Commander NSTC Visit

At the beginning of the spring semester, RDML Bernacchi came to Rutgers University to be the guest speaker at the unit’s winter commissioning ceremony. Being that he was in town for a weekend, he was able to speak to the entire battalion during a Friday drill session and enjoy dinner with the I/C midshipmen that night. All three events with RDML Bernacchi were great opportunities to learn more about his experiences, leadership advice and the changes being implemented in the Naval Reserve Officer Training Program.

At the drill session on Friday, RDML Bernacchi spoke to NROTC Rutgers about the new Sea Trials summer training program. It was also a valuable forum for asking questions of the man who is overall responsible for the NROTC program. In that short hour, RDML Bernacchi conveyed his intent clearly while giving the Midshipmen a voice in the improvement of the NROTC program.

The dinner that followed after was much more relaxed, but even more valuable. The I/C Midshipmen were able to socialize and learn from one of the most accomplished Naval Officers the Service has to offer.

Before taking his leave, RDML Bernacchi spoke at the winter commissioning ceremony in which he left a lasting impression on the battalion. Over the course of a couple days, RDML Bernacchi was able show the unit what it truly looks like to be both a leader and a commander.

- Written by 2LT Dezzie Ligon

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF NROTC RUTGERS

By the time you receive this newsletter, my turnover with my relief, CAPT Andy Smith, will be nearly complete. This three-year tour has flown by amazingly quickly, but what a remarkable 3 years it has been. As you read through this newsletter, you’ll see just how much the unit has grown over three years simply by seeing the wide array of activities the battalion supported during this Spring Semester. Rutgers-Princeton midshipmen excelled in the classroom, in the community, on the drill deck, and in athletic competitions and proved they are one of the top units in the Nation. Thank you to all of our supporters and advocates for helping to grow and develop the Rutgers-Princeton unit into the thriving unit it has become. It has been a true privilege to be at the helm for three years; but, without question this has been a team effort. As a large portion of the team departs for their next assignments, know that the unit is in great shape under the command of CAPT Smith! Good luck to all midshipmen and staff!

- Written by CAPT David Wright
Major General Charles Bolden Princeton Lecture

Major General Charles Bolden (USMC, retired) delivered a talk, entitled “Humanity’s Exploration,” on 14 February at Princeton University. MajGen Bolden discussed the future of space exploration and innovation, and its capacity to bring people together.

The former administrator of NASA was an aviator, flying combat missions in the Vietnam War, and a test pilot, before being selected as an astronaut. Before his public remarks, the general spoke to a group of midshipmen and cadets from the Rutgers and Princeton ROTC units. He answered questions about his experience in the military, his selection as an astronaut, and lessons he learned during his long and storied career.

During the talk itself, MajGen Bolden emphasized his belief in the importance of striving to achieve new challenges in space. He praised the mission and international cooperation found in the International Space Station and spoke positively about potential plans to land on Mars. While the plans NASA undertakes are ambitious, he argued that they depend on each member of the team working productively and cooperatively. He credited his experience in the military with teaching him many of the lessons he later applied to leading NASA.

– Written by MIDN 2/C Esha Rao

Tulane MEC

On February 7 2018, a small team of Rutgers Midshipmen departed on a five day trip to New Orleans, Louisiana in order to compete in the Tulane Military Excellence Competition (MEC). This was the first time Rutgers Midshipmen would compete at Tulane.

Rutgers Midshipmen began the trip by joining their peers from Villanova to catch a bus. Both units departed on the eighteen hour-plus bus ride to New Orleans. Midshipmen arrived in New Orleans on the evening of February 8th and rested for their early start at 0430 the next morning to practice squad drill and color guard before the competition. The Midshipmen did not receive any awards, but were glad that they got the chance to compete and experience New Orleans during Mardi Gras.

Overall, the Midshipmen had a very exciting and unforgettable experience. Rutgers/Princeton NROTC will definitely try to return for future competitions and festivities.

– Written by MIDN 2/C Alexis Stewart
Vice Chancellor Discussion

On February 2nd, Midshipmen and Cadets from the Rutgers/Princeton Navy and Air Force ROTC units had the opportunity to meet with Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Academic Affairs, Ben Sifuentes-Jáuregui.

