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**ON THE COVER:**

MIDSHIPMAN ADJUTANT, MIDN 2/C MICHAEL WHITAKER RENDERING HONORS TO OUR NATION’S COLORS AT THE 2008 SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY SPRING REVIEW CEREMONY.

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(FOR MORE INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.SAVSTATE.EDU/NROTC](http://WWW.SAVSTATE.EDU/NROTC))
CO’S WORD

I want to thank god for all of his many blessings to get me to this point. It has been a great honor for me to return to command the unit from where I started my naval career and finish 30 years of service in the best Navy in the world.

Though this NROTC unit is small compared to other larger universities with NROTC units around the country, it has produced officers that have had a great impact on our Navy and our country.

When I began my naval career, I intended only to serve my 4 year minimum service requirement to repay the Navy for my 4 years of scholarship payments, and here I am 30 years later, and I never looked back. I have no regrets. I have enjoyed a very successful and rewarding naval career.

No one joins the Navy to get rich, and I did not get rich financially, but I am wealthy, with a wealth of experiences – both good and bad, a loving family, true friends, and a sense of worthwhile accomplishments in service to my country.

I am not one for bragging on myself. I believe in actions speaking louder than words. I follow former president Teddy Roosevelt’s slogan of “speak softly, and carry a big stick.”

Thanks to the active duty staff and Midshipman company for making my retirement ceremony an occasion I will always remember.

I applaud all the midshipmen who have committed themselves to service during a time of war. You can leave no better legacy or indication of your pursuit of life, liberty and the freedoms we all enjoy in our country.

Continue to press on, regardless of any adversity.

I leave you all with the following poem, If, by Rudyard Kipling:

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream -- and not make dreams your master;
If you can think -- and not make thoughts your aim

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings -- nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run --
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And -- which is more -- you'll be a Man, my son!

(For more information and photographs, please visit our website at www.savstate.edu/nrotc)
Since its inception, this NROTC program has existed to develop young men and women morally, mentally, and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty in order to commission college graduates as officers who possess a basic professional background, are motivated toward careers in the naval service, and have a potential for future development in mind and character so as to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government.

In plain English, the NROTC students who meet or exceed the academic and physical fitness standards and demonstrate a strong work ethic and are willing to conduct themselves in a respectable manner will earn a commission. Each Midshipman is accepted into this program by the Commanding Officer based on his or her potential to develop their mind, body and character and learn the basic military leadership skills. At the end of the time allowed to earn a particular degree, those midshipmen who do not progress academically, do not embody the ideals of duty, honor and loyalty or succumb to the rigors of the program, ultimately have failed to realize their potential. Since there is no better predictor of future performance than past performance, one can only predict that those who fail to realize their potential as midshipmen will also fail to realize their potential as naval officers.

The standards of the program are finite and documented, and the staff is committed to your success. There are no surprises, and the standards apply to everyone. For the last thirty seven years, many midshipmen have taken on the challenge, some failed to live up to their potential, but many persevered and demonstrated that they had the true potential to assume the higher responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government. These midshipmen earned the privilege of assuming the watch in defense of our nation as naval officers.

Like I am at the end of every semester, I am very proud of the midshipmen who have persevered and earned the privilege of assuming the watch as naval officers. I am also very optimistic that every returning midshipman has the mettle to live up to the recognized potential which earned them acceptance into this NROTC program. Remember, potential transformed into achievement over time yields higher responsibility and reward; potential not transformed into performance over time is worthless. Semper Fi.

I would like to congratulate everyone on a great semester. Having the opportunity to serve as the Midshipman Commanding Officer was an honor. As a freshman, I did not expect to one day serve as the MCO. This great opportunity is just one of many the Navy has to offer those who are willing to lead. Being part of the NROTC program allowed me to gain an extended family and friendships that will last a lifetime.

As I move on to another chapter in my life, I wish my fellow shipmates the best in all your endeavors. As a company, we have experienced so much together. We have laughed, cried, and so much more. I will always remember our experiences and share them with my loved ones for years to come.

Remember, always be proactive and stay motivated as you continue on your journey. Now is your opportunity to make a difference. Take advantage of the opportunities that NROTC provides, and learn from the experience.

There is a quote from the movie The Great Debaters that inspired me throughout the semester. It states, “Do what you have to do, so you can do what you want to do.” These words have brought me a long way, and I hope that they will provide you with inspiration as well. Fare Well!

