

GO GOLD

Run by Battalion Cadets for family, friends, and alumni

Cadet Battalion Fund

All donations to Go Gold's Cadet Battalion Fund go toward our dining in and dining out ceremonies as well as to facility renovations and improved training events. The Cadets of the Go Gold Battalion greatly appreciate every donation and thank our wonderful alumni and friends for your endless support.

To make a donation please visit:

<http://www.Vanderbilt.edu/alumni/army-rotc.php>

Upcoming Events

March 23rd

- ◆ JFTX@ Ft. Campbell

March 29th

- ◆ Lab: Equipment Turn-in

April 5th

- ◆ APFT
- ◆ Lab: Award Ceremony, Uniform Inspection, Photos

April 12

- ◆ Military Ball

April 17

- ◆ MSIII/MSIV Staff Ride

April 19

- ◆ MSIII – MBA Shooting Range

Continuing the fight!

Vanderbilt ROTC is back and firing on all cylinders after a relaxing week off for spring break. Even with the week off, it has been a busy month for Go Gold Battalion. The MS III class recently took the OPAT for their future branching and plenty of OPORDs have been flipped. The best part is there are still exciting things we have to look forward to!

In this month's newsletter, MS IV Cadet Andree talks about being a Cadet AND a D1 student-athlete, MS III Cadet Carter discuss how her experience and goals within the program have shaped her, MS II Cadet Couzens discusses the Valor program she helped bring to the battalion and what it means to her, MS II Cadet Nino talks about his experience in ROTC and how it has affected him, and MS IV Cadet Hardiman gives us his personal take of going through ROTC as an MS I through MS IV and what to expect. Enjoy!



Vanderbilt University
Army ROTC
Go Gold Battalion

Battalion Chain of Command

Professor of Military Science

- ✦ LTC Eric Westphal

Assistant Professor of Military Science/Recruiting Operations Officer

- ✦ MAJ Matthew Mount

Senior Military Science Instructor

- ✦ MSG Gabriel Cleveland

Military Instructor/Training NCO

- ✦ SFC Justin Golding

Cadet Battalion Commander

- ✦ Alex Marshall

Cadet Command Sergeant Major

- ✦ Christah Artrip

Cadet Executive Officer

- ✦ Philip Brown

Cadet S-1

- ✦ Jacob Hardiman

Cadet S-2

- ✦ Owen Marsh

Cadet S-3

- ✦ Darius Mckenzie

Cadet S-4

- ✦ Blake Stamps

Cadet S-6

- ✦ Max Montgomery

Being a Cadet and a D1 Athlete: Cadet Andree



Being a D1 student-athlete and an Army ROTC cadet has its rewards, but it definitely has its challenges as well. One of the most challenging aspects is the scheduling. Since I play a spring sport, I have tended to be ROTC heavy during the fall semester and then softball heavy during the spring semester.

This means that in the fall I would attend most PT sessions, the FTX, classes, labs, and most of whatever else would come up. I would either be up early for PT, or if there was not PT, - I was awake for softball weight training and conditioning at 6:00 am instead. After PT or softball training, I would usually have to rush home to shower and eat breakfast and then I'd sit in class for most of the morning. I would then have an hour of small group softball practices in the afternoon. I'd be finished and home by about 5:00 pm and then have the rest of the night to eat, do homework and relax.

The spring semester is when everything becomes chaotic for me. I cannot attend PT because I have softball weight training and conditioning daily (except game days) at 6:15 am. After this, I will shower and grab breakfast before heading to classes all morning. After classes, I have practice (officially) from 2:00-5:30pm every afternoon except for when we're playing games. I say officially because I often wouldn't be leaving the field until close to 6:00pm. On game days, we have to be at the field two hours before the game time and then stay for 30 minutes after the game to clean up. That means



on weekends when we have double-headers, we are at the field from a little before 10:00am until 5:00 pm if there's no rain in the forecast. If there's rain forecasted, and the field was tarped, we have to come out at 6:30 am to untarp it and do field work first. During the spring, my team will play over 50 games from February through the second week of May.

Balancing both softball and ROTC is difficult not only because of the time commitment, but because I cannot physically be present at both places at the same time. I want to do as much outside work as possible to help my classmates out at ROTC, but I know I will hurt my softball team if I spend too much time doing that and vice versa. It can be hard to feel like I am letting someone down.

On the flip side of things, I really enjoy both softball and ROTC. I have become a stronger person for going through both of these things and I have grown in many ways. I have gotten to meet plenty of amazing friends and inspirational people through both programs. I've been able to learn about leadership in two different atmospheres to help me widen my experiences and learn what works and what doesn't for me as a leader. As challenging as it is, I am grateful to be at a school that allows me to participate in both ROTC and a D1 sport.

Accomplishing Goals in ROTC:

Cadet Carter

To be an uncontracted cadet implores numerous bounds of striving toward success. Before I started the Vanderbilt Army ROTC program I was unaware by the magnitude of opportunity that one could achieve. Starting the program I had little to no knowledge of the military, discipline or physical strength. Being in the program has benefited me through my academics, fitness and opportunity. The program provides a Cadet with a holistic stature of college. Through the program and the competitive nature it creates the foundation of a successful student and leader.