The Vice Chancellor began the event with a quick introduction followed by a discussion of some issues that undergraduates face and the solutions that are being implemented to combat these problems. Afterwards, the floor was opened up to the Cadets and Midshipmen for questions. They used this time to address some issues that they have faced as a result of being in the ROTC program; conflicts between ROTC and college requirements, such as early morning workouts and military classes were some of the main topics. The Vice Chancellor openly took these comments in and worked with the audience to figure out potential solutions that the undergraduate department could initiate, such as allowing required military classes to count towards part of the students’ core curriculum.

Overall, the meeting was a good experience for both sides, as it allowed Vice Chancellor Jáuregui to hear first-hand some struggles that ROTC undergraduates face at Rutgers and enabled the Cadets and Midshipmen to directly address issues while coming up with potential solutions for the future.

- Written by MIDN 3/C Matthew Boettge

Navy League Dinner

At the end of January, Rutgers NROTC Color Guard was invited to the 55th Annual Installation of Officers and Awards Dinner for the Navy League, Central NJ Post. The colors were presented by MIDN Westerbeke, MIDN Lynch, MIDN Williams, MIDN Toth, and MIDN Boettge.

After presenting the colors, the Midshipmen enjoyed the rest of the ceremony which included periods for awarding deserving sailors for their achievements and raffles. In a surprising development, the CO presented MIDN I/C Westerbeke with a new award: Midshipman of the Year. MIDN 4/C Lynch won the 50/50 raffle and the CO won a small television; however, instead of keeping the television for the unit, it was ultimately offered to the recipient of the Bluejacket Sailor of the Year Award from Naval Weapons Station Earle.

The event was a great opportunity for Rutgers NROTC Color Guard to practice their routine, while representing themselves at a local event.

- Written by MIDN 3/C Brady Williams
On February 16, 2018 CAPT Curtis Duncan came to visit Rutgers/Princeton NROTC Unit to speak about the Nuclear Propulsion Program. As director of the Nuclear Programs for Officer Development, CAPT Duncan works to ensure that the Nuclear Propulsion Program receives the best candidates from the NROTC Units across the country.

During his visit, Captain Duncan briefed the Midshipmen on the particulars of entering the U.S. Navy Nuclear Program. This entailed the training we would receive, the career pipeline we would follow, and what we could expect as Junior Officers on a submarine.

The night before, a few Midshipmen had the opportunity to eat dinner with him at a local restaurant. He was particularly engaging as he regaled us with a few sea stories and anecdotes about the unusual occurrences he has seen from Midshipmen going for their interviews with the Admiral.

One particular theme that he touched upon was how to Navy gave him adventures for a lifetime. It was a welcome reminder of what we as Midshipmen are working toward.

- Written by MIDN 2/C Daniel Toth

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On April 7th, four midshipmen attended the Defending Democracy Conference at Princeton University. This annual conference introduces panelists to discuss prominent issues that appear to threaten the American democratic status quo. This year’s topic was “Civil and Military Response to Weaponized Information.”

The discussion was centered around two recent issues: Russian influence in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and the ongoing testimony of Facebook’s CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, regarding misuse of private user data. Panelists introduced different technological, social, societal, and political perspectives on the issues forcing the audience to think critically about the dangers of misinformation and the value of our First Amendments rights.

Among the speakers were General Michael Hayden, USAF; Major General Andrew Davis, USMC; and Admiral Cecil D. Haney, USN. The Defending Democracy Conference has been held by many top-tier universities including West Point and Yale University. Harvard University is expected to host next year’s conference.

- Written by ENS Rachel Westerbeke

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On the first weekend of April 2018, Yale’s Naval ROTC Unit conducted their 3rd annual Leadership Conference. Dozens of units across all the branches participated in the conference. Four NROTC Rutgers/Princeton midshipmen attended the conference. The conference was set up to allow for attendees to make connections with others, which could find their way into future training and even the fleet. More importantly, the conference had many knowledgeable speakers to provide insights that go beyond one’s typical interpretation of the media.