MARINE OFFICER INSTRUCTOR
Capt. J S. MARTIN

MIDSHIPMAN COMMANDING OFFICER,
MIDN 1/C ROBIN SANDERS

(FOR MORE INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.SAVSTATE.EDU/NROTC)
“Up in the morning before the rising sun…” The Savannah State University Midshipman Company is more than accustomed to early mornings. However, on this special Monday morning, the company put away physical training gear in favor of our Service Dress Blue uniform as we gathered to honor, and remember the legacy of Dr. King and his dream of a unified America.

On this chilly January day, the Midshipman Company formed up to take part in the 29th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. parade, in beautiful downtown Savannah. Lead by the Drill Team Commander, MIDN 3/C Melendez, the company marched in unison as thirty black pairs of oxfords shinned in the sun light. The crowd cheered and a stream of applause echoed the streets, as spectators admired the Midshipman Company’s discipline.

This parade was somehow different than all the other parades the company has participated in. The roads somehow seemed longer; almost as if they rose up to meet with those thirty black pairs of oxfords if only to say, “There is a dream within you too, now; this day.” And I remembered why I marched down those long streets in those sun-soaked leather oxfords. I remembered then, just as I remember now.

I too have a dream, only now, my dream has become a goal and in but two more years, a reality. Dr. King did not have a chance to see his dream come into fruition. So, in his honor, we pursue our dreams. Some of us will make it to the other side. Some won’t. But we will always remember that like Dr. King, we all have dreams. Let your dream liberate you.

MIDN 3/C ALLICE GHOLSON

BELOW: Savannah State University NROTC Midshipmen display their pride and professionalism while marching in the annual Martin Luther King Observance Day Parade.
On January 30th 2008, the Savannah State University NROTC Drill Team departed Savannah to compete in the annual Tulane Mardi Gras Drill Meet. The Drill Team had been training long and hard to try and duplicate the success of the team from last year who had placed 8th overall and won a third place trophy in Platoon Armed Basic. Instead of staying in a hotel this year we stayed in the Tulane Navy building which gave our cadre the opportunity to come together even more as a team.

The morning of the Meet you could feel the anticipation of the entire team as we held one last practice and made last minute corrections to uniforms. When it was show time, the Drill Team performed admirably and it showed how long and hard they had practiced by how they performed. Although we did not win a trophy we did place 9th overall and due to the fact that there was a bigger field (59 units) this year than last we did improve our standings overall in perspective. Sometimes there is more to be learned from defeat than victory and maybe this will motivate next year’s drill team to aspire for more. Although we did not place, we did not allow it to dampen our spirits as we had a weekend to enjoy the sights and sounds of New Orleans during Mardi Gras weekend. ~MIDN 3/C DAVID MELENDEZ

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Color Guard is history. It can be influenced by its surroundings and times of its creations, or it can reflect the past as well as the future. It can send us to a far away country or bring us closer to home. It brings out the richness in our heritage and continues the legacy of our forefathers.

Our colors have been flying high all over the world throughout history. Whether it was a cold day in Iwo Jima in 1945 or a colder day on Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd for the annual dedication parade.

The SSU NROTC Color Guard has played a key role in representing our unit on several occasions. We were granted the opportunity to demonstrate our knowledge of the drill manual at the annual Mardi Gras Drill Meet in New Orleans, Louisiana. We competed against some of top NROTC programs in the nation. We commanded the attention of spectators and our competition. This event was the highlight of my year.

MIDN 3/C ALLICE GHOULSON

(FOR MORE INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.SAVSTATE.EDU/NROTC)
I have had the honor of witnessing nine graduates of the NROTC program at Savannah State University get commissioned into the naval service. I have also had the opportunity to get to know and serve with these same graduates. It has been a great pleasure to know MIDN 1/C Sanders and Sgt. Ferdinand, not only as fellow midshipmen, but as mentors and friends.

These two young ladies took it upon themselves to be not only inspirational and motivating to the young ladies in this program, but to go above and beyond and become our mentors and friends.

On May 10, 2008, I witnessed both ladies cross the stage and enter a new era. One of “graduated” life. MIDN Sanders had to wait only approximately ten more minutes to become the 230th graduate of SSU NROTCU, Ensign Sanders. Sgt. Ferdinand will become the 231st commissioned officer of Savannah State University NROTCU upon her graduation from Officer Candidate School in August.

