



**SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
ARMSTRONG ATLANTIC STATE UNIVERSITY  
NAVAL RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS**



# IMC



**INSIDE:**

- **MESS NIGHT**
- **FEX1**
- **FEX 2**
- **FOUNDERS DAY**
- **MEMPHIS DRILL MEET**
- **TULANE DRILL MEET**
- **ARMY NAVY FIELD MEET**
- **CHANGE OF OPTION**



# Contents

CONTENTS	2
NOW HEAR THIS	3
A LITTLE BIT OF SEMPER COMBO	4
MEMPHIS DRILL MEET	5
FEX 1	6
FEX 2	7
SPRING REVIEW	8
MESS NIGHT	9
CHANGE OF OPTION	10
TULANE DRILL MEET	11
THE PATH LESS TRAVELED	12
FOUNDERS DAY PARADE	12
ARMY NAVY FIELD MEET	13
FAIR WINDS AND FLOWING SEAS	14
COMMISSIONINGS	15

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*On the Cover : The Midshipman company poses with the SSU president*

# NOW HEAR THIS

CO 1MC Article



Captain Kent V. Flowers, USN  
Commanding Officer

Greetings from SSU and AASU! In hope this newsletter finds you in good health and spirits. Enjoy reading how the Midshipman Company excelled this semester. As I promised in the fall 1MC, I will provide the remaining answers to my student interview questions.

**What is the best career advice you ever received?** *It was from ADM J. P. Reason, USN (Ret). He was a Rear Admiral at the time. We talked at the reception for my SWOS Department Head School graduation. He advised me to empower my people, be passionate and seek to learn my job better than anyone else. That was great advice. I have tried to adhere to it each day since then.*

**What do you say to the parent who is ambivalent about their child taking a NROTC scholarship because of the war?** *Parents have a big influence on what their children decide to pursue. Most students look to their parents for approval and support. I recommend that parents be supportive of the NROTC Scholarship opportunity. It is a top notch educational program. It will change the course of their child's life in unimaginable ways. Those who are concerned about the war have some valid points. However, I think one of the highest expressions of citizenship is being in the military. We in the U.S., have the world's best equipment, best leaders and best supporters. Why not join our winning team? Become part of the world's best! We are the Global Force for good! Go GET'EM!*



MIDN 1/C Darius Smith  
Midshipman Commanding Officer

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for blessing the Midshipmen Company, Active Duty Staff, and civilian employees throughout this strenuous semester. It has been an honor and privilege to serve as the Midshipman Commanding Officer for the Savannah State/Armstrong Atlantic State University NROTC Unit during the spring 2011 semester. I must say that I am very pleased with the esprit de corps and dedication to service the Midshipmen Company displayed throughout the entire semester. The future of the Navy and Marine Corps starts here and I fully believe that Midshipmen receive quality training while at this Unit. As graduation comes closer by the day, I reflect back on these past years and I smile because I know that I will never forget where I came from and I know I have the tools to be successful with special

thanks to the NROTC unit. On another note, I must say I am extremely proud of the Midshipmen Drill Team who performed well at Tulane University's Drill Meet while also placing first overall at the University of Memphis Drill Meet. It has been a while since our unit brought home Gold and I am very gracious that we achieved it while I was in command. As the Midshipmen ascend through the ranks and travel closer to that commissioning, I'm certain they are learning the habits of a good officer and applying them daily. The active duty staff does their best in training the Midshipmen Company well enough to be effective leaders in the future. Though we lost several Midshipmen this semester, I believe it supports the idea that the military is not for everybody and I'm comfortable with that. The goal of the NROTC program is to develop future Navy and Marine Corps Officers and if that means only an average of two commissions a semester rather than thirty, I will be able to sleep at night knowing that this NROTC unit DOES NOT PRODUCE BAD OFFICERS!

# A LITTLE BIT OF SEMPER COMBO

The relationship between the Army and the Navy is both friendly and very competitive. Between our two forces we oftentimes will joke and provoke one another. Our friendly rivalry stretches back centuries and helps us to prepare for more serious matters. When a true threat to our nation is at our door, any distance between the Navy and the Army closes, and we become close brothers in arms. The Naval Reserve officer Training Corps and Army Reserve officer Training Corps of Savannah State and Armstrong Atlantic State universities were able to show a little bit of this friendly rivalry on February 1, 2011 at the Military Appreciation Basketball Game.