The keynote address was given by Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence Susan Gordon. Director Gordon kicked off the conference with fantastic speech outlining the extent of her duties. The Yale NROTC Leadership Conference was a great opportunity for college students to learn about and discuss conflicts with today’s military. Future officers were able to connect and understand each other’s experiences as midshipmen and cadets. Also, the plethora of experienced speakers made for a thought-provoking, motivating conference for all to learn and enjoy.

Written by MIDN 3/C Justin Calimlim

The day was off to a good start with a solid performance by the 5K competitors—despite a massive uphill battle. On the drill deck, the Rutgers/Princeton Color Guard continued their success with a clean performance that led them to place third for this event. Later, Rutgers Squad Drill team led by MIDN 1/C Ligon, gave a nearly flawless performance and came in first place. The track and swim teams gave good efforts in each of their events - despite losing control of the baton in the sprinting relay - but the swim team made up for the drawback with a first place win in the T-Shirt Swim Relay. Throughout the day, the Rutgers/Princeton basketball teams competed in a basketball tournament. While Team B came out flat with a score of 0-4, Team A came out victorious with a record of 4-0 therefore winning the tournament. During the afternoon events, the Endurance Challenge took place and one of our teams ultimately came in first after performing, pull ups, push-ups, ammo can press, a campus run, and a memory challenge.

To end the day, the Rutgers/Princeton Platoon Drill team gave a solid performance on the drill deck led by MIDN 1/C Fields coming in first as well. In the end, the Rutgers/Princeton Midshipmen displayed hard work and dedication during the RPI Military Excellence Competition. As a result of their hard work and dedication to the unit, the Rutgers/Princeton Midshipmen ended up placing first overall at the RPI MEC and look forward to bringing even more intensity to future competitions.

- Written by MIDN 2/C Esha Rao

For the first time, a handful of the Midshipmen were able to participate in Rutgers Special Friends Day on March 4, 2018. This annual event is run by Rutgers students where special needs people aged 11-23 come together for a day full of food, crafts and activities.

The day started with Midshipmen receiving an initial training for the day at the Cook/Douglass Recreation Center before the arrival of participants. Once the special friends arrived, groups of Midshipmen were paired with a friend. From there, the Midshipmen were able to spend the day participating in fun activities with their assigned friend at stations that were set in the recreation center. One of the most popular activities for the participants and Midshipmen was swimming. Additionally, dancing, basketball, board games, and art were other activities that made the day exciting for everyone involved. After many activities, the Midshipmen ate lunch with their friends to re-energize for more events.

Overall, the event was a great opportunity to get Rutgers/Princeton NROTC involved with Rutgers University. By volunteering, Midshipmen were able to hone on their leadership skills and give back to their community.

- Written by MIDN 4/C Evan Craige
**Tri Service Challenge**

On April 29, 2018, the Rutgers-Princeton MIDN wrapped up the last of their unit events for the year with the fifth annual Tri-Service Athletic Event against Cadets from the Rutgers Army and Air Force ROTC units.

With a decent turn out from all three branches of almost 60 total competitors, the Cadets and Midshipmen engaged in friendly games of soccer, volleyball, Tug-o-War and a stretcher relay. Due to some unprecedented winds, ultimate frisbee was unfortunately cut from the day’s itinerary, but with minimal complaints as that only meant more time for soccer! After twenty minute matches each, Navy came to a close win against Air Force cadets with Army cadets taking third place. Usually the most favored event, the stretcher relay was next. This year, the relay consisted of a half-mile run through Werblin Fields while carrying one Midshipman in a stretcher, followed by a series of push-ups, crunches, squats and weighted relay races conducted as a team. Navy ROTC Midshipmen took first place without question, with Air Force once again taking second place and Army cadets taking third. After a quick break for pizza, thanks to the support of USAA, the competition moved into the Werblin basketball courts for our final events. Beginning with volleyball, Air Force ROTC cadets earned their first win with Navy Midshipmen taking second place. To wrap up the event, all Cadets and Midshipmen participated in rounds of Tug-of-War before determining the overall winners of the Third Annual Tri-Service Event.

As expected, the coveted Tri-Service Event trophy went right back into the arms of the Rutgers-Princeton Navy Midshipmen as a final first place win to close out this semester full of successes.

