President Woodrow Wilson created the ROTC program in 1916 by signing the National Defense Act. The result of this signing was to create a relationship between the military and the country's academic community. In order to foster excellence in the military, business, and industry, ROTC military training came to the University of Pittsburgh in the same year, 1916. When the program was introduced, there was much debate over whether the program should exist or not, and many were skeptics. However, there were enough people in favor, and the program was supported by the University. In this time period, cadets didn't learn how to wear the uniform, but how to dig a trench. As well as not how to salute the lieutenant, but how to cure chilblains. The culture and training in ROTC in these days was far different than what we are currently used to. For example, during World War 1, the campus was turned into a support system for the war overseas. It was a place for the men to drill, and the women to volunteer for the Red Cross. The fraternities turned over their houses to the University for use as barracks, and the mess hall served one hundred thousand meals.
JOINING ARMY ROTC: A FRESHMAN EXPERIENCE
Article by: Cadet Katelyn Bailey (MSI)

The first time I came to the University of Pittsburgh it was to learn about the ROTC program. I started looking into the world of Army ROTC only a few months before I came to Pitt to find out more about what it would be like, but I already knew that it was something that I wanted to do. My goal was to be a physician and help as many people as possible: two things I knew the Army would be able to help me do. I felt that the Army would teach me how to help those in need, no matter the circumstances. I would learn how to be tough and calm in times of pressure. I would learn how to be strong.

As soon as I learned about the program here at Pitt, I was blown away; it sounded almost too perfect to be true. I loved the idea of teamwork and building both my mental and physical strength. I loved the benefits of being in the program and knew Pitt was where I belonged.

When I arrived here in August, I was nervous about orientation. I only had one family member who had served in the Armed Forces, so this was a vastly new experience for my entire family. Orientation day was a little daunting, but in the end, I knew all of my thoughts about ROTC were true: the program was well built and focused on making its cadets strong leaders, both inside the Army and outside in the civilian world.

The ROTC program here at Pitt not only met my expectations, but continues to exceed them every day. Yes, being in the program is challenging at times, but knowing that I am surrounded by cadets who are looking for the same things in life as I am is reassuring as I pursue my academics here at the University.

ROTC has already taught me valuable skills about teamwork, perseverance, and resiliency. I hope to continue working with the Armed Forces for the rest of my life, as I pursue medical school in hopes of working with military veterans in the future.

I know the program continues to make me a stronger person every day, and I could not wish for a better opportunity to help those around me.

Patrolling Lab: Preparation is Key
Article By: Cadet Taylor Carr (MSI)

For the November lab on patrolling, my school, Duquesne, started preparing two weeks in advance. Training for lab was held at the end of PT and extra training took place on a squad by squad basis. First, we learned hand signals, and what all the terms mean. Next, we were told to reference our handbooks to learn the basics for squad attack, react to contact, break contact, and room clearing. After reading about squad attack, we then acted out step by step what to do in a squad attack. We practiced this for several days and went over different scenarios and what to do in those situations. This training for lab was very helpful because it appealed to everyone’s learning styles (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic), and I felt that two weeks was enough time to learn everything that we were expected to.

Although November lab was cut short, I still feel like I learned a lot at this lab. After learning so much about tactics in the past two weeks, it was great to finally put it all together by running lanes. The lane that we ran at lab was a key part in our training. I think it was good for both squads because they benefited from it. Mistakes were made on both sides, but there were a lot of things that we did right. Having an After Action Review (AAR) directly after the lane was also helpful because it helped us see what we did correctly and what we did wrong. I think running more lanes would have been beneficial, but I understand because of weather we could not. I now feel like I have a base knowledge of squad tactics, that can be built upon in future operations. It is crucial that we understand and remember everything that we have learned in the past two weeks, because it is important to know this as future military officers. I will also use this base knowledge of squad tactics in future operations as I advance through ROTC.

SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI:
We are looking to nominate new alumni into our new “Hall of Fame” in Bellefield Hall. If you are an alumni of the Three Rivers Battalion and would like to nominate a former cadet who has distinguished themselves in their career, military or civilian, please contact us at:

ThreeRiversBattalionCadre@gmail.com
FTX: Training of All Kinds
Article by: Cadet Nathan Bair (MSIII)

Being an MSIII in Army ROTC, I knew that this year’s Fall FTX (Field Training Exercise) was going to be a challenge, as well as an experience. I am happy to say that FTX was exactly what I thought it was going to be. Throughout the weekend, I was able to participate in leadership training at the FLRC (Field Leadership Reaction Course), sighting-in and qualifying at the range, rappelling from the confidence tower, and participating in land navigation.

The FLRC was where my squad and I were most able to develop as a team and overcome obstacles of all shapes and sizes, while rotating the leadership positions to all the members of the squad. This was to ensure that all members were evaluated on their leadership capabilities regardless of their age or rank within ROTC. The firing range was also a very good experience, though it was not my first-time shooting, it was my first time qualifying with the Army standard issue rifle. It allowed the MSIII class to get a hold on their abilities with a weapon and understand where they stood in comparison with the rest of the battalion.

The rappel tower was something that I really enjoyed and is something that I think has been the hardest challenge for cadets in the battalion to overcome. However, to my knowledge all of the cadets finished and completed going down the tower which is an extraordinary feat seeing that many have never done anything like that in their whole lives.

Finally, land navigation was something that I am both comfortable with and interested in so that was an aspect of the weekend that I also thought was highly enjoyable. However, it was many of the MSIII’s first time going out on their own without anyone or anything to reference except for their map and compass, so some struggled. Overall, the weekend encompassed the whole of what we learn while enrolled in the ROTC program, it focused on leadership, teamwork, and perseverance.

Doc Muckey Challenge:
Suicide Prevention and Awareness
Article by: Cadet Samantha Grimes (MSII)

On Friday, 30 September 2016, cadets came together for the Doc Muckey Suicide Awareness Challenge. Performed in squads, the challenge consisted of burpees, pushups, buddy rushes, and pull-ups. The event took place at the base of the Cathedral of Learning, at Carnegie Mellon University, Flagstaff Hill and Schenley Park. Each squad ran between stations, carrying a sand bag and water jug between them. The run was meant to challenge cadets physically and mentally, forcing them to realize the need to ask for help and encourage one another.

Following the challenge, all cadets met inside the Cathedral of Learning to listen to a presentation of a first-hand account of the impact of suicide, from the father of Keagan “Doc” Muckey, the man memorialized by the Awareness Run. Though suicide awareness is taught routinely, and cadets have become familiar with Army programs for suicide intervention, such as “Ask, Care, and Escort.” Mr. Muckey introduced cadets to the deeply personal impacts of suicide that few people realize. Walking cadets through Keagan’s life and the events preceding his death, Mr. Muckey shared the zest for life he remembered in his son.

The most critical lesson cadets learned from Doc Muckey’s story was the crucial importance of speaking up and refusing to take warning signs of suicide lightly.

“Arsenal of Democracy”
First Aid & Communication: Paramount Leader Skills

Article by: Cadet William Blackley (MSIII)

Despite cooler temperatures and wet conditions, cadets from schools in and around the Pittsburgh area, from the Three Rivers Battalion, all gathered to conduct a leadership lab on the morning of Saturday, 22OCT16. This month’s lab took place at William D Boyce Park just outside of Pittsburgh and focused on teaching Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TC3) and Communications. After first formation, cadets were broken up into their respective companies to begin a rotation of classes relating to different components of TC3 and Communications. These stations varied from applying a tourniquet to calling up a 9-line. Each class was taught by a pair of MSIII’s providing an opportunity for these cadets to develop confidence in teaching.

As an MSIII, I was assigned to teach a lesson on poor blood circulation and hypothermia in conjunction with Cadet Hildebrand. We taught numerous iterations of the class and were able to train approximately 140+ cadets on the care and treatment of hypothermia.

