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 then 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.
I was not sure what exactly to expect from Army ROTC before I joined. However, I figured it would be a challenge, but one that would only help me in the long run to become an Army Officer Nurse. One of the first challenges that I faced was the physical fitness routine. At first it was rough, but I eventually improved and was able to keep up with the other cadets. Physical training usually consists of running and strengthening exercises several days throughout the week. In addition to physical fitness, there is a ruck march every very few weeks over the course of the semester. The ruck marches are where I struggle the most, but I am determined to improve through the implementation of a structured, discipline training regime focused on ruck marching. Overall, Army ROTC was a definitely difficult to adjust to at first, but I believe I have the hang of things this spring semester.

One of the main reasons ROTC was difficult to adjust to at first was because there was a lot going on in September such as orientation, landmark events, lab, and FTX. However, these events enhanced my self-confidence and resilience and allowed me to get a glimpse into how the Army works. By the end of the semester, I was use to life as an Army ROTC cadet. ROTC has allowed me to become a more personable, efficient, structured, and determined individual, which benefits me as a student and a nursing major as well. I have also made many friendships with my fellow cadets.

Overall, Army ROTC was definitely an adjustment at the beginning of fall semester, but I was able to adapt with the help of my fellow cadets. I have many responsibilities within ROTC that will only increase, but it makes me a more well-rounded person. The tasks and challenges given by the ROTC program will make me a better person, officer, and nurse by teaching me leadership, patience, organization, integrity, and many other admirable qualities and skills. I feel my Army ROTC experience gives me an advantage over other students in the nursing program. Joining Army ROTC so far has been a very rewarding and beneficial life challenge.

ARE YOU AN ALUMNUS OF THREE RIVERS BATTALION???
If so, and you are interested in being included in regular email updates and learning more about our events, please send us your phone number and email to:

ThreeRiversBattalionCadre@gmail.com
A GRAND MILITARY BALL
CDT Kasey Busko (MSII)

The Three River’s Battalion held its 42nd Grand Military Ball at the Pittsburgh Marriott Center on February 17th, 2017. The military ball is a time honored Army tradition with the purpose of building unit cohesion. It is a night where we recognize and reflect on the progress we have made and the obstacles we have overcome as a battalion throughout the year. It was also an evening where we recognized the commissioning MS4 class of 2017 as well as their branch assignments. Professor of Military Science, Lieutenant Colonel Jason Eddy, spoke about the battalion’s Leadership Labs conducted earlier in the year which teach cadets about strategy and tactics. He emphasized on the importance of the labs and how they are the basic foundations cadets use to later become successful officers.

The guest speaker of the night, Commander of the Pittsburgh District, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Colonel John P. Lloyd, gave an entertaining and informative speech towards the close of the event. In it, he spoke about the challenges we, as future United States Army Officers, will face in a changing world. He highlighted the importance of knowing your soldiers and being both a responsible leader and person in your everyday life. To close the evening, cadets and cadre alike celebrated by taking to the dance floor.
The Three Rivers Battalion conducted a Platoon Tactics Lab at Greensburg Armory on 25 March 2017. We began training by drawing weapons and MREs and forming up into our squads. While waiting to begin the mission, each squad conducted rehearsals that included how to ambush and react to contact. We then formed back up into platoon sized elements and each platoon moved to their respective areas to begin the first mission. My platoon was given a grid location and moved in a tactical formation to our location and then upon arrival, set up 360-degree security around the perimeter. The first mission was a react to contact. My platoon set up security and kept watch for the enemy, and when they were spotted called out the 3 D’s (distance, direction, and description). The enemy then assaulted through and performed aid/litter and EPW searches.

The second mission was an ambush. My platoon was given a grid location and moved to the objective and pulled security in the woods while waiting for the opposing platoon so that we could conduct the ambush. During this time, we were given the mission, number combinations, and passwords. We continued to pull security while the PL, 1st SL, weapons SL, 2 riflemen, and the AGs went to the leader’s recon. During the two missions, my squad leader placed us in various positions to conduct 360-degree security and established our sectors of fire, and conducted LACE reports.

This lab was helpful because it reinforced my knowledge of platoon tactics, involving an ambush and a platoon attack, as well as various movements and new hand signals. This knowledge will be advantageous for me when I attend Advanced Camp. By learning the foundations of platoon tactics and hand and arm signals, they will be able to teach future cadets and their future soldiers.
JROTC Drill Competition

CDT Schaefer (MSI)

The JROTC Event took place on 4 February 2017. The purpose of the event was to provide guidance for the conduct of the 2017 Drill Competition at Seneca Valley Middle School in Harmony, PA. Cadets from the University of Pittsburgh, Duquesne University, and Slippery Rock University were asked to volunteer at the event. The cadets assumed positions throughout the duration of the event, including grading the Armed Inspection and Armed Exhibition, grading the Squad Armed Drill and Squad Unarmed Drill, scoring judges, and sitting at a recruiting table.

I was assigned to be a scoring judge along with 3 other cadets. We tallied each score sheet and calculated the scores for each team in each event. Problems arose with varied scoring style and missing scores, but we were able to communicate with the judges in a timely fashion through runners in order to mediate the problems. Although I was not among those judging the competition, it was interesting to read the notes from the judges on errors or praises. Platoons were marked down for errors such as walking out of step, moving to the wrong command, missing a movement, etc.

The school that finished the competition in first overall surprised everyone with their Armed Inspection, in which they lost a significant number of points and did not win the particular event as they had in years passed. One of the most enjoyable parts of the day was watching the knockout competition. The JROTC cadets from all schools got into a formation and SFC Henderson called commands. When a cadet made a mistake, they were eliminated until it came down to one cadet.