Our competition began at the halftime of a Savannah State University basketball game. Our unit was on one side of the stadium, and the Army unit on the other. We felt anxious to begin our competition against Army and watched the ongoing game eagerly. During time outs we passed out Navy and Marine Corps information pamphlets and souvenirs as we pumped up the crowds. When half-time started, Staff Sergeant Morrison, MIDN Reigart, and I were selected to compete in a series of events against three of the Army personnel on the court. The first event was the Free-throw shoot out. I was selected to shoot free-throws against the clock. It had been a long time since I shot free-throws in competition, but with the help and motivation from my fellow NROTC midshipman, I was able to score four successful Free-throws which was enough to tie with the Army cadets. The second event was the push up contest. Staff Sergeant Morrison, a push-up guru, was selected to do this one. MIDN Reigart and I the counted for the Army cadet who scored 78 pushups. Unfortunately, the Army cadet counters for Staff Sergeant Morrison only counted 74 pushups. We felt unsure on the accuracy of this count and from the sound in the stadium, most of the people there counted a different number as well. We now felt even more determined to show our colors and prove our strength.

The last event was a wheel barrel race to the end of the court and back to the half-way point, ending with a lay-up shot. MIDN Reigart was chosen to be the wheel barrel and got into position as I held his legs ready to race against the Army. The whistle blew and the race began, we quickly rushed past the Army cadets all the way down the court and back to the half court line. I dropped MIDN Reigart's feet, he picked up the basketball and scored an easy goal, successfully executing the lay-up.

As this final event concluded, the two teams met back at the half court line and shook hands. The referee declared the entire competition a draw. The event was over and all due respect was paid. The event echoed two main points for me, that even with all of the rivalry between our branches, our companionship stands out, and that the NROTC can beat the Army cadets while wearing polos and khakis.

-MIDN 3/C Craig



# MEMPHIS DRILL MEET

As a Midshipman 4/C, the whole idea of another college drill meet was very nerve racking. We had exactly two weeks to recover from spring break, which I initially thought was going to be a challenge. However, the strong desire to improve after our performance in the Tulane drill meet, placing almost 3rd overall, gave us high expectations for Memphis. Any other feelings of anxiety dissipated after the two intense weeks of practice we had Monday through Friday. Friday morning, the weekend of the event we departed early for our ten hour drive. En route, we studied our military knowledge and prepared mentally for the meet. Once we arrived, we had our evening practice to make sure we had everything on point to through for each drill event. After practice we prepared our uniforms and hit our racks. The next day as we woke, drill was the only thing on our minds and we felt very focused on our task. Our first event was inspection. The Master Chief in command for the event spoke highly of our appearances which motivated us and gave us a great start. The following events were platoon basic, squad basic, color guard, dual exhibition & single exhibition. We performed well in all events making only minor mistakes. As the day continued, we felt confident on our performance against the other Universities, however anxious about how well we scored against them. Anxious about our performance, we eagerly awaited the results as the awards ceremony began. The results were in, we placed in all of events except dual exhibition. In platoon basic we placed 2<sup>nd</sup>, in squad basic: 3<sup>rd</sup>, Color guard: 2<sup>nd</sup>, Single exhibition 2<sup>nd</sup> with a 2<sup>nd</sup> place overall ranking for the competition. As we accepted our trophies and awards to bring back home, our only disappointment being that we failed to place 1<sup>st</sup> overall. Once we returned to our barracks to get dresses for liberty, we received a call informing us that we placed 1<sup>st</sup> overall due to our performance in the endurance competition. Everyone went crazy, shouting at the top of their lungs “We’re number 1!” knowing that we could enjoy the rest of the evening that we did our best and made Savannah State University NROTC stand out in front. I took a lot back from my experience in the drill meet and I hope to participate in many more to come. - MIDN 4/C Zirion



