conferences: Developing skills for the future

Selected Midshipmen were able to attend leadership conferences at the Naval Academy, the University of Texas, Texas A&M University, and the University of Notre Dame.

The primary focus of the University of Texas Leadership Conference was ethical leadership. The day to day business of the event consisted of listening to speakers, going to elective lessons on leadership, and meeting with groups to discuss things learned throughout the day. The primary lesson, which was covered by every speaker in a different way, was the importance of knowing yourself. While this may sound hokey, it is clear how important having a set of moral values and ethics is to being a successful leader. Each speaker through various personal experiences was able to show how they were able to effectively lead others, not because of any great skill of theirs, but primarily because they knew the right thing to do and because they acted on that. Others naturally followed once they had made it clear that they were following an ethical and moral path.

Texas A&M University hosted the Student Conference on National Affairs (SCONA). SCONA has two main goals

every year: “first, to create interest in problems and policies, national and international; and second, to develop enlightened responsible leaders through meaningful exchange of ideas among students.” This years topic was “Cost of War, Cost of Peace: Consequences of Yesterday, America’s Vision for Tomorrow.” After each speaker finished and allowed delegates to ask questions, the delegates would break off into their small groups of about 10 people and discuss the group’s policy, applying the information they just received from the speaker towards their proposal to create a more peaceful future. “It helped me to voice my opinion amongst not only my peers,” said MIDN Chang Lee, “but [high-ranking officers], as well as offer insightful comments and solutions to highly controversial subjects.” The policy had to relate to the conference’s topic, and the group also had to present a comical skit at the end of the conference that portrayed the group’s policy in a humorous way.

The University of Notre Dame hosted a leadership symposium for nearly 150 Midshipmen, Officer Candidates, and Marines from around the country. Our Midshipmen attended a

leadership symposium from CAPT Dolan, a former SEAL who later went into the JAG field, who stressed that whatever they do in the military, no matter what field, job or MOS, to make sure they enjoy it, and to never quit while it’s still fun. They also heard from RADM LaRouche, a reservist who had key insight into many ethical issues that officers will face in the military. He stressed to the Midshipmen to hold their subordinates to the highest standard, and to lead by example. Mr. Paul Whitesell, a former Marine who is currently the Superintendent of the Indiana State Police, and a member of the Black Belt Hall of Fame, discussed his experiences and focused on teaching the Midshipmen to surround themselves with good people. A strong staff with a unified mission is the key to success. He also stressed on focusing on the needs and capabilities of the individuals under your command. Col. Alford, the commanding officer of The Basic School, spoke about the importance of accountability, for yourself and your subordinates, and being an officer 24/7. His talk led into a series of Ethical Decision Games, in which all the Midshipmen had a chance for discussion on key issues.



## Competition Teams

The Endurance team competed in the Piney Trails Run in Houston, Texas, which consists of a 10 mile run through a nature park. Four Midshipmen, MIDN 1/C Jason Tucker, MIDN 4/C Joe Barone, MIDN 3/C John Garcia, and MIDN 3/C Zach Harvey, who is also the team captain. MIDN 4/C Barone won first place in his age group and second overall. MIDN 1/C Tucker won second place in his age group and fourth overall.

The Drill team competed in the Beale Drill Meet at the University of Memphis, in Memphis, Tennes-

see. Their competition consists of an inspection and squad drill. Two Midshipmen, MIDN 1/C Christopher Olander and MIDN 1/C Jeremiah Medina, also competed in the tandem exhibition drill. The Endurance Team and Color Guard Team also competed in this drill competition.

The Color Guard Team presents the colors at many UT games and sporting events around the community. Recently, our color guard presented the colors at the Spurs vs. Lakers basketball game in San Antonio, Texas



**“MIDN 4/C Barone won first place in his age group”**

# Field Trips to Naval Air Stations

By MIDN 2/C Charles Cahoon and MIDN 3/C Ryan DeFranco

The UT NROTC took a trip to the Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company in Fort Worth, Texas on 08APR11. The midshipmen and cadre were given a tour of the aircraft assembly line in which the new F-35's are being built. The assembly building is simply massive, a mile long and filled with seemingly hundreds of intelligent workers doing tasks ranging from entering massive amounts of data into computers, to operating the giant five ton crane which moves along a track mounted on the ceiling of the facility. The amount of equipment stowed everywhere was incredible. Unassembled hulls of aircraft were waiting to be constructed, some with their many wires spewing out between their panels. The midshipmen also had the privilege of seeing a real F-35! It's sleek and diligently planned design speaks volumes of its capabilities and potential, clearly setting it apart from any of its predecessors.