- Written by MIDN 1/C Noristz

**Villanova Military Excellence Competition (MEC)**

On Saturday April 14th, Midshipmen travelled to Villanova University to compete in the annual Military Excellence Competition. The Midshipmen spent months preparing for the competition, dedicating time around their normal schedules to practice. After countless hours of practice for what is colloquially regarded as “Game Day”, the fruits of their labor were ready to be tested.

They rose up to the challenge by coming away with first overall, edging out other large universities such as Penn State, University of Pennsylvania, and Michigan. It was a team effort as Rutgers recorded wins across the board. First place finishes in Squad Drill, Air rifle, Color Guard, and Basketball helped Rutgers come away with the big win. Second place in Two-man Trick, third place in the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer (ISMT), and third place in Platoon Drill were also instrumental in etching Rutgers’ name onto the trophy in 2018. The Squad Drill team has had their sights set on first place for a while, knowing that the only way to the top was through beating the United States Naval Academy. Through their hard work and dedication, they did just that, earning the win. The current Color Guard Team was only assembled this year, but they quickly prepared themselves to compete at the highest level. With two freshmen on the team, there will be many more years of high level competition. Another huge first place finish came in the air rifle, an individual event won by MIDN 4/C Bellaran. Who knew Rutgers was so deep in talent? As usual, Rutgers NROTC basketball never ceases to amaze and unite the battalion. All the Midshipmen showed up to the championship final and inundated the court with the Rutgers victory chant. It was a very close game, but Rutgers played hard and won. This was in part attributed to MIDN 2/C Molinari, who stepped up in the absence of a first team starter and scored four of the six baskets in the Rutgers victory.

As a relatively young unit, the Rutgers and Princeton Midshipmen take pride in competing with older and more established ROTC units. Rutgers/Princeton NROTC can no longer be ignored. The win at Villanova MEC was published in The Daily Targum by the Battalion Public Affairs Officer, MIDN 3/C Rao, highlighting how hard work and passion for competition has given us a name amongst the nation’s giants.

- Written by MIDN 1/C John Jung
Scarlet Day of Service

On Saturday, April 21, 2018 the Rutgers University Programming Association hosted the 2018 Scarlet Day of Service. Over 500 students volunteered to participate in one of 20 community service projects around New Brunswick. Nine Midshipmen for Rutgers/Princeton NROTC Program were among these students. The Midshipmen opted to help out at New Brunswick’s First Reformed Church, along with a handful of other Rutgers students, who were working on creating a garden, small R&R area, and pit to play gaga ball in the yard outside of the Church; the garden is going to be used to help feed some local residents and the gaga ball pit is for kids to have some fun.

Once there, the group of students were given a chance to get to know each other with a few icebreakers before getting hard at work. Four Midshipmen were tasked with the construction of five benches out of supplies donated to the church by a local home depot: wood planks and cinder blocks. In addition, another bench was constructed from a large slab of rock that had been found and dug from the ground and a bird bath was placed in the center of the R&R area. At the same time, others were clearing the ground of weeds in preparation for the garden and gaga ball area. Once the area was cleaned up, students got to enjoy the ever-exciting job of shoveling and carrying dirt. While heaping dirt into small crates and hauling them to the garden was arduous, the students took to it with a good attitude and managed to enjoy it together.

In the end, the students had managed to transform the yard from bare to beautiful: the garden was planted and ready to begin growing. Weeds were nowhere to be seen and despite the simple building blocks used for the benches, the group made a quaint and pretty R&R area. The students then gathered to reflect the day, and unanimously noted that the hours of work flew by as they had fun and knew that they had made a positive difference for the local community.

- Written by MIDN 3/C Matthew Boettge

Mess Night

Mess Night is an old tradition of the United States armed forces in which a unit gets together one evening out of the year to celebrate good health and build camaraderie. On the April 28, 2018, Rutgers/Princeton NROTC hosted their own Mess Night for the first time in unit history since the Scarlet Knight battalion was originally formed back in 2012.

