

# Fall 2015 Conn

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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

NAVAL ROTC





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## CO's Call

Battalion,

Another fall semester has already slipped behind us. It goes by so incredibly fast. Yet, each semester seems to always be packed with so many events that it hard to imagine accomplishing them all in so short a period of time. You can all pat each other on the back for a job well done. You not only completed the semester, but you extraordinarily accomplished it in an exemplary manner in which I am quite proud. Bravo Zulu.

We recently witnessed our version of one of the oldest traditions in the Navy, the changing of command. MIDN 1/C St Charles turned over the reins of the Wolverine Battalion to MIDN 1/C Kent. Midshipmen

St. Charles, Trethewey, Redder, Howell and the entire fall Battalion staff are to be lauded for the time, commitment and investment that they put into our mission - developing midshipmen. Midshipmen Kent, Ratoff, Mikatarian and Stitt, you are, as the saying goes, stepping out of the frying pan and right into the fire by taking on the most difficult of tasks during your last semester at the University of Michigan. The measure of your success will not be in what you complete this semester, but rather in what you put in motion and the character and style in which you act.

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Looking ahead, I am really excited about some of the grassroots philanthropic ideas that are being discussed in the Battalion. Each action of direct service to our community has a ripple effect that reaches out to the needs of today as well as the growth of our personal character and sense of purpose. Community has everything to do with our larger mission of national security. It is truly at the core of what the Navy and Marine Corps is all about - providing for the needs of our people.

Finally, I wish to congratulate our fall commissionees and wish them well as they go forth (some much faster than others) into their Naval careers. In many ways, I am sure that it is both exciting as well as a bit intimidating to leave our Michigan' campus and Battalion lifelines. One fifth of their life experience has been spent at this University as Naval ROTC midshipmen, and now it is time to step out into a world much more immense, exceedingly complex, and extraordinarily

challenging in ways that can only be imagined. I can promise our new Ensigns and Second Lieutenants one thing: They are embarking on an incredible professional journey of immense importance, responsibility and excitement which has the potential to pale all the previous experiences of their lives if they do but one thing - embrace it with gusto! Good Luck!

Regards,

Commanding Officer



# BnCO's Call

Battalion,

I would like to begin my BnCO's call by thanking every member in the Battalion for their hard work and dedication in making this semester a success. It was your efforts that made this semester a success, and I must thank you for your hard work in maintaining our leadership, physical, and educational standards of excellence. You have set the bar high for all future classes, and the program will only benefit from such stalwart dedication.

A special thank you must be extended to my immediate staff, Midshipmen Trethewey, Redder, and Howell, for their flexibility and good counsel throughout the semester. Without their countless hours of hard work, many of the events this semester would not have gotten the attention they deserve. I owe many of our successes to you three, and Midshipman Redder, you deserve a special note. You have coordinated many events, from weekly Drill Labs to PT, and were on top of all the moving parts within the Battalion, working constantly with Midshipman Grubish on the POW/POD. You were key to the communication between my staff and the Unit staff by keeping LT Love informed of all our plans and changes. In short,

you have been an incredible asset to Battalion, and I believe your work has been the lynchpin to keeping everything functioning.

I must also thank the Unit staff for their efforts to guide and develop myself and my staff as better leaders, and for keeping us on track when our plans were either farfetched or off track. In particular I must thank Captain Evans for his constant encouragement and faith in our abilities. His guidance was instrumental in developing Midshipman Trethewey and myself directly, and thus the rest of my staff through transmission. His guidance was instructive while maintaining independence for my staff and myself to develop our own leadership styles. Thank you as well to the Unit's civilian staff for continuing to support our daily operations and allowing us to focus on Battalion events by assisting us with all the requirements of commissioning. Your assistance was greatly appreciated.

Throughout this very full semester, we as a Battalion have managed to not only meet our requirements, but rise above expectations. With the changes to the operational tempo of the Battalion, everyone found themselves subject to extended periods of increased expectations, such as the two week period wherein

Bravo 2's Winter FEX was followed immediately by the Cornell University Drill Competition. During similar periods, we all felt the strains of our time commitments, but managed to accomplish the mission with flying colors. To all Battalion members, these events are only successful with your cooperation and endurance. Give yourselves a pat on the back for succeeding in a very challenging semester.