# FEX I

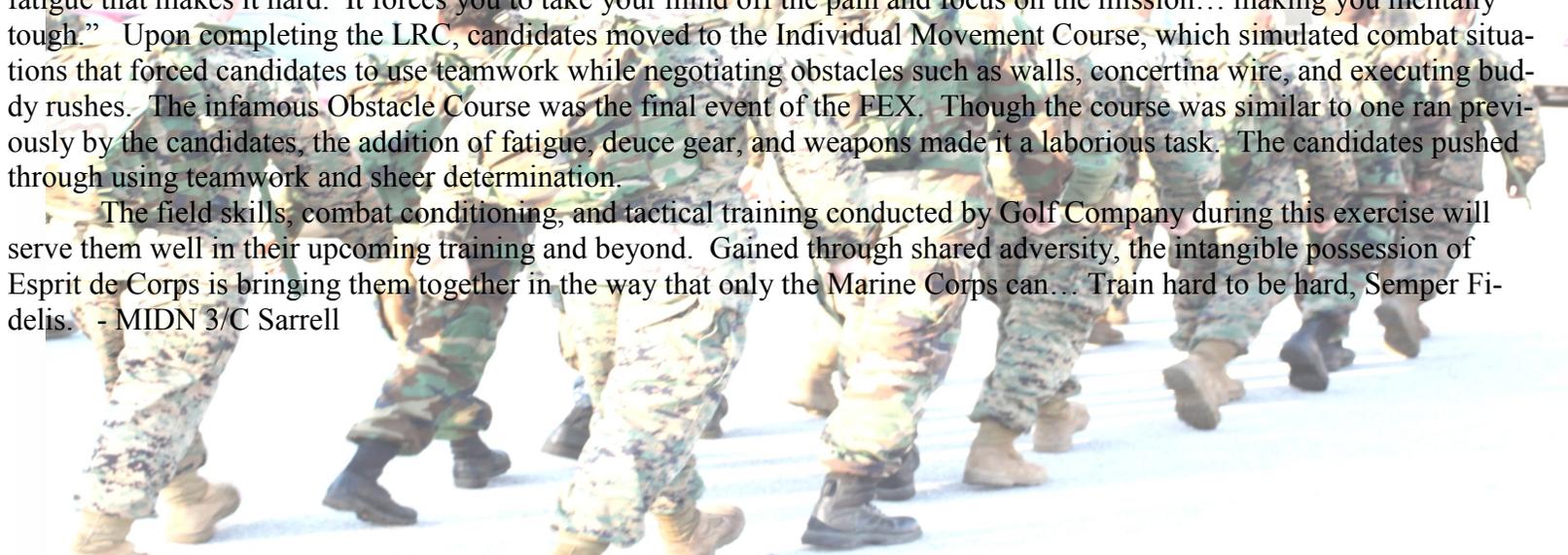


The weekend of 11 – 12 February 2011 was a benchmark for “Golf Company”, SSU/AASU NROTC Marine Detachment and the motivated Navy-opts who train with them, on the road to Officer Candidates School (OCS) and beyond: their first field exercise (FEX) of the semester. The 24 hour exercise at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina gave the “candidates” a preview of OCS by testing them mentally, morally, and physically; pushing some to their limit. While running on sore feet, little sleep, and minimal chow; the candidates were given the opportunity to apply field skills they had learned previously while gaining new ones.

Friday, 11 February began with PT and class like any typical day of the week. Candidates returned to the unit at 1200 and were en route to Parris Island by 1245. After arriving, all hands were ushered onto the infamous Yellow Footprints upon which many civilians have initiated their transition to Marines. After receiving a welcome briefing from a drill instructor and Receiving officer, candidates stepped it out to the Confidence Course at Leatherneck Square. Here they were given the chance to test and build their physical fitness and confidence while overcoming fear on obstacles such as The Dirty Name, The Tough One, and The Weaver. Afterwards, the candidates route stepped to Elliot Beach, set up bivouac, and conducted fire team/squad tactics, and operations order training until Taps.