The Midshipman and staff mustered at the VFW Post 133 for a cocktail hour with the special guests before commencing with the ceremony. Upon parading the beef, the Commanding Officer of Rutgers/Princeton NROTC, CAPT Wright, proclaimed the meat was ‘fit for human consumption’ thus queuing the start of dinner. As the battalion enjoyed their delicious meals prepared by the VFW staff, the tradition of fining started. After properly receiving permission to address the Mess, Midshipmen proposed ‘Fines’ or punishments on other fellow Midshipmen for their wrong doings. If the CO agreed with the proposed Fine, the accused Midshipman would be ordered to drink from the ‘Grog’ which is a bowl of mixed beverages. The Fines are great entertainment, very comical, and let the unit kick back and relax with laughter and good memories, but that’s not the only highlight to Mess Night.

Once the floor was closed from Fines, Rutgers/Princeton NROTC presented its special guests with appreciation gifts. Previous Rutgers/Princeton NROTC Submarine Officer, LT. Ash, was presented with a Stirling Engine, reflecting his technical background in the Navy. Another gift was presented to the first AMOI, MSgt Hill, of Rutgers/Princeton NROTC which was a memorabilia box featuring a custom knife, challenge coins, pictures, and other tokens of thanks. The Marine Corps and Naval ceremony concluded with multiple toasts to infamous battles within our heritage, the Fallen Soldier memorial table, and the posterity and good fortune to all who have served or are currently serving. All in all, the evening was a memorable night that helped build unit cohesion amongst staff and Midshipmen.

- Written by MIDN 3/C Jake Chiasson
Spring semester always seems to hit you in the face. One second you’re in the mountains skiing like an Olympian, and the next second you’re fully dressed and showered at 0430 preparing for the inventory physical fitness test to start the semester. It is at this time that you come back and see all the continued efforts of the new Midshipmen who became a part of the unit last semester. You notice the ones who truly cared and did not let something like winter break hinder their progression. Little did we know, these new Midshipmen would once again excel beyond any of the expectations placed upon them as second semester freshmen. They are once again quickly given the opportunity to contribute to the NROTC Rutgers/Princeton team by participating in Military Excellence Competitions such as those at Tulane, RPI, and Villanova. It was from our major success at these competitions that we as a unit, including our still wet behind the ears freshmen, made a name for ourselves as the de facto number one NROTC unit on the east coast. We also organized and participated in several significant events including the Mess Night, the Commissioning Ceremony, and the Awards Ceremony. Of course, we couldn’t have accomplished nearly as much without the Unit Staff who pushes us to improve and the support of families at home. Also, thank you to the Battalion and Midshipmen Staff for your cooperation and work ethic this semester!

- Written by MIDN I/C Ligon
Spring Commissioning Ceremony

On May 14th, 2018, NROTCU Rutgers University commissioned nine officers into the United States Navy and Marine Corps. Rear Admiral William W. Wheeler III came in to speak at this momentous occasion. MIDN 1/C Fields served as the program MC, and the ceremony went flawlessly. In addition to commissioning the eight Ensigns and one Second Lieutenant, departing personnel such as CAPT Elliott and Supply Technician Mr. Thompson were honored and presented with meaningful gifts. Commissioning was an extremely important event, and will undoubtedly be remembered by those involved for the rest of their lives. In the words of RDML Wheeler, you only have one commissioning.

Ensign Lemyre and Ensign Martini have already reported to their ships, and Ensign Westerbeke has reported to Nuclear Power School in Charleston, SC. Ensign Chung, Ensign Hay, Ensign Marrazzo, Ensign Moran and Ensign Towers will all be reporting to Flight School in Pensacola, FL in the coming months. Our sole Marine, 2nd LT Ligon, will be heading off to The Basic School in Quantico, VA in the fall. While waiting to move on to their next duty stations, our Ensigns are serving aboard NROTC Rutgers-Princeton. Congratulations to our nine newest officers and good luck to them as they enter the fleet!

- Written by ENS Moran
Updates from the Fleet

- ENS Verdi commissioned in January 2018 from Rutgers University with a degree in Industrial Engineering. Since his departure from NROTC Rutgers, ENS Verdi has resided in Pensacola, Florida, where he will start his training as a Student Naval Aviator. As of June 20th, ENS Verdi is going through Introductory Flight Screening (IFS) where he will learn to solo fly a Cessna Aircraft.