To earn a contract as a cadet has given me a clear understanding of the value of hard work. Entering the program as a sophomore added the obstacle of a time constraint. I needed to receive a scholarship in the program in one year because after that you are no longer eligible to earn it. With this

knowledge I set a goal to conquer the PT Test. My goal stemmed as I saw the cadets in the program. The upperclassmen all showcased the value of hard work as they displayed dedication to the program and others. I knew entering the program would include sacrifice yet opportunity beyond any avenue I would imagine. I saw the Cadets in the program consistently propel through their performance with high GPA's and PT scores. They spoke with confidence and clarity and always seemed to truly enjoy any



obstacle they faced. I made it my mission to visualize a contract and receive a scholarship through the program. I dedicated my weeks to daily workouts and more extensive studying.

I knew I wanted to set the example that if you set a goal you can achieve it through your own merit. Eventually, after months of working out, I passed the PT test. It is an accomplishment I see merely as the standard. I continuously strive to raise my PT score until I am consistently maxing the test in every event. The program has given me true fulfillment as it has given me a better understanding of my strengths and weaknesses. It has set me on the path I want to display for my community, women, and my country. The program has given me an opportunity to instill pride in myself and my education. Coming from a small town in Texas where resources were limited and education was disregarded, I see how changing myself can dictate a brighter future.

What Valor Really Means: Cadet Couzens

Upon attending Basic Camp this past summer, I learned about Valor at the Sunday Service and immediately thought a movement should be started in the “Go Gold” Battalion. Valor is a ministry that aims to engage future military leaders in fellowship and Christlike service. With the assistance and mentorship of Air Force LTC Gage Bleakley (retired), as well as help from Cadet



Peevy, and Cadet Truett, I am grateful to say that a Valor program was started in the fall semester of 2017. We currently meet on Tuesday evenings for worship, fellowship, scripture, and prayer. Whether we gather for fellowship around a movie, Bible study, or even the gym - Valor has created a community and family in which we can confide. We hope to encourage one another to lead while humbly serving in a Christlike manner.

In addition to cadets in our battalion, Vanderbilt Navy midshipmen and Marine options are welcome to attend Valor as well. It has been instrumental in building relationships and creating cohesiveness between the two programs. Though it took several months to find our way, I can personally say that

Valor is now a huge source of joy and encouragement in my life. I feel blessed to learn and serve beside these strong men and women who push one another for excellence mentally, physically, and spiritually each coming day. As future leaders of the United States Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, Valor is an instrument in reminding us to do all things as Christ would; in nobility, integrity, and humility.

“Just as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” (Proverbs 27:17)



What ROTC means to me: Cadet Nino

I joined Army ROTC last semester in the Fall of 2017 as a sophomore. I remember my first day showing up to HQ last August being both awfully excited but admittedly pretty dang nervous. I was not contracted yet and I knew almost nothing about the Army in general other than the values it stands for. I would not have been able to tell you anything about land navigation, OPORDS, military structure, OML, TMKs, how to set up a patrol base, ORPs, or most importantly - what the go-to answer is for most questions, “Well, that is “METT-TC dependent.”



In those first few weeks almost nothing I heard made a lot a sense. I remember being perpetually frustrated with myself because I, like all the other cadets, have the desire to be outstanding in what I do. Fast forward almost a year and I am realizing how much I have learned throughout my time in the program. I still have quite a way to go, but the process of it all is unusually enjoyable.

To my own surprise - the three 0600 PT sessions each week, the four-hour classes/labs on Thursday afternoons, and each semester’s FTX have become something I look forward to. I expected

after having completed a few months of ROTC that eventually I would hit a plateau or maybe even a slight decrease in my excitement for what we get to do. Fortunately, up until this point I have been wrong.

Each day ROTC presents a new challenge or learning opportunity. The progression of thinking through these challenges is what I have come to love. It was for that reason I contracted this past January and am competing for active duty with the hopes of branching either JAG or Infantry. I have been very blessed to be a part of the team at Vanderbilt Army ROTC and look forward to what is to come.

From MS I to MS IV: Cadet Hardiman

Each year, MS I - MS IV, a Cadet takes on a different role within the battalion. The transition between years can be daunting but it does not have to be. Essentially there is not much change between MS I and MS II years as your responsibility only marginally increases. Yet your MSII year is when you really start to distinguish yourself as a leader within the program and your class. The best ways to have success during the MS I and MS II years is to obtain the best grades possible, volunteer, take advantage of extra opportunities, find upperclassman mentors, and improve at PT.

The transition to the MS III year is quite a jump. All of the sudden you find yourself under the microscope of MS IVs and cadre as you are constantly being evaluated. Now you oversee the running of labs, PT, and regularly being picked as PL or PSG for STX lanes. The best way to transition into and have success in your MS III year is to find mentors in the MS III/MS IV class as a MS II, volunteer, and ask questions of cadre and MS IVs. The more one volunteers, the more people will respect them and see them as a leader among leaders, thus setting one up for more success. Generally, by the time one is a MS II, they know what to expect as a MS III.

The transition from MS III to MS IV was the biggest in my opinion. One does not really know what to expect and thus you are going into that year somewhat blind. A main reason for this is that the class that is affected most by the rotating cadre is the MS IV class. As a MS IV, you run the battalion under the direction of the cadre. There are two key elements to being successful as a MS IV. The first is to meet and talk with the cadre as much as you can so that you understand your roll and their intent. The second is to do the same but with your cadet battalion commander. If he/she and the PMS are on the same wavelength, then their direction and your support will lead the battalion to success.

The transitions can be seamless if each Cadet takes the initiative throughout the year to prepare for the next year. One way of making the transition seamless is to use every opportunity as a learning opportunity. Another way is by observing those who are in a higher MS class who are having success and then try to think how you can improve on what they are doing.