Saturday, 12 February came quickly for the tired candidates who received no more than 4 hours of sleep. A sense of urgency was evident in the frigid air as they broke down their bivouac and packed their gear for the day’s first event: the 6-mile hike. As the candidates stepped off at 0530, an uncomfortable movement quickly became grueling as the Marine Officer Instructor began his mechanical pace. The importance of proper packing, hydration, and foot care became quickly evident to the candidates who were bearing between 50 and 70 pounds of gear. As 6 miles became 7, the candidates received a short break and made admin movements to the final events: the Leadership Reaction Course (LRC), Individual Movement Course, and Obstacle Course. The Leadership Reaction Course was a challenging yet rewarding experience for the tired, hungry, and sore candidates. The course required them to use teamwork while thinking “outside of the box” to complete a series of seemingly impossible scenarios. This exercise helped to develop leadership and fire team cooperation. According to MIDN Arnold, the only 4/C Marine Option in attendance, “The LRC isn’t a difficult concept, it’s the fatigue that makes it hard. It forces you to take your mind off the pain and focus on the mission... making you mentally tough.” Upon completing the LRC, candidates moved to the Individual Movement Course, which simulated combat situations that forced candidates to use teamwork while negotiating obstacles such as walls, concertina wire, and executing buddy rushes. The infamous Obstacle Course was the final event of the FEX. Though the course was similar to one ran previously by the candidates, the addition of fatigue, deuce gear, and weapons made it a laborious task. The candidates pushed through using teamwork and sheer determination.

The field skills, combat conditioning, and tactical training conducted by Golf Company during this exercise will serve them well in their upcoming training and beyond. Gained through shared adversity, the intangible possession of Esprit de Corps is bringing them together in the way that only the Marine Corps can... Train hard to be hard, Semper Fidelis. - MIDN 3/C Sarrell



# FEX 2

In preparation for Officer Candidate School (OCS) the Marine Option Midshipmen and active duty MECEPS participate in Bulldog training. Bulldog training tries to simulate the “fog of war,” or should I say OCS, to educate the participants on the skills necessary to graduate the most strenuous test of leadership the Marine Corps has to offer. Those skills are taught through physical fitness, weapons familiarization, land navigation, and field exercises (FEX). The second FEX consisted of the Invictus Challenge, host by Jacksonville Univ., and a 9 mile hump the very next morning.

The Invictus Challenge hit us with full force. An O-course relay and a 3.5 mile E-course were just a small pill to swallow prior to our 9 mile hump. The next morning started with a bivouac cleanup and then the infamous hump. We all suffered and were rightfully drained for the entire week after our weekend endeavors. But, thanks to our new Assistant Marine Officer Instructor Gunnery Sergeant Sumpter we have yet another tool to add to our repertoire of experience compounded by the love and respect we all continue to gain for each other as we train side by side to one day lead men and women to protect the stars and stripes. - MIDN 3/C Bazemore