After all of the cadets had cycled through each class on TC3 and Communications, we moved onto the next phase of the Lab where cadets took everything they just learned and put practical application of the newly acquired knowledge to use. As before, cadets were divided into groups. Within each group, the MSIIIs took turns serving as Squad Leader and executing a Situational Tactical Exercise (STX) lane. Each lane involved a scenario with a tactical combat casualty (such as a downed pilot rescue) and required the use of TC3 and Communications. When it was my turn to lead the STX lane, I quickly realized just the importance of paying attention to detail when handling a situation that involves TC3 and Communications. For instance, neglecting to remember hypothermia prevention or failing to ask for the right equipment when calling a 9-line can very easily be the difference between life and death for your soldiers. Moreover, the practical application of TC3 and Communications involved the use of the TLPs and built upon lessons learned at previous labs and FTX.

The TC3 and Communication Lab proved to be an invaluable learning experience for myself in adaption as well as in building confidence in conducting operations in the field.

HONORING OUR FALLEN ALUMNI

On December 5th, cadets from the Three Rivers Battalion got together and conducted a combat-focused physical fitness session in honor of a fallen alumni of the University of Pittsburgh: Captain Mark Resh. Captain Resh earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Engineering from the University of Pittsburgh in 2001. Upon graduation, Captain Resh joined the Army and served as an Apache Pilot. Sadly, he was killed while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom with 4th Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division.

On January 28, 2007, while flying near An Najaf, Iraq, coalition troops had come into contact with enemy fighters. He flew to support the soldiers on the ground and as he arrived he came under intense enemy machine gun and rocket propelled grenade fire. In order to help the soldiers on the ground, he placed his helicopter between the enemy fire and the soldiers on the ground. For over fifteen minutes he flew in support of the soldiers and used his helicopter to distract and shield the soldiers on the ground. This allowed another air crew that was under attack to maneuver out of the area. Eventually he was shot down and ended up giving his life for those he was trying to protect.

During the fitness session at Pitt, cadets from the battalion worked together in squads and competed against one another in honor of CPT Resh. CPT Resh’s mother and father, Carol and Charles Resh, also made the trip out to witness the event which was followed by a dedication of one of the classrooms in honor of CPT Resh. A special thanks goes out to the family of CPT Resh for taking the time to come to Pittsburgh and help us honor his life and his sacrifice for our Nation.

CAPTAIN MARK RESH

SPRING SEMESTER
SCHEDULE

04 FEB:
Branch Orientation Lab

25 FEB:
Land Navigation Lab

25 MAR:
Platoon Patrolling Lab

30MAR – 02APR:
Spring FTX

07APR – 09APR:
Gettysburg Staff Ride

13 MAY:
Commissioning
Fall Semester Commissionees:

Three Rivers Battalion is proud to recognize it’s newest 2nd Lieutenants in the U.S. Army:

2LT Corey Gaffron
Adjutant General Corps, PA ANG
Bachelor of Science in Homeland Security
California University of Pennsylvania
California, PA

2LT Evan Mignogna
Military Intelligence, PA ANG
Bachelor of Science in Intelligence Studies
Point Park University
Pittsburgh, PA

Dining In: A Tradition of Leadership

Article By: Cadet Eli Talbert (MSIV)

As is our tradition we concluded the semester with a night of revelry and tradition, the annual Army ROTC Dining In. As a senior, this was my last experience as a cadet at Dining In and I am pleased to say it was my best. After the branch pinning ceremony and the creation of the grog we were treated to a sumptuous meal that included steak and chicken. It was then that the real festivities began.

As in prior years Mr. Vice accepted points of order which were punished by drinking the grog. However, this year we also had minute to win it games, such as a marshmallow toss, in the case of a disagreement. The points of order ranged from technical to ridiculous, but all were good fun.

When the dinner portion of the night was concluded we then had the privilege of listening to COL Michael A. Getchell. While his talk was far-ranging he focused particularly on how to deal with failures of the system something that as future officers we are bound to run into. Finally, we ended the night with skits. The skits poked fun at everything from individual people to Army culture in general and one was even musical. It was a perfect way to end a thoroughly enjoyable night.

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