Being new to ROTC as a freshman in college and having only recent knowledge of commands and movements, I was very impressed with the JROTC cadets during this final event. Overall, the Drill Competition was a success. Each school was a strong competitor and it was wonderful to see students in high school involved in JROTC and having a passion for the program. The ROTC cadets from each university were able to build camaraderie as well as set an example for those thinking about joining ROTC in their college years.

Extended Hands: Conversations with the People of Afghanistan

CDT Katee Coleman (MSIV)

The Three Rivers Battalion had a unique opportunity this year, to interact and converse with people who live in Afghanistan, through a program called “Extended Hand.” The program is hosted by students in the “World in Conversation” organization at Penn State University. During these sessions, students at Penn State would act as facilitators between TRB ROTC cadets and individuals across the world,
utilizing video communication technology to host these conversations. Cadets at Pitt would meet in a small conference room and connect to student facilitators at Penn State via video and microphone, and the facilitators would then connect Pitt cadets to students in Afghanistan. The facilitators would help promote positive conversation between the two parties by giving speaking prompts, but then they would mute their microphones and allow the rest of the dialogue to occur between the cadets and the students in Afghanistan. Conversations were different during each session, but they surrounded civic life, daily life, current conflicts, societal norms, customs, and peace-building.

Cadets had a very positive experience and were glad to have the opportunity that most ROTC cadets do not get during their 4 years in college. Cadets saw this as an eye-opening experience that helped build cultural awareness and communication skills with people from a different country. Although we may encounter people of different origin during daily life at Pitt and within ROTC, this experience was unique because it allowed us to speak remotely with people while they are in their country of origin. Some cadets mentioned this was especially beneficial because the first time they conversed with people from Afghanistan would not be during a potential future operation in theatre. In the current environment, leaders and soldiers at all levels are in a position to interact with local nationals and can have a significant effect on multicultural relationships.

Many cadets noted that the most helpful part of the experience was in learning to take time before speaking to ensure we respected our audience and were aware of cultural aspects that may allow someone to interpret what we say differently from how we meant for it to come out. This is an especially important point to take home when these cadets become future junior leaders and must interact with their peers, as well.

Through raw conversation with the people from Afghanistan, we saw that our goals do not always align well with theirs. Continuing to have this unique opportunity presented to the TRB cadets will have a lasting effect on future interactions between people of different cultures and our future junior leaders.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2019 COMMISSIONEES!

From the University of Pittsburgh
2LT Jacob Boice, Medical Service Ed Delay
2LT Jason Carne, Field Artillery, Active Duty
2LT May Chang, Medical Service, Active Duty
2LT Erickson Gonzalez, Engineer Branch, USAR
2LT Michael Green, JAG Ed Delay
2LT Brandon Herbert, Military Intelligence, PAANG
2LT Gregory Kabusk, Infantry, Active Duty
2LT Kilian Liptrot, Military Intelligence, Active Duty
2LT Matthew Nieberding, Aviation, PAANG
2LT Reed Radford, Chemical Corps, Active Duty
2LT Stephen Starinsky, Field Artillery, Active Duty
2LT Jacob Sweed, Infantry, Active Duty
2LT Eli Talbert, Adjutant General, USAR

From Duquesne University
2LT David Gallagher, Engineer, PAANG
2LT Jesse Martin, Infantry, Active Duty

From California University of Pennsylvania
2LT Benjamin McCurdy, Adjutant General, PAANG

From Franciscan University of Steubenville
2LT Stephen Shaw, Quartermaster Branch, Active Duty
2LT Michael Shaw, Engineer Branch, USAR
2LT Kristie Kelly, Army Nursing, Active Duty
Congratulations!

TO THE COMMISSIONEES OF SPRING 2017
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:

LIEUTENANT GENERAL ALAN R. LYNN

Lieutenant General Alan R. Lynn is the Director of Defense Information Systems Agency and Commander, Joint Force Headquarters - Department of Defense Information Networks (DODIN), Fort Meade, Md. As the Commander, Joint Force Headquarters – DODIN, he is in charge of the command and control of defensive cyberspace activities focusing on unity of command and unity of effort within the Department of Defense. LTG Lynn graduated as a ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate with a degree in English from the California University of Pennsylvania, California, Pa., in 1979. He was awarded a network engineering specialty from the Air Force Information Systems Officer Course in 1988. He also completed a Masters Degree in National Resource Management at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF) in 2000.

Lieutenant General Lynn’s awards and decorations include two Distinguished Service Medals, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, two Bronze Star Medals, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, two Meritorious Service Medals, three Army Commendation Medals, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, South West Asia Service Medal with two Bronze Service Stars, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Army Service Ribbon; Overseas Service Ribbon with 5 device, NATO Medal, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia Kuwait Liberation Medals, and parachutist and air assault badges.

CONTACT US:

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UPCOMING FALL SEMESTER CALENDAR

26 AUG:
New Student Orientation at the University of Pittsburgh

28 SEP – 01 OCT:
Fall FTX at Camp Dawson, West Virginia

06 OCT – 08 OCT:
Three Rivers Battalion Army Ten Miler Team at Washington D.C.

13 OCT – 15 OCT:
Ranger Challenge Team at Fort Dix, New Jersey

21 OCT:
Leadership Lab: Squad Tactics

18 NOV:
Leadership Lab: Communications & Tactical Combat Care