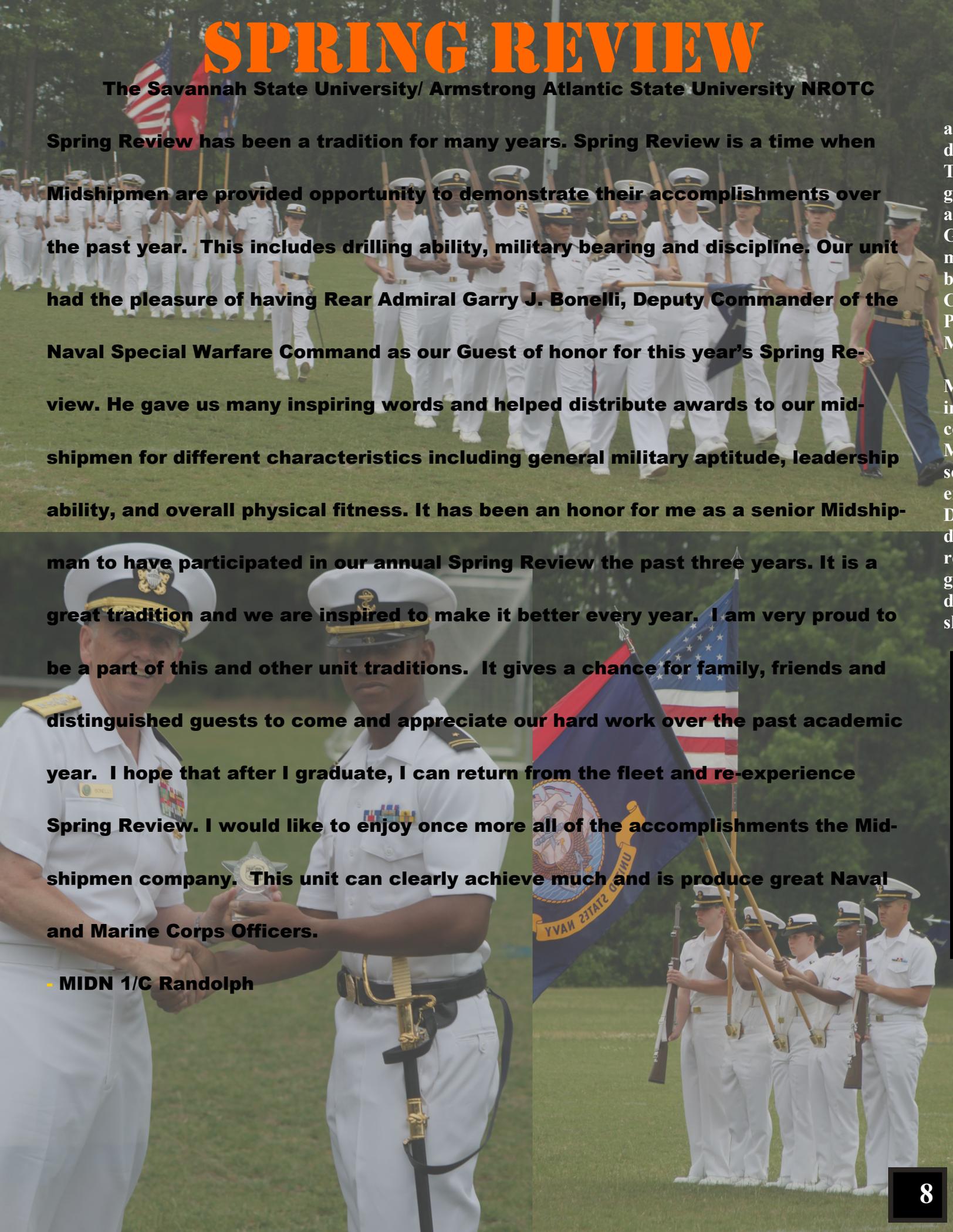
# SPRING REVIEW

The Savannah State University/ Armstrong Atlantic State University NROTC

Spring Review has been a tradition for many years. Spring Review is a time when Midshipmen are provided opportunity to demonstrate their accomplishments over the past year. This includes drilling ability, military bearing and discipline. Our unit had the pleasure of having Rear Admiral Garry J. Bonelli, Deputy Commander of the Naval Special Warfare Command as our Guest of honor for this year's Spring Review. He gave us many inspiring words and helped distribute awards to our midshipmen for different characteristics including general military aptitude, leadership ability, and overall physical fitness. It has been an honor for me as a senior Midship-

man to have participated in our annual Spring Review the past three years. It is a great tradition and we are inspired to make it better every year. I am very proud to be a part of this and other unit traditions. It gives a chance for family, friends and distinguished guests to come and appreciate our hard work over the past academic year. I hope that after I graduate, I can return from the fleet and re-experience Spring Review. I would like to enjoy once more all of the accomplishments the Midshipmen company. This unit can clearly achieve much and is produce great Naval and Marine Corps Officers.