We then got to sit in the cockpit. A simulated cockpit anyway, attached to a neat 3 panel screen, upon which prospective pilots would learn to operate and maneuver the aircraft in a variety of parameters and situations. Quite incredible technology it is, being one of the reasons that U.S. Naval Aviation is the best in the world! Each of us had our turn in the simulator. Some performed exceptionally well, and others did not. Among those who did well were Sergeant Barton and Captain Dixon. Captain Dixon did especially, because he managed to land his aircraft on a carrier in a level six sea state. Major Kopke and Lieutenant Lozeau through a comical spectacle both ended up landing in the ocean and scuttling their planes. I won't even talk about MIDN Alford's flight, though it was the most humorous and entertaining of all. Our fieldtrip was a valuable educational

experience, and I think the unit should participate in more like it, more often.

For their second aviation oriented trip this spring semester of 2011, the UT Naval ROTC Battalion took a few members down to

Kingsville, TX to see where many aviators have or are currently receiving their training. During the visit, the members who participated saw some painting designs unique to the Kingsville NAS and learned about the T-45 Goshawk, which is one of the

most popular fixed wing aircraft to train new aviators around the world. Along with learning general knowledge of the aircraft, the BN members present spent some time in flight simulators – where they attempted to land on a US Carrier and acted as a wingman to an AI T-45.

As a whole, the trip was fun and informative. It was a great opportunity to learn regardless of whether or not one was interested in aviation – and possibly even caused some to reconsider their future community as a Naval/Marine Corps officer.



# MD Walk-a-Thon



On Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup> 2011, the Muscular Dystrophy Association hosted a walk and Fire Truck pull to raise money for muscular dystrophy research and to raise awareness. The walk took place indoors at the Barton Springs Square Mall. The walk was staffed by many volunteers of various organizations. Several local high schools had Key Club members assisting with the walk, as well as a drum line to lead the walk. Several local vendors also donated free food to all participating in the walk.

The University of Texas Navy ROTC personnel participated under the flag of Wesley's Muscles, organized by the recently commissioned Second Lieutenant Denniston, USMC, in name of his son. In attendance were Lt. Denniston, Lt. Jordan, SSgt. Fernandez, SSgt.

Little, SSgt. Mercer, OC Gresham, MIDN Wright, MIDN Tucker, MIDN Cahoon, MIDN Knight, MIDN Muffly, MIDN Dinmore, MIDN Cardinal, and various friends and family members.

The walk began with a free breakfast for all participants, consisting of bananas, breakfast burritos, water, and donuts. During the breakfast, volunteers performed musical acts on a small stage arranged inside the mall. Once all of the teams had been gathered, the walk began. A drum line led the procession on a circle through the entire mall, while everyone walked holding signs identifying who they were supporting that day.

At the conclusion of the walk, all of the teams headed out to

the parking lot to compete in the Fire Truck pull. The goal was to pull a 48,000 lb Fire Truck 50 feet in a tug-of-war style with a single rope. Five teams competed in the pull: The Austin Fire Department, Austin High School's Key Club, Bob FM radio, a group of MDA supporters, and the Wesley's Muscles. When all was said and done, Wesley's Muscles took first place with a time of just over eleven seconds. The prize was a trophy, and a golf day for four at a local resort.

In all, more than \$25,000 dollars was raised for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and everyone had a good time showing support for a great cause!



# Car 2 Go Fundraiser

By: MIDN I/C Jeremiah Medina

The Naval ROTC participated in a fundraiser with the Austin Car2Go company during Spring Break (March 18 - 20), raising \$10,000 in the course of a weekend. Car2Go is a smart car rental company that distributes accessible smart cars throughout an area for easy transportation options for those who held membership with the organization. This event was an opportunity for the battalion to raise a large amount of funds in a short amount of time. Overall, based on the feedback from fellow battalion members, the event was one of the most enjoyable fundraising events the battalion has

participated in this past year.