Congratulations to those MECEPs and Midshipman graduating this semester, your leadership has been instrumental for the Battalion, as I am sure it will be in for your future commands. I wish you all the luck for your futures, though luck has had nothing to do with your previous success. For those with time left in the

Battalion, realize the opportunity to learn from these leaders is fleeting. Take a moment to congratulate them on their achievements and ask for their advice.

Again, thank you all for your hard work this semester. I look forward to being led in my last semester here by such capable Midshipmen as Midshipman Kent and his staff. I wish them all the best as they assume command.

Congratulations to the incoming Battalion staff! For the rest of the Battalion, continue to work hard for the incoming staff. All new commands are challenging, and we all have a role to play in their endeavors.

Thank you again for a fantastic semester! Go Blue!

-MIDN 1/C St. Charles

# NSO

New Student Orientation, or NSO, is the first indoctrination the newest members of the Wolverine Battalion have to life here at the University of Michigan NROTC. The new 4/C midshipmen are tested not only physically but mentally too. Most have not been exposed to very high stress environments before they walk in the Chemistry Building doors. All were shell shocked once they realized this was not a soft and welcome hello, but a very loud and abrasive initial gut check. They now must have well kept hair and be clean-shaven. NSO was an outstanding success in prepping the 4/C for the longer and more arduous journey in Charlie Company that awaits them. NSO was the first step in the new 4/C becoming functioning and contributing members to our Wolverine Battalion and part of every midshipman's path to commission as an officer in the United States military.

-MIDN 1/C Trethewey



# Charlie FEX

As the culminating event to their training in Charlie Company, the 4/C participated in a field exercise (FEX). The weekend was designed to challenge the 4/C both physically and mentally and provided them with the opportunity to showcase what was learned during the 7 weeks of Charlie Company. 4/C participated in a conditioning hike, endurance challenge, small unit leadership evaluation, pugil sticks, and a high ropes course. The fall 2015 FEX successfully created a challenging and enjoyable learning environment that allowed the 4/C to display their teamwork and leadership ability in a varied setting.

- MIDN 1/C Singer



# Birthday Run

Every year in celebration of the Navy and Marine Corps service to our great nation, the battalion puts on a birthday run over several days. The distance of the run is dependent on the age of the two services; this year the battalion ran 240 miles for 240 years of service. It is a truly amazing event to be a part of as it celebrates all the brave men and women who have gone before us to serve our country and protect our freedoms.



# Birthday Ball

Every year, the battalion celebrates the birthday of the Navy and Marine Corps. The Birthday Ball was a huge success, as MIDN Soper worked tirelessly to plan the ball and ensure everything ran smoothly. Gunnery Sergeant Moore accompanied MIDN Soper in training the midshipmen who were a part of various details at the Ball. Thanks to everyone's hard work and dedication, the Ball was a blast. The seniors were able to enjoy their last Ball in the Battalion and the 4/C were able to take part in their first battalion event out of Charlie Company.



## Bravo 2 FEX

It is a tradition that the Battalion's Marine option midshipmen go to Fort Custer, MI and have a Field Exercise (FEX) each Fall Semester. Bravo 2 FEX consisted of Day Land Navigation, Night Land Navigation, Small Unit Leadership, and a Leadership Reaction Course. The battalion also invites our neighbor PLC Units. Like our Marine Options, PLC students are college students who are preparing to go to OCS and become Marine Corps Officers. This year's FEX ran smoothly thanks to the outstanding preparation and execution by Staff Sergeant Ventura.



# Cornell Drill Competition

On the weekend of 14 NOV, select members of the UM NROTC Battalion traveled to Ithaca, NY to compete in the Cornell University Invitational Drill Competition. Midshipmen competed in events ranging from close order drill to swim relays. With the attendance of two service academies and almost a dozen other NROTC units, the competition was fierce. Each midshipman performed outstanding and represented the University of Michigan with the utmost class and distinction. Several of The Battalion's Midshipmen who attended received trophies for outstanding performance in a variety of events. This years Drill Competition was an overall success thanks to the dedication of all who were involved.

-MIDN 2/C Stein



# Veteran's Day Ceremony

The Veteran's Day Ceremony is a tradition that the Michigan Tri-Service ROTC and the VA Hospital have celebrated together for the past 10 years. The morning started with some volunteer Midshipmen and Cadets making rounds in the hospital to thank many Veterans for their Service to our country and to speak with them about their experiences in the military. This was a very gratifying experience for all of those who volunteered. We then moved down to the ceremony, which was packed with people and special guests such as the Mayor of Ann Arbor, Christopher Taylor, and Michigan State Representatives Dingell and Walberg. This year we were also lucky enough to have Lieutenant Colonel Kettles as a guest speaker, who was recently recommended to receive the Medal of Honor. The VA Ceremony was a hit this year and I believe we made many veterans feel proud and appreciated.