- MIDN 1/C Randolph

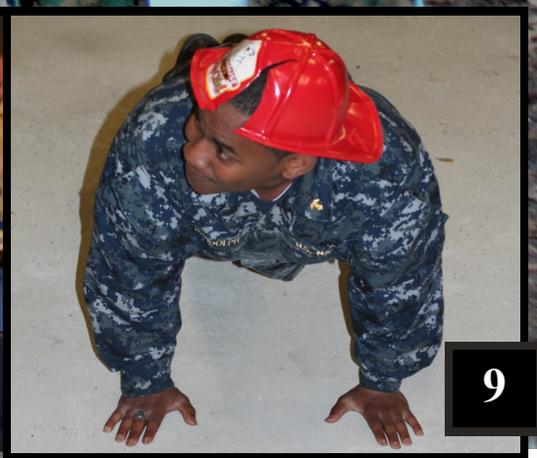


# MESS NIGHT

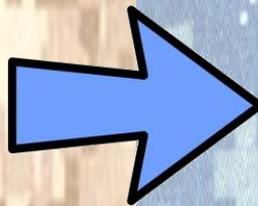
Field Mess Night is a long time Marine Corps tradition. It's a time for active duty staff members, OC's, MECEP's, and midshipmen to gather and dine-in. It's also a time for midshipmen to let loose around their shipmates. The night is divided into different segments, including a social hour at the beginning, a time for eating, a time for skits and fines, and a time for speeches and toasts. The company is divided into different tables, with active duty, the Guest of Honor, and the President of the Mess at the head table, and midshipmen, OC's, and MECEP's at the remaining tables. The active duty staff members present were Lieutenant Matthews, Lieutenant Taylor, Captain Flowers, Commander Rader, Major Watson, and Gunnery Sergeant Sumpter. The President of the Mess was MIDN 1/C Smith. The Guest of Honor was Sergeant Major Dwayne W. Farr.

After the initial social hour, everyone takes their seats. After MIDN 3/C Mack "Paraded the Beef" and presented the President with a sample for tasting, the company lined up to get their chow and return to their seats. While the company was eating, the President requested entertainment from some of the MIDN. For instance, the 2/C MIDN were required to line up and dance to songs that the President requested, and MIDN 4/C Weston had to perform several songs as well. MIDN Craig impersonated various midshipmen, and MIDN Dumas was able to impersonate actors from different movie scenes. When the company finished eating, the President of the Mess opened up the floor to fines and skits. One of the funnier fines was when Staff Sergeant Morrison requested that MIDN Randolph be required to wear a toy firefighter's hat from Firehouse Subs or drink from the grog as punishment for forgetting his Kevlar at a field exercise. Because Randolph chose to argue with the President of the Mess, he was required to wear the hat *and* drink from the grog. In addition, every time the President slammed his hammer on the table, he had to make a fire truck sound. MIDN's Mack and Gomez created videos for the MIDN Company to enjoy. Moreover, the skits and fines allowed the company to let off some steam and laugh about the events of the year.

Following the skits and fines, Sergeant Major Farr gave a motivating speech, pointing out that it's important to trust noncommissioned officers as newly commissioned Ensigns and Second Lieutenants. Sergeant Major Farr was presented a plaque and Lieutenant Taylor and Captain Flowers were presented awards from the MIDN Company as going away gifts. Captain Flowers gave words of appreciation and encouragement to the company, and the President dismissed the mess for the night. In conclusion, Mess Night was a great success thanks to the efforts of the Mess Night committee. Everyone had a great time and it was a good start to our Spring Break.-- MIDN 3/C Eichler

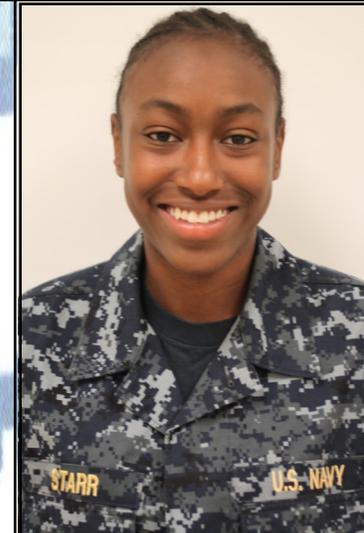


# CHANGE OF OPTION



I came to this university in August of 2008 on a Marine Corps scholarship. Since then, I have been training with the Marines and going through the pipeline to become a Marine officer. This year I decided to explore my options as a midshipman and pursue change of option. I made this decision based on many things. I am interested in pursuing a more technical career, nuclear propulsion, and what the Navy can offer me as far as experience goes. I would not change a thing if I could. I believe that training that I received with the Marine options helped refine my leadership skills. I was very shy and timid when I first arrived to the program and now I am more vocal. I believe that the decision I made was the best one for me and I am hoping that within the next few weeks, my change of option becomes official— MIDN 2/C Richardson

I came to this university August 2009 on a Navy HBCU scholarship. After my first semester I decided to participate in Marine Corps Bulldog training to see what the Marine side of the house had to offer. Surprisingly, I enjoyed the Marine Corps Bulldog training which got me thinking about changing options. As I spent more time in the program, I eventually changed my mind about my career choice based on many things. I decided to change my option from Navy to Marine Corps. The change of option process has been long but the end result is well worth the wait. - MIDN 3/C Starr