The fundraiser took place between Austin and Round Rock over the last weekend in Spring Break (Friday through Sunday). Car2Go was undergoing an Austin-wide upgrade of their smart car fleet, from software upgrades to vehicle unit replacements, and asked our battalion to assist them in this transition, which was creatively called "The Great Exchange". Our tasks involved installing new hardware (such as member card readers) into the new smart cars, driving the old smart cars into a holding lot in Round Rock, and distributing new smart cars into various locations in Austin. Immediately be-

fore "The Great Exchange", Austin Car2Go offered a chance for any battalion members to earn money during the week of Spring Break by helping the company prepare for "The Great Exchange". Those who took advantage of the offer assisted in readying both old and new smart cars for transportation between Austin and Round Rock. For the amount of money raised and the enjoyment of the task, "The Great Exchange" with Austin Car2Go was a worthwhile experience. Not only did the battalion earn a considerable amount of funds, but also built its reputation off campus as a trustworthy and reliable organization.

# Explore UT

By SSgt Jared Thompson



Spring was in the air and the campus was bustling on Saturday, March 5th, as the University of Texas hosted its annual Explore UT event. The Naval ROTC Unit was well represented by members of the battalion assisting with the rock wall station and answering questions from interested high school students inquiring about becoming an officer in the Navy or Marine Corps. Some visitors of the UT NROTC booth fiercely compet-

ed to perform the most sit-ups or push-ups in pursuit of a highly sought after Navy or Marine Corps foam football. The top performers had their name and record posted on the table for the duration of the event. When the dust had settled, the sit-up record stood at 230, performed in one sitting, and the push-up record was 110.

The booth was nearly depleted of its entire stock of memorabilia as the day drew to a close. Battalion members reflected another busy, but successful, Explore UT event. Hundreds of people of all ages safely climbed the rock wall thanks to the exceptional efforts by the Midshipmen attaching the climbing harness and directing the line. The Naval ROTC battalion proudly displayed the professionalism, which makes it so successful, during the annual event. Explore UT gave the battalion an extraordinary opportunity to interact with the public and explain some of the remarkable events that UT NROTC is a part of.

Among the most rewarding aspects of Explore UT was the valuable insight and advice battalion members were able to share with young students interested in the program. While closing up the final boxes and cleaning up the area at the end of the event, an eighth-grade student and his family approached the Midshipmen at the booth. He explained that his goal is to become a Marine Corps officer



and he was seeking some advice from a couple of the battalion's Leatherneck Platoon members. The Midshipmen stressed the importance of excelling academically as well as challenging yourself physically, maintaining a high level of physical fitness. In addition, they encouraged the young man to seek leadership opportunities in his school's JROTC program and keep sight of his goals. It was encouraging to meet such focused and inspired individuals, like this eighth-grade student, and to have a small part in continuing their drive toward achieving a highly honorable goal.

Explore UT was yet another successful event for the UT Naval ROTC battalion due, in large part, to the professional efforts made by the Midshipmen volunteers who sacrificed their time to help out. Events such as this assist in continuing to attract highly skilled and dedicated students to pursue the UT NROTC program and ultimately earn the distinct honor of leading our nation's Sailors and Marines.

# NJROTC Round Up

On April 30th 2011 We invited students from NJROTC high schools known as our "little brother" units from around the Austin area to join us in the annual NJROTC Round Up. The event is to increase awareness of the UT NROTC program and build esprit de corps with local NJROTC units. 143 NJROTC students attended the event from 5 schools, Arlington Heights, Georgetown, Lehman, Smithson Valley, and Vista Ridge High School.

While at the university the NJROTC units took part in an athletic competition, a scavenger hunt, a knockout drill competition and a barbeque lunch. The athletic competition consisted of 4 stations, dips, push-ups, sit-ups and pull-ups, as well as answering of knowledge questions. It was a timed competition and an incorrect answer to a knowledge question was worth a time penalty. The scavenger hunt was to get the students acquainted to the UT campus. Students



Knock Out Drill Competition

were given a list of places throughout the campus and a question to go with each destination. Students were sent out in groups to take a picture at each destination and answer as many questions as they can in an hour.

The MIDN at the event also spent plenty of time with the high school students talking to them about life in the UT NROTC BN and life as a Longhorn.



*Navy wins the President's Cup*

# President's Cup

Every semester, our battalion participates in a competition against the Army and Air Force ROTCs called President's Cup. It is a competition mostly based on physical fitness. The first day of the competition consisted of every branch playing each other in one game of Basketball, Volleyball and a game known as "trash ball".