-MIDN 3/C Galliani



# 4/C Spotlight

## Alpha 1

Since joining my platoon, MIDN 4/C Perry has distinguished himself through his actions and his commitment to this program. MIDN Perry is a very dependable member of the platoon; I can always count on him to do his part. He excels at drill, and he demonstrated this in both Platoon Basic and Two-Man Armed Exhibition at the Cornell Drill Competition. MIDN Perry's most inspirational quality, however, is his motivation and tenacity at PT. It is clear that he always gives 110%, and this makes him influential among his peers. I see a bright future for MIDN Perry as a member of the Wolverine Battalion. -MIDN 3/C Wireman



## Alpha 2

MIDN Quinn has been an outstanding midshipman this past semester. He has volunteered extensively within the battalion and was always willing to offer help where needed. He has shown the willingness to push himself and always has his positive attitude on display. He excels physically and has actively participated in battalion events. He performed exemplary at the Cornell drill competition in both swimming and running. He was also a valuable member of the battalion's CC football teams. MIDN Quinn is a role model for his peers and the rest of battalion and has a bright future at the University of Michigan NROTC. -MIDN 3/C Gerber



## Bravo 1

MIDN Watson performed at a consistently high level this semester. He has managed to balance Charlie Company, his academics, and extracurricular activities with unparalleled success. He has been a reliable motivator throughout his time in Bravo One; he has visited the VA hospital over 5 times, volunteered for multiple color guards, and was a part of the esteemed, “MEAL Team Six” for Bravo 2 FEX. His PT scores continue to progress and he strives to encourage all to improve in their physical fitness. He has been given the opportunity to run the VA hospital visits next semester and I am sure he will attack this job with the utmost intensity, as he does with any other task. I look forward to watching MIDN Watson grow as a leader and a person. -MIDN 3/C McEllis



## Bravo 2

MIDN Reitsma has displayed many qualities that show strong potential for a great Marine Officer, even though he has only been on the Battalion for one semester. He is in great physical condition and has top scores on the PFT and CFT. He has shown tenacity for volunteering, as his name is usually the first when I ask for signups on any duty or event. Lastly, he ensures he is always presentable. I have never seen MIDN Reitsma with an out-of-regulations haircut, messy uniform, or unshaven face. He has done well in every inspection that I have witnessed and managed to look better than some upperclassmen in his SDBs. -MIDN 3/C Lockhart



## Senior Farewells

As I say farewell to this chapter of my life and embrace this new beginning, I would like to thank all the members of unit staff and the battalion who took part to help mold me into the person I am now. To my family and friends who stood by me through every trial and tribulation, I would have never achieved this great accomplishment without you.

Through my time in the battalion I learned how to pick myself back up after facing failure and contrary the feeling of surpassing what you think you can do. I learned college is more than just your GPA, it's about the journey. It's about every experience that you have whether it is good or bad. It's about being more than just a student in school, but a student of life. The bonds you make with your peers and mentors are truly unforgettable.

My advice to underclassmen is to never accept the bare minimum and always strive to be the best. Always look to do something new and never fear a challenge. Your body may bend and waiver, but your mind will never break. I end with the words I live by, "Never argue with stupid people, they will drag you down to their level and then beat you with experience." - Mark Twain.