# TULANE DRILL MEET



Upon hearing that the 2010-2011 drill team would be participating in the Tulane Drill Meet, I knew I wanted to go. When I first joined NROTC I knew nothing about drill, but once I learned what it represented and when I competed in the Memphis Drill Meet in Spring of 2010, I knew that I wanted more. Going to the Tulane Drill Meet, also known as the Mardi Gras Drill Meet, was one of the best experiences I've had. It was particularly special since Savannah State had not participated in the Tulane Meet since 2007. The team decided we were definitely going this year and bringing home trophies. We prepared intensely for months and formed an awesome 15 person platoon. Drill meets are always kind of nerve racking for me due to my lack of experience, but we had a very well seasoned team; a lot of whom have been drilling for years. We left a day before the meet and made a 12 hour drive to Louisiana during which we all either slept or studied our knowledge packets for the meet. That evening upon arrival we went straight to work with one last practice where we had to perfect last minute moves that were on the inclement weather drill card. Unfortunately, it was really rainy and over-cast in New Orleans and we found out that we might have to perform a totally different routine. After our evening practice we prepared our uniforms and hit the racks. We were up bright and early for our first event; Color Guard. As other teams arrived, we kind of scoped everyone out and watched other schools perform. I don't think any of us were super confident that we were going to win, but we knew we were going to do our best and that we were prepared. Our Color Guard came out of their event not very impressed with themselves, but as the day went on our confidence levels were building up. By the time the day was over and it was time for the award ceremony, nobody could really pinpoint if we had placed or not. We knew we were up against 32 other schools, a lot of which were top military schools in the country including the Naval Academy, Norwich, Air Force Academy, Citadel, Embry Riddle, and Texas A&M.

As they announced the winners we were in disbelief when they called us for 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Color Guard beating the Naval Academy and we were also called up for 3<sup>rd</sup> place in Platoon Basic finishing right behind Texas A&M and Norwich. After the ceremony, the Commanding Officer of Tulane's NROTC (who we found out will be our new CO this upcoming year) approached us congratulating us on our victories, and he proceeded to inform us that we were 4 points away from placing 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in the drill meet. That was the cherry on top of everything. Major Watson and Gunnery Sergeant Sumpter expressed to us how proud they were and what a good job we all did. After the meet we made our way down to the famous Bourbon Street where the Mardi Gras celebration was in full swing. Overall the weekend was a blast and a huge success, and all I can say is I cannot wait until next year!- MIDN 3/C Graf



# THE PATH LESS TRAVELED

Life as a midshipman can be a challenging endeavor. Both Navy and Marine option midshipmen go through physical, mental, and academic rigors. Spring semester marks the beginning of “Bulldog” training for Marine option midshipmen; its purpose is to prepare members for Officer Candidate School. This grueling 4 month training cycle involves hikes, obstacle and endurance courses, field exercises and a daunting schedule of physical training 3 times during the academic week. On a voluntary basis, Navy option midshipman may choose to participate in Bulldog training; these select midshipmen face many unique challenges. For many Navy ops doing this for the first time adjustment can be difficult; running in boots, pull-ups, and concepts such as the 5 paragraph order are often foreign. Rigorous training evolutions such as spending 30 hours in the field conducting obstacle courses, combat maneuvering, and combat conditioning are coupled with courses such as calculus and sailing; both required naval qualifications. Perhaps the biggest challenge for these Navy midshipmen is that they are doing such training voluntarily, so constant effort must be shown to prove they belong in the same training environment as the OCS bound Marine options.— MIDN 3/C Powell



## FOUNDERS DAY PARADE

What do you get when you add great weather and proud members of a historical city? You get a parade. On the day of 19 February 2011, the Savannah State University attended the Founder’s Day Parade. Five stunning Midshipman

marched in the parade as the Color Guard, two brave Midshipman proudly marched the Savannah State University banner.