It has been a great honor to serve with both Ensign Sanders and Sgt. Ferdinand. You both deserve kudos for making it this far. But remember the road you travel will directly influence others. We look to you both to show us the way. Thank you for all the advice and encouragement.

May preparation meet opportunity.

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PT

“1, 2, 3, 4, United States Marine Corps!” I have become quite acquainted with that cadence this semester. As a Fourth Class Midshipman, I had the opportunity of enduring physical training with the Marine Options of the Unit. I found it very challenging to PT with Gunnery Sergeant Wright, but I remembered his famous words of, “This is what you asked for!”, which motivates me ‘til this day. Every PT day is an adventure to me, thanks to the creative minds that came up with the PT schedule. Every night I find myself thinking about where I will be at 0600 the next morning.

Having fellow shipmates with the same physical ability as me makes me feel more belonging to my “Brothers in Green”. It’s just an overwhelming feeling knowing that you’re giving it your all in PT and, there’s someone right beside you that is doing the same or better. I envy the idea of “no man left behind” and I witness it every time we run in formation.

I find PT rewarding because, it helps me to develop a healthy lifestyle. I never knew that by enduring extensive training every PT day would help me live a longer life. I don’t think I can see myself not participating in PT because, I feel that it is already a part of me.

MIDN 4/C DARRIUS SMITH

ABOVE: Savannah State University Marine Options and Two gung-ho Navy Options pose for a photo after a long day of land navigation, patrolling, and field exercises

BELOW: Savannah State Midshipman Company enjoys a Thursday afternoon command run with the Commanding Officer
It seemed as if the heavens opened and poured frozen droplets of water on us. The sky was cloudy and the creeks were full. This was the scene as the Marine Option Midshipmen and two gung-ho Navy Option Midshipmen took to the woods for our first exercise in land navigation by dead-reckoning.

We were split into seven groups of two, some of us experiencing the terrain for the first time. With a pace count unique to each group, we set off. At first the task seemed rather simple, but soon grew wearisome after getting lost a couple times. Midshipman 4/C Smith, D had this to say, “It was a great experience. I learned that stress can either make you or break you. It felt like it was us against the world.”

We have two midshipman preparing for OCS and many more who desire to follow. Midshipman 2/C Whitaker and Midshipman 2/C Campbell said that they expected the course to be rather easy after partaking in a similar program at Mountain Warfare Summer Training last year, but definitely met their match.

MIDN 3/C SHANTE’ SMITH

Recently, distinguished Savannah State University NROTC alumnus, Lieutenant Colonel Melvin T. Ingram, United States Marine Corps, was awarded the Defense Meritorious Service Medal. While serving as the Officer-in-Charge of the Country Coordination Element, Ethiopia, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), LTCOL Ingram’s superb leadership, perseverance, and dedication to duty, were instrumental in the successful negotiations between the CJTF-HOA and Ethiopian leaders.

As his citation states, “[LTCOL Ingram] demonstrated exceptional command presence, displaying inspiring leadership and sound management qualities to achieve critical goals and objectives. The detention of a J2X team in a “no go zone” in eastern Ethiopia, due to rebel activities, potentially threatened to rupture bilateral relations. He quickly defused tensions, advised and supported the US Ambassador and CJTF commander. With the US Ambassador, he met senior Ethiopian military and political leaders to quickly get two U.S. military personnel sent back to CJTF and to reassure host nation officials of our commitment to abide by their sensitivities and restriction of operations in certain areas of Ethiopia. Lieutenant Colonel Ingram further represented the US Embassy and CJTF-HOA in subsequent lengthy, host nation negotiations to ensure the release of the Ethiopian-born American citizen detained during this same incident. Through perceptive insight into how best to coordinate operations, he succeeded in enhancing cooperation, mutual understanding and support between the US Embassy, Ethiopia and CJTF-HOA.”
On March 18 2008, I was a participant in the 2008 Aviation Awareness Days Program. The program was sponsored by SSU NROTC and the 165th Airlift Wing of the Georgia Air National Guard in cooperation with Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools. USCG Air Station Savannah, GulfStream Aerospace, Embry-Riddle University, Middle Georgia College Aviation, Savannah Civil Air Patrol, Navy Recruiting Command and other aviation-related units participated. It was designed to give about 1,200 students from local middle and high schools an introductory familiarization into the field of aviation and its relationship to math and science. The day would soon prove to be an experience of a lifetime.