-MIDN 1/C Young

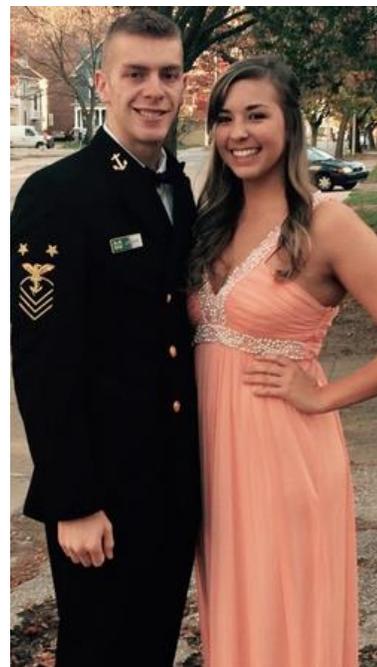
Members of the finest NROTC battalion,

I am honored to have the opportunity to finish my four years at the University of Michigan with a bit of wisdom and motivation for you all. College is a rollercoaster. I've never experienced more highs and lows in my life than those I had during these years. The stress of studying, exams, and ROTC can be heavy. However, the joys of friends, becoming an adult, and future officer make the ride worth it. I owe every inch of success during these years to those that led me, helped me, and guided me through those sunless winters in Ann Arbor. So, never hesitate to ask for help! For me, the experiences here have been nothing but humbling. From the minute I stepped foot at North Hall until the final hour of my time here, I've been challenged and humbled. But it's only just begun! The challenges that lay before us will be straining. Stay humble and don't be afraid to ask for help. The best officers will be those who learn from the people they hope to one-day lead. But at the end of it all, it's never about you.

Some lighter advice: enjoy the time you have with all those around you. I cannot begin to explain how much fun I've had with the people around me. They've made this experience so special for me and I owe everything to my friends and roommates here. I'm so thankful and lucky to have known you all!

Thank you to everyone that made this experience so special. To the multiple officers and Unit staff that offered hours of time and patience to the millions of questions asked and dilemmas I found myself in; without their guidance, I wouldn't be here at all. To my family and friends: your endless support and love even when I may have not deserved it will always give me faith and motivation to press on. Thank you to everyone! I'm blessed. Good luck to all the underclassmen and new officers in your journeys! A favorite quote: "We're still pioneers and we've barely begun. Our greatest accomplishments cannot be behind us, cause our destiny lies above us" (Interstellar). Keep climbing!

-MIDN 1/C Johnson



To the unit staff: thank you for all of your guidance over the past four (and a half) years. Your guidance has been invaluable to me. To my family: thank you for all that you've done to support me- picking me up from lows and helping me get back on track. To my friends: thank you for all of the stories and experiences that I will never forget. And to the battalion: thank you for receiving all of my mistakes with such flexibility, for inspiring me and pushing me to improve myself.

Remember why you're here: you are meant to develop yourself into an officer. Though there are lots of requirements, programs, and activities that the unit puts on towards this end, the onus is on you to improve yourself. Do the work: read, write, discuss. Think critically. Develop your mind and body. Challenge yourself, fail often. Bite off more than you can chew and choke it down anyway. Become a better person every day; soak up every experience you can; learn from the successes and failures of those who have gone before you. And finally, have a blast- college, and the NROTC program, is the greatest choice you've ever made! The Navy has sent me to Hawaii, San Diego, Coronado, Memphis, and Wisconsin; I've met role models, mentors, and lifelong friends; I've seen warplanes fly off of warships; and I haven't even started my career yet. Your story is yours to write, but I assure you it'll be a good one while you're here. Go Navy and Go Blue!

-MIDN 1/C Duggan

Being a member of the University of Michigan's Naval ROTC program has been an essential factor in my development as both a scholar and a leader. In those early months as a freshman and 1/C, I questioned whether I would complete the program let alone make a positive difference. Guided by the outstanding leadership of the Midshipmen and the professional staff, I gained confidence, progressed through the ranks, and have ended here where I am today; a graduating Mechanical Engineer from one of the most respected Naval ROTC programs, at one of the finest universities in the country, and on to a coveted posting in Spain.

On the cusp of entering active duty, I am exhilarated by the prospect that our training, education and life experiences will finally be put to the test. As many of our civilian classmates



transition to a career of daily commutes and mundane tasks, we will begin our careers as pilots, nuclear reactor operators, submariners, surface warfare officers, SEALs and any one of many important assignments with immediate responsibility for leading sailors and entrusted with millions, even billions, of dollars' worth of taxpayers' hardware. What is demanded of us is a higher calling than any of our civilian classmates can comprehend. But we are ready and we owe much to the Naval ROTC program and our Unit Staff who have been guiding us, sharing their knowledge and preparing us so we may become competent, successful and respected officers.

To my junior battalion mates, enjoy your college experience. It may seem stressful at times, and you may feel like you simply want to get on with your life. But this is a special, unrepeatable four years. I have met some of the greatest people I will ever meet. I have laughed more and had more fun in college than at any other point in my life. We are surrounded by a richness of diversity and potential experiences that you should not pass up. Go to as many student events as possible. Go to performances, museums and galleries. Attend athletic events other than football and basketball, most of which are free. Try every type of cuisine. Stay up late, rise early and enjoy the company of others. Don't procrastinate. Get your work done early so you may immerse yourself in this pursuit of knowledge and experience without the stress and distraction of unfinished tasks hanging over your head. In sum, broaden your mind.