Unfortunately, at the end of the first day, Navy was in third place, and Army and Air Force were tied for first.

The second day was more of pure physical competition with sprints, planks, sit-ups, and push-ups. On the third day we did a Tri-Service run, where we ran all over cam-

pus and ended at the UT Tower. Once we got to The Tower, the university's President, William Powers Jr., made a speech to all the ROTC's about how he is proud of what we are doing with our lives. He then presented the President's Cup trophy to the Navy ROTC for winning the overall competition



*CAPT Dixon, President Powers, MIDN Tucker, the Air Force ROTC Commander Colonel Bowman and the Army ROTC Major Reyes all wearing Navy ROTC PT shirts.*

# Captain's Cup

The Captain's Cup is a competition that occurs every semester between all three platoons in the battalion that occurs every semester. This semester, the Captain's Cup consisted of a swim competition, an inspection by the NROTC's Unit Staff, and a platoon drill competition.

The swim competition

was very close, but the Leatherneck Platoon took first place. The uniform inspection was in Summer Whites for MIDN and Class Deltas for the MECEPS (Marine Enlisted College Education Program students). The inspection consisted of a uniform inspection and military knowledge and bearing inspection. The

Drill Competition was very interesting. Each platoon woke up early on several mornings to practice marching with M-1 Garand Rifles. After a very close drill competition, Navy Platoon won first place. Overall, Navy Platoon received the most points towards Captain's Cup, thus earning the prestigious title of Honor Platoon.





# Change of Command Ceremony

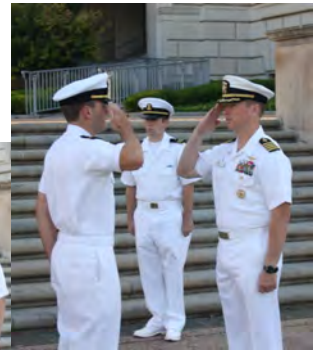


MIDN Tucker passing the guidon to MIDN Goodrich

On 28Apr2011 after a very long and successful spring semester for our Battalion Staff, MIDN Tucker was relieved from his duties as BNCO. MIDN Tucker, along with his BN XO MIDN Hecke and SgtMaj SSgt Mercer, had a eventful semester. They, along with the rest of staff worked endlessly to keep the battalion running smoothly this semester.

MIDN Tucker passed on control of the Battalion to MIDN Goodrich and his staff,

including MIDN McKinney as BN XO and SSgt Thompson as SgtMaj.



MIDN Goodrich reporting to CAPT Dixon

# Awards Ceremony

Every semester we are very lucky to present MIDN with awards from many foundations including Sons of the Revolution, Order of Daedalians, the Military Officer Association of America and our very own MIDN Foundation. This semester we gave out 16 unit level awards.

The Naval Officer sword is awarded to Midshipman Tucker. The Marine Corps officer sword is awarded to Midshipman Muffly. The Military Officer Association of America ROTC Medal was presented to MIDN John B Goodrich and SSgt Matthew K Little. The American Legion bronze medal award for Scholastic Excellence

was presented to MIDN Taylor Poli. MIDN Clinton Peterson was awarded the American Legion silver medal award for Scholastic Excellence. The American Legion gold medal for Scholastic Excellence was awarded to MIDN Jordan Penland. MIDN Chris Lee received the American Legion bronze medal award for Military Aptitude. The American Legion silver medal award for Military Aptitude was awarded to MIDN John Garcia. MIDN Andrew Watkins received the American Legion gold medal award for Military Aptitude. MIDN Larrimie Gordon was awarded the Reserve Officer Association's Silver Medal.

MIDN Alyssa McKinney was awarded the Reserve Officer Association's Gold Medal. Sons of the American Revolution presented MIDN Michael Lowe with the Silver ROTC Medal. MIDN Austin Muffly received the Outstanding Platoon Leader award presented by the MIDN Foundation. Order of the Daedalians award was presented to MIDN John Goodrich. The Crawford and Hattie Jackson Foundation, United States Marine Corps award was received by MIDN Aaron Tallant, while the united states Navy award was received by MIDN John Goodrich.