The parade was held by Turner Chapel AME and the turnout was stunning. There were many guests attending and the community was in full support as well. As the Midshipman marched, they felt a sense of pride as they held their colors high and rifles strong. Midshipman 4/C Singletary stated, “This parade shows how the churches across the state can come together... and it shows how the churches support the community.” Overall the Founder’s Day Parade was a success and the Midshipman were outstanding during the parade. – MIDN 4/C Dumas



# ARMY NAVY FIELD MEET

On 31 March, the Midshipman Company experienced one of the most action packed and entertaining events of the year, the Army vs. Navy field meet. Both units were eager to compete against one another in the numerous scheduled events ranging from football to push-up competition. Midway through the competition, Navy began to pull away as the point leader. Army put in good effort and stole victory in the pull-up contest, however their celebration was short lived as our Midshipmen company ran away with all the other events. The event was capped with a stellar performance by Staff Sergeant Fralick in the flag football game when he stole the show with the game winning touchdown. All in all it was a great way to have some friendly competition with Army NROTC and also come together as a Midshipmen Company. It was an outstanding experience and a really fun day. - MIDN 4/C Weston



# FAIR WINDS AND FLOWING SEAS



Captain Kent Flowers

Greetings Shipmates! I will soon depart SSU and end my active duty service. I can honestly say that I have had a great and blessed career! I have enjoyed my time at SSU with the best job in the Navy, Command! The core values of our profession are honor, courage and commitment. According to Winston Churchill, courage is the first of human qualities, because it is the quality which guarantees all others. Each of you will encounter challenges along the path to your commission and beyond. My hope is that you meet each milestone with our core values in mind.

Do not be afraid to dream big and challenge yourself. Stay focused, motivated and driven to pursue excellence in all you choose to do. You will be better off in the long run and its totally worth it. Your attitude will determine your altitude, so keep aiming higher. Thank you for your superb performance, your loyalty and the birthday laughs. I am better for having served with you and will cherish my time at SSU. I wish each student and staff member the best of future success and blessings! My very best regards, CAPT Kent F.

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Lieutenant Jerry Taylor

It has truly been a joy to have the opportunity to put my mark on the future leadership of the Navy and Marine Corps. It is my hope that I was able to influence each of your careers in some way for the better. To the students that have and will be commissioned, I know that I and the rest of the staff were hard on you at times, but hopefully you realize that you will be better officers because of it. As Theodore Roosevelt said, "Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, and difficulty." To the NROTC Staff, it has been my extreme privilege to work with such an enthusiastic, cheerful, and capable group. I have said it many times; if the Navy would allow me to continue my career at SSU NROTC, I would take that opportunity in a heartbeat. Fare winds and following seas to all of you.

# COMMISSIONING



If 11 years of service as an enlisted member in the United States Marine Corps has taught me anything, it is that things change. I was commissioned as a 2ndLt on 7 May 2011 and in this case, I have earned the opportunity to transfer over to the officer side of the house to lead and train Marines. Luckily, though, leading and training Marines has always been a part of my career but the only aspect that is different is that I'll have a bigger group of them. It is no longer about me, it is about them. The Marine Corps has two missions; #1 is Mission Accomplishment and #2 is Troop Welfare. In my eyes, you cannot successfully accomplish the mission unless your troops are taken care of first. This was the case when I was enlisted and I know it has not changed. The shoe is on the other foot now, but I will never forget where I came from.

Second Lieutenant Jean Durham



When I enlisted in the Marine Corps back in June of 2000, it never crossed my mind to become a Marine Corps Officer. I always enjoyed being the one to get the job done. It wasn't until my Command made the suggestion to become an Officer. I then realized being an Officer is what I wanted to do. So, here I am a 2nd Lt in the Marine Corps after spending 11 years enlisted. The adjustment will take time and I now know that parents will entrust me with the lives of their children. It is always about sacrifice and my job now is to sacrifice and earn the respect of my subordinates.

Second Lieutenant Joshua Fralick



I am grateful for the tremendous opportunities SSU/AASU NROTC has allowed me. My two years here were full of hard work and sweat, but it has paid off. I've learned many things and had influences that will last me my Navy career and onwards. As I prepare for flight school, I'm confident, because I've been set up for success. If I have any advice to give, I'd say relax, and find a job you love, then work is not work. That's exactly what the Navy is to me, and there is nowhere else I'd rather be, Go Navy, Fly Navy!

Ensign Robert Nelson