For me, the 28th of March started at 0520. I was suited and booted in my crisp and clean khaki uniform by 0540, to make it to the unit by 0600. After I arrived and the muster was taken, myself and ten of my fellow midshipmen were driven to the air field where the event was to be hosted. Upon arrival we quickly got ourselves prepared for the incoming students. The plan was simple, every Midshipman would be responsible for one to two groups of students, making sure they were given a proper tour of all the aircraft put on display for them.

I was given the privilege of escorting the wonderful students of Savannah and Beach High School’s JROTC programs. After I introduced myself to them and explained the rules of the aircraft tarmac, the tour was underway. We were able to see the aircraft and talk to their pilots and crews. The aircraft consisted of an SH-60B, an USAF C-130B, a Piper 6XT, the Coast Guard’s HH-65A “Dolphin” and a GulfStream test jet. Once the students got on the aircraft, their faces lit up with excitement. The pilots and air crews gave excellent descriptions of each aircraft’s main purpose, the training it took to fly it and any recent missions. After the tours I could tell some of the students couldn’t wait to become members of the aviation community.

MIDN 4/C DESHAWN AARON

ABOVE: MIDN 2/C CAMPBELL poses while visiting the helo station.

Above: Two F/A-18 HORNETS flyover our static display field.

Mess Night

Traditions, choker whites, videos, Grog, and the infamous "Winch." What do all these have in common? They were integral parts of the Savannah State University/Armstrong Atlantic State University NROTC Unit’s celebration of naval service traditions known as “Mess Night.” It was held on the nineteenth of April at the Hunter Army Air Field Hunter Club. All midshipmen, active duty staff, and honored guests were instructed to arrive an hour before the ceremony started for a social hour complete with finger foods, a bar for those of age, expensive cigars, and many whispers and jitters about who would be charged the most for all the embarrassing things they had occurred all year. As an honorable notion, our own Commanding Officer Captain Leonard B. Jones was the guest of honor, seeing as he was about to retire from over 30 years of naval service to our country.

As this was my second Mess Night as a midshipman in the SSU NROTCU, I was a bit apprehensive of the outcome of the event. Last year’s festivities were a bit new to me and as a freshman I didn’t feel as though I was able to grasp the concept of just how important the event was to the naval service. But this year’s Mess Night was filled with laughs, meaningful toasts, encouraging speeches, and moments in NROTC history that I am sure we as future naval officers will remember for years to come as we continue on to pursue our goals as leaders in our Navy.

MIDN 3/C MARPHILLIA CARRINGTON
On 17 April 2008 the Savannah State University NROTC program hosted its annual Spring Review. This year’s crowd was significantly larger than that of years past and provided the Midshipman Company with just the motivation it needed to execute one of the best Spring Reviews in the History of the Company. Our guest of honor for this year was Colonel Flora M. Emerson, USMC, Director Supply Chain Management Center, Marine Corps Logistics Command, Albany, Georgia, and alumnum of Savannah State University NROTC.

The ceremony began with the Staff falling into their places and the Midshipman Company marching onto the field followed by the presentation of the colors. After the report was given and the order was published it was time for the awards portion of the ceremony.

Numerous military and civic organizations presented awards to the Midshipman to reward them for all their hard work in the past academic year. After all the awards were given out it was time for the change of command ceremony. This salutes the outgoing Midshipman commanding officer for all of their hard work and recognizes the authority of the incoming commanding officer.

When the change of command was complete, the company performed a pass in review to show honors to the guest of honor. Overall the ceremony was a huge success and it will be hard to match the success of this ceremony for years to come.

MIDN 3/C DAVID MELENDEZ

As the last Thursday Drill began I prepared for the CO’s run and readied myself for an early dismissal. However, things are never so simple, Ensign Samuels returned to discuss with the company his career since leaving the NROTC unit. His information was a pleasant surprise to me, knowing that as a midshipman our future career is directly affected by our current actions.

The CO’s Run began smoothly and continued without a hitch. It was extremely motivating. GySgt Wright called cadence as Captain Jones lead the company. We ran around campus shouting and showing our spirit to all the students of Savannah State. After we returned, Lt. Corbin gave a brief on the summer cruises and Ensign Kevin Samuels spoke to the company.