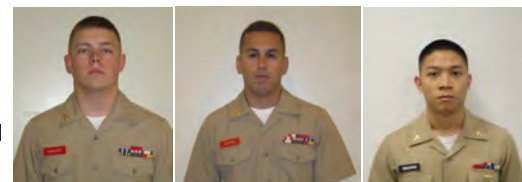


# Battalion Members of the Month

Every month the BN Staff picks a MIDN that they believe has shown great dedication and hard work around the unit.

MIDN Wright received the

award for the month of February. MIDN Reyes received the award for the month of March. MIDN Medina received the award for the month of April.



# Ensign Commissioning Ceremonies

Nubia Betancourt graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a major in Arabic Language and Literature and a minor in Middle Eastern Studies in May 2011. Betancourt was commissioned into the United States Navy as part of the Seaman to Admiral Program. She was sworn in by LT Christian Rivera (USN), while Chief Petty Officer Rodney Lamarr Martin and David Caple changed her shoulder boards.

Betancourt received her first salute from Chief Petty Officer Rodney Lamarr Martin (USN).



Alexander Darst graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Electrical Engineering in May 2011. Darst was commissioned into the United States Navy as a Surface Nuclear Warfare Officer. He was sworn in by Lt Daniel Ayala (USN), while his mother and father Beatriz and Kevin Darst changed his rank. Darst received his first salute from Staff Sergeant Thompson (USMC).



Colin Doherty graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Music in May 2011. Doherty was commissioned into the United States Navy as a Naval Flight Officer. He was sworn in by his father Lt Thomas Doherty (USN RET). While Doherty's mother Sarah Spring and brother Kyle Doherty changed his rank. Doherty received his first salute from Staff Sergeant Thompson (USMC).



Tara Elliott graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a major in Anthropology and a minor in French in May 2011. Elliott was commissioned into the United States Navy as a Surface Warfare/Oceanography Officer. She was sworn in by 2nd LT Cruz (USMC), while her mother and sister Margaret and Caryl Elliott. Elliott received her first salute from OC Phillips (USN).



Richard Hecke graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Kinesiology in May 2011. Hecke was commissioned in the United States Navy as a Naval Aviator. He was sworn in by ENS Elizabeth Page (USN) while his mother Carol Fleckenstein and girlfriend Nayeli Abarca, changed his rank. Hecke received his first salute from SSGT Janet Hudson (USA).



Christopher Olander graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Aerospace Engineering in May 2011. Olander was commissioned into the United States Navy as a Naval Aviator. He was sworn in by CDR Joe Culwell (USN), while his father and brother Mike and Alan Olander changed his rank. Olander received his first salute from CPL Oscar Gonzalez (USMC).



# Ensign Commissioning Ceremonies

**This semester we commissioned twelve Ensigns into the Navy!**

**Nubia Betancourt,**  
**Alexander Darst,**  
**Colin Doherty,**  
**Tara Elliot,**  
**Richard Hecke,**  
**Christopher Olander,**  
**Neehar Pandya,**  
**Lee Patterson,**  
**Jordan Penland,**  
**Karin Marie Pooser,**  
**Jason Tucker,**  
**and**  
**Bernadette Vingerhoets!**

Neehar Pandya graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Aerospace Engineering in May 2011. Pandya was commissioned into the United States Navy as a Naval Aviator. He was sworn in by Dr. Hans Mark (AF), while his mother and father Mina and Dhruv Pandya changed his rank. Pandya received his first salute from Sgt Brad Hogue.



Lee Patterson graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Mechanical Engineering in May 2011. Patterson was commissioned into the United States Navy as a Submariner. He was sworn in by MAJ Kopke (USMC), while his mother Kim Patterson and fiancée Anna Lyddane changed his rank. Patterson received his first salute from Petty Officer 2nd Class Austin Davis



Jordan Penland graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Microbiology in May 2011. Penland was commissioned into the United States Navy as a Submariner. He was sworn in by CAPT Joshua Brandon (USA) while his mother and father Jamie and Jeff Penland changed his rank. Penland received his first salute from Sgt Jared Penland (USA).



Karin Marie Pooser graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Chemical Engineering in May 2011. Pooser was commissioned into the United States Navy as a Surface Nuclear Warfare Officer. She was sworn in by ENS Wes Hozaphel (USN), while her mother and father Karen and Laddie Pooser changed her shoulder boards. Pooser received her first salute from Petty Officer 1st Class Donald Pooser (USN).