- ENS Doran commissioned in January 2018 from Rutgers University with a degree in Information Technology and Informatics. Since her departure from NROTC Rutgers, ENS Doran has resided in Pensacola Florida to start her training as a Student Naval Flight Officer. ENS Doran is currently attending Aviation Preflight Indocriation (API).

- ENS James Oshel, commissioned in January 2017 from Rutgers University with a degree in Industrial Engineering. Since his departure from NROTC Rutgers, ENS Oshel has resided in Pensacola, Florida where he continues his training as a Student Naval Aviator. ENS Oshel has now completed primary training in flight school at the top of his class. He has been designated as a pilot in the Maritime Patrol community.

- ENS Matthew Moeller, commissioned in May 2017 from Rutgers University. After commissioning and completing follow on training in Norfolk, VA, ENS Matthew Moeller joined the crew of his first ship, USS PORTER (DDG 78). ENS Moeller met his ship with 3 months remaining on their Forward Deployed Patrol. He had the opportunity to make port visits in many different countries to include Palma de Mallorca, Spain; Bar, Montenegro; Souda Bay, Greece; Toulon, France; and Larnaca, Cyprus. Along the way he earned many qualifications towards his ultimate goal of a Surface Warfare Officer pin. ENS Moeller was able to participate in PORTER’s first ever swim call in the Mediterranean Sea, multiple multinational exercises with foreign Navies, and many other exercises key to the Forward Deployed Naval Forces. At the beginning of December, USS PORTER and Ensign Moeller returned to where they now both call home in Rota, Spain.
Updates from the Fleet

- ENS Bret Hinrichs, commissioned in June 2017 from Princeton University. ENS Hinrichs is currently stationed in Norfolk, VA onboard USS Bainbridge (DDG 96). He serves in the Engineering Department as the ship’s Main Propulsion Officer and will be attending VBSS (Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure) and SAR (Search and Rescue Swimmer) Schools. ENS Hinrichs graduated Basic Division Officer Course on 30 January 2018, and is looking forward to getting back to work at sea.

- 2ndLT Connor Lam commissioned in May 2017 from Rutgers University. 2ndLT Lam is currently attending The Basic School (TBS) at Marine Corps Base Quantico. The Basic School teaches newly commissioned Marine Corps Officers the fundamentals of officership, endurance, and most importantly, the basics of being a rifle platoon commander. He has been learning infantry tactics including squad level operations, platoon tactics, patrolling operations, maneuver warfare, and the tactical orders process. The lieutenants of The Basic School are given the ability to apply what they learn through numerous field exercises consisting of different tactical billets and unique leadership opportunities. 2nd Lieutenant Lam graduated The Basic School in April of 2018 and headed down to Pensacola to begin flight school.

- 1stLT Daley commissioned in May 2016, is the first NROTC Rutgers commissioned officer to receive a promotion. 1stLT Daley has been promoted from 2ndLT. The promotion ceremony was conducted right outside of Rutgers High Point Football Stadium where many of the staff from the unit attended.
Throughout the semester, Midshipmen volunteer their time to help fundraise money for the NROTC Unit. Some of the fundraising events have included: working security at Rutgers Football games, helping Rutgers Athletics at Women’s Volleyball Games, and Shoprite Bagging events. As the unit continues to grow and attend more Military Excellence Competitions, and various educational conferences, it is important that our fundraising efforts continue to increase as well. If you are currently able to donate to the Rutgers–Princeton NROTC Unit, any donation would be greatly appreciated and go a long way in helping the Midshipmen organize future Military Balls, Mess Nights, our participation in Military Excellence Competitions, and numerous other functions. Donation checks should be written out to “Rutgers, The State University”, and “Scarlet Anchor Society Donation 1424” should be written on the Memo/Comment/For line of the check. If “Scarlet Anchor Society Donation 1424” is not written on the Memo/Comment/For line of the check, then the check will not be able to be deposited. The Check should be written out similar to the example below:

All checks can be mailed to:

NROTCU Rutgers/Princeton
College Avenue Campus
12 Lafayette Street, Bldg. 3171
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

We would like to thank you for your continued support of the Rutgers–Princeton NROTC Unit!