Ensign Samuels began speaking, wearing regular Pt gear just like the rest of us and it made me think back to his former days as the company’s Midshipman Commanding Officer. It was great to see that he has gained that level of success that we are all striving for at the NROTC unit.

He has not changed much, but we could sense that although his time in the fleet has been short he has learned much. He told us that what we learn throughout our time in the unit, although it may seem small it will make a huge difference in the bigger picture. I related it to the small pixels on a TV screen that form the whole picture, you have many small pieces that make the complete picture.

Ensign Samuels also stressed the importance of good leadership by giving us examples of some of the problems his enlisted men and women have encountered and he has advised them on. So to me it felt like I have to grow up and mature quickly so that I can handle situations that may be beyond my experiences.

Ultimately, the last drill to me, was the best one and one I’ll never forget.

MIDN 4/C MICAH DANIELS
Hailing from Matthews, Georgia, Captain Leonard B. Jones currently serves as Commanding Officer of the NROTC Unit here at Savannah State University. He is a June 1978 Navy ROTC graduate of Savannah State College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry. After 30 years of hard work and continued commitment to achieving success, he is retiring from his legacy within the United States Navy and transitioning to a civilian career on 1 July 2008.

Granted the opportunity to interview the Commanding Officer my first question was, “Did you ever dream of becoming the Commanding Officer as a midshipman?” he replied, with a laugh at first, “No, I was more focused on the first five years of my career.” As he finished making this statement he changed my career focus immediately. This to me was a great lesson learned. In order to attain great success, you must first succeed at minor tasks in order to excel at greater endeavors. It is obvious that the Commanding Officer enjoyed his time at the unit. One of his most memorable times spent was at the October 2006 NROTC SSU Reunion Banquet. There he was able to share sea stories and journeys on the road to success with fellow alumni of the Savannah State University NROTC Unit.

The most cherished part of his job is having been granted the opportunity to come back where he got started and having the privilege to commission some of what he believes to be the Navy and Marine Corps’ greatest future officers. When asked what would be your final farewell words the Commanding officer replied, “Where’s my relief for the midwatch!”, which was immediately followed by a chuckle and “just kidding”. However, as he waves farewell he wishes “continued success here at the unit and in the future” to the Staff and the Midshipman Company.

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This semester Capt. Martin, MOI, posed the above question to the Midshipman Company. Sgt. Ferdinand and MIDN 1/C Sanders are living examples presented now to answer that question. This semester, seven midshipmen earned scholarships. Now, over 87 percent of our company is on scholarship.
## NROTC Unit Staff

### Active Duty Staff

- **CAPT Leonard B. Jones, USN**
  - Commanding Officer
  - Professor of Naval Science

- **CDR Edward G. GaNun, USN**
  - Executive Officer
  - Associate Professor of Naval Science

- **Capt Joey Martin, USMC**
  - Marine Officer Instructor

- **LT JG Dickamore, USN**
  - Freshman/Sophomore Advisor
  - Recruiting Officer

- **LT Corbin, USN**
  - Junior/Senior Advisor
  - MWR/IT Officer

### Midshipman Staff

- **SKCS (SW/AW) C. Porter, USN**
  - Supply Officer

- **YNC (AW) R. Byers, USN**
  - Admin Officer

- **GYSGT J. Wright, USMC**
  - Assistant Marine Officer Instructor

- **Mrs. Taylor**
  - SSU Secretary

- **Mrs. M.T. Shepard**
  - Military Personnel Clerk

- **MIDN 1/C Robin Sanders**
  - Commanding Officer

- **Sgt. Lynette Ferdinand**
  - Executive Officer

- **Sgt Mark Stroud**
  - Company 1st Sgt

- **MIDN 2/C Demetrius Campbell**
  - Logistics Officer

- **MIDN 2/C Michael Whitaker**
  - Adjutant

- **MIDN 2/C Jay English**
  - Operations Officer

- **MIDN 3/C Scott**
  - Academics Officer

### Commanding Officer

- **Naval ROTC Unit and Professor of Naval Science**

### Savannah State University

- **SSU Secretary**
  - Mrs. M.T. Shepard

### Savannah, Georgia 31404-9701

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**Professor of Naval Science**

- **Box 20299**
- **Savannah State University**
- **Savannah, Georgia 31404-9701**