Jason Tucker graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a major in Linguistics and a minor in Arabic in May 2011. Tucker was commissioned into the United States Navy as an Intelligence Officer. He was sworn in by his father LT COL David Tucker (U.S. ARMY RET.), while his mother Janiece Tucker and fiancée Kathleen Rehmann changed his rank. Tucker received his first salute from GySgt Simone



Bernadette Vingerhoets graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Nursing in May 2011. Vingerhoets was commissioned into the United States Navy as a Nursing Officer. She was sworn in by Lt Michael Silver (USN), while her mother Bernadette Forte and father Frank Vingerhoets changed her shoulder boards. Vingerhoets received her first salute from SSgt Amador.



# 2nd Lieutenants Commissioning Ceremonies

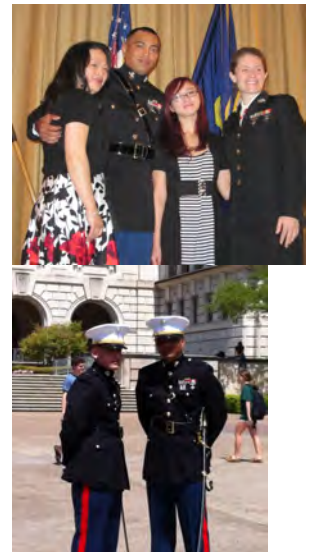
This spring semester, Morgan Jordan successfully completed the Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program (MECEP), and commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps. 1stLt Matthew Sladek administered his oath of office and was his commissioning officer. His wife Nicole and mother Lisa Jordan pinned on his gold bars, and his first salute was given by SSgt Jaime Gaona. 2ndLt Jordan will report to The Basic School (TBS) on 7 June 2011 where he will compete for an MOS.



John Cruz and Jacob Fernandez commissioned as Second Lieutenants in the United States Marine Corps following a private ceremony in the Theatre at the Union Building on March 25, 2011.

John Cruz enlisted in the Marine Corps after growing up in Guam, earning the rank of SSgt. Cruz has aspired to become an officer not only to follow orders and policy but also to influence them directly. In addition he wants to give back to the Marine Corps. Cruz is a passionate Marine; he has constantly taken individuals under his wing and treated them like family. Lt Cruz graduated with a degree in Economics from the College of Liberal Arts. Lt Cruz will report to Quantico, Virginia for further training as a Marine Second Lieutenant at The Basic School.

Jacob Fernandez enlisted in the Marine Corps immediately after high school in Del Rio, Texas. Fernandez enlisted after 9/11, out of a sense of patriotism and the idea of freedom. Fernandez's motivation to become an officer comes from a desire to create policy rather than enforce it as a SSgt. He feels he will have a greater impact on the Marine Corps as an officer. He displays a constant desire to succeed and motivates everyone around him to share that desire. Fernandez has been one of the key infantry instructors at the Battalion, preparing MIDN and Marines for Officer Candidate School and The Basic School. Lt Fernandez graduated with a degree in Geography from the College of Liberal Arts. Lt Fernandez will report to Quantico, Virginia for further training as a Marine Second Lieutenant at The Basic School.



*This semester six 2nd Lieutenants were commissioned into the Marine Corps.*

*Morgan Jordan,  
John P. Cruz,*

*Jacob A. Fernandez,  
Christopher Cardinal,  
Stephen Mercer and  
Austin Muffly!*

Christopher Cardinal graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Kinesiology in May 2011. Cardinal was commissioned into the United States Marine Corps. He was sworn in by 2nd Lt Cruz (USMC) while his mother and father Deb and Pat Cardinal changed his rank. Cardinal received his first salute from SSgt

Fernandez (USMC).



Stephen Mercer graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in History in May 2011. Mercer was commissioned into the United States Marine Corps through the Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education. He was sworn in by Capt Eric Montgomery (USMC) while his mother and father Helen Mercer and MAJ. Charles Mercer (USA RET) changed his rank. Mercer received his first salute from SSgt Thompson (USMC).



Austin Muffly graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Aerospace Engineering in May 2011. Muffly was commissioned into the United States Marine Corps. He was sworn in by his grandfather James L Muffly Sr., LTJG (USN). Then his mother and father Debra and James Muffly changed his rank. Muffly received his first salute from GySgt Simone (USMC).