I will always have a special fondness for these college days and a strong bond with those whom I have had the pleasure of sharing this experience. When asked where I studied and where I went through ROTC, I will proudly say I was a member of the Wolverine Battalion at the University of Michigan.

-MIDN 1/C Squiers



To my family and friends, thank you for the love that has instilled me with the drive to succeed. You have seen my triumphs and mistakes, but your support has been unconditional, and has provided me with the ambition to conquer my goals. My commission isn't simply a token of my own achievement, but also a reflection of the ideals and discipline imparted onto me by all of you whom have had an impact on my life. Thank you for making me who I am. I have always believed that the people that you surround yourself with will determine who you are. I have been blessed with positive role models in every aspect of my life.

While out in San Diego my freshman year, a gunnery sergeant spoke to us about motivation. He told us to write down 3 things by the end of the week that would last forever as our motivation. "When life gets tough, and things get difficult, and you're back is against the wall, pull out this sheet of paper, and remember why you're doing what you're doing." I thought hard about my three greatest motivators. It was an exercise that has lasted with me for a long time. Here is my list:

- 1) My friends, family, coaches, and mentors. I fight for my goals everyday because I need to be better for them. They have put in so much work to guide me in the right direction, and they expect me to be great, to be a leader. I will not let them down.
- 2) My brothers in arms. You count on me to lead you. You count on me to help you reach your own goals. I will not let you down.
- 3) Myself. The opportunities that have been presented to me are remarkable, and I would be foolish to not take advantage of every one of them. I will not have regrets. I will not let myself down.

I challenge you to make a list for yourself. Find what motivates you. Find what is going to make you succeed.

Thank you to everyone at the University of Michigan for making my time here special.

Good luck, stay motivated, and forever GO BLUE!

-MIDN 1/C Grzegorzewski



**BnCO:** MIDN 1/C St. Charles

**BnXo:** MIDN 1/C Trethewey

**BnOPS:** MIDN 1/C Redder

**BnCMC:** MIDN 1/C Howell

**Training Academics:** MIDN 1/C Grubish

**Admin:** MIDN 1/C Baier

**Financial:** MIDN 2/C Oestreich

**Logistics:** MIDN 1/C Alcaraz

**Alumni/Historian:** MIDN 3/C  
Grzegorzewski

**Intelligence:** MIDN 3/C Penner

**Communications/PAO:** MIDN 2/C  
Muckenthaler

**Colorguard:** MIDN 2/C English

**Drill Team:** MIDN 2/C Stein

**Drill Team Plt Sgt:** MIDN 3/C Daigler

**Drill Meet Coordinator:** MIDN 1/C Morales

**Athletics:** MIDN 3/C Haas

**Recruiting:** MIDN 1/C Dyer

**First Aid:** SSgt Ventura

**Safety:** MIDN 2/C Buis

**PTI:** MIDN 2/C Birmingham

**APTI:** MIDN 3/C Fuchs

**Chow Team CDR:** MIDN 2/C Hetherson

**Webmaster:** MIDN 3/C Burggren

**Pelorus/Conn:** MIDN 3/C Mersino

**Supply LPO:** MIDN 3/C Downs

**AOPS:** MIDN 3/C Donohue

**Birthday Ball:** MIDN 2/C Soper

**Birthday Run:** MIDN 3/C Faris

**VA Ceremony:** MIDN 3/C Galliani

**Commissioning:** MIDN 2/C Holwerda

**Marine Fall FEX:** SSgt Ventura

**Alpha Company CDR:** MIDN 1/C Smith

**Alpha Co Senior Chief:** MIDN 1/C Haney

**Alpha 1 Plt Sgt:** MIDN 3/C Wireman

**Alpha 1 Plt CDR:** MIDN 2/C Soper

**Alpha 2 Plt Sgt:** MIDN 3/C Gerber

**Alpha 2 Plt CDR:** MIDN 2/C Monohan

**Bravo Company CDR:** MIDN 1/C Snyder

**Bravo Co First Sergeant:** MIDN 1/C  
Thompson

**Bravo 1 Plt Sgt:** MIDN 3/C McEllis

**Bravo 1 Plt CDR:** MIDN 2/C Kim

**Bravo 2 Plt Sgt:** MIDN 3/C Lockhart

**Bravo 2 Plt CDR:** MIDN 2/C Krawec