

ANCHORS AWEIGH

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A DDG exiting Pearl Harbor

NEW FACES



MIDN 4/C Jonathan Bovio
High Point, NC
Business



MIDN 4/C Ian Cummings
Sanford, NC
Business Administration



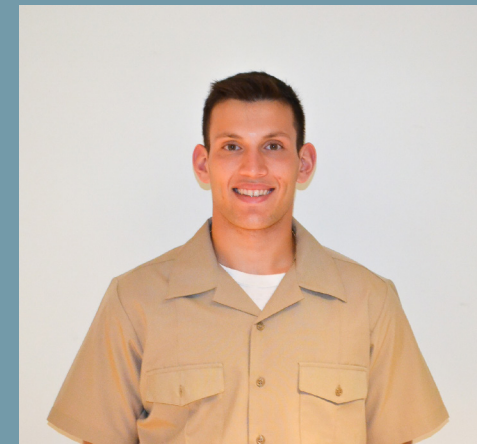
MIDN 4/C Nolan Fazen
Waxhaw, NC
Computer Science



MIDN 4/C Joshua Hawkins
Greensboro, NC
Peace, War, and Defense/Political
Science



MIDN 4/C Will Hornthal
Topsail Beach, NC
Biomedical Engineering



MIDN 4/C Brandon Romeo
Harrisburg, NC
Pre-Business



MIDN 4/C Joshua Sands-Lee
Perry, GA
Peace, War, and Defense



MIDN 4/C Maya Spencer
Charlotte, NC
Chemistry



MIDN 4/C Erin Storch
Colorado Springs, CO
Mathematics



MIDN 4/C Parker Sylvia
Kill Devil Hills, NC
Peace, War, and Defense/Political
Science



SGT Kagan Dunlap
MECEP
Asheville, NC
Exercise and Sports Science



SGT Louie Poreider
MECEP
California
Physics and Astronomy



SSGT Tyler Vaughan
MECEP
Pittsburgh, PA
Peace, War, and Defense



CORTRAMID EAST

Aviation Week - MIDN 3/C Slaight

As a midshipman in Bravo Company, I spent some of my time at CORTRAMID at Naval Station Norfolk and Naval Air Station Oceana to learn more about the aviation community. We toured the E-2 Hawkeye Fleet Replacement Squadron, VAW-120 "Greyhawks" and visited two helicopter squadrons, the "Sea Dragons" of HM-12 and "Dusty Dogs" of HSC-7. At each stop, midshipmen were free to roam around the aircraft, speak with current aviators, and test our skills in the various flight simulators. Part of our time with the squadrons was spent being briefed on the physiological aspects of Naval Aviation, and we saw videos of aviators training to prevent G-loc while flying. After watching the Naval Aviators perform, we practiced the "hic" maneuver, which is an AGSM, or Anti-G Straining Maneuver. It is meant to increase G-tolerance, and the active duty in the room found our attempts quite humorous.. Later that day, we all passed our water survival training which was required before we could go fly in the T-34C trainers.

At the VFA-37 hangar with the "Ragin' Bulls", we met with F/A-18 pilots before we each had our turn in the Super Hornet simulator. We then got to fly in the T-34s with some of the pilots from NAS Oceana. I flew with "TomTom" up and down the coast for a thrilling 20-minute ride. To end the week, Bravo Company toured the inside of a P-8 Poseidon and had the amazing opportunity to go onboard the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN-69). Aviation week was my favorite part of CORTRAMID and I am even more committed to pursue a future as a Naval Aviator upon my commissioning.

Marine Week - MIDN 3/C Anspach

For Marine Options in particular, CORTRAMID's Marine week functions as a self-test. Over the week, you complete the o-course, confidence course, a CFT, rappel tower, and other challenges that you might find at OCS, TBS, or Parris Island. These events can be either exhilarating or miserable, all depending on your mindset. Beyond these more physically demanding exercises, other events give Midshipmen a taste of life in the Marine Corps. The firing range, osprey ride, and hours spent speaking with officers and NCOs come to mind. Officership is also a central component to Marine week, with high expectations of those chosen to be squad or platoon leaders.

One seemingly insignificant moment reminded me of why I had chosen to be a Marine option in the first place. While learning small-unit tactics in a simulated village, the sky fell, and an immense North Carolina-fashion summer storm hit us without warning. We got back in our squads and began to march back to our squad bays when an NCO gave us some simple instructions: "When I say 'double time,' you run." Expletives may have been added for dramatic effect. Nevertheless, we ran back through the rain, slightly damp but no worse for wear. Something about it was incredibly motivating.

Some left Marine week assured that their decision to be in the Navy was a wise one. Some Marine options found that their decision to be a Marine option was a mistake. Some Navy options even decided that they were going green when they got back to their unit. However, to me and many other Marine options, Marine week was exhilarating and reminded us why we want to be Marine Corps officers.



MIDN 3/C Slaight



MIDN 3/C Anspach



MIDN 2/C Strong on board the USS Ralph Johnson



Top: MIDN 3/C Sherman on CORTRAMID



Bottom: From left to right, MIDN 3/C Schmidt, Slaight, and Warlick on CORTRAMID



MIDN 1/C Skoczek in front of a P-8A Poseidon

BETWEEN SURFACE AND AVIATION

MIDN 2/C Patrick

As April rolled around, the 3/C midshipmen started planning their enlisted summer cruises. This year, my class had the option of going on a surface cruise or submarine cruise. For the past two years I've been contemplating whether I would rather serve on a surface ship as a SWO or fly Navy. When people ask me what community I want to serve in, I always tell them "I'm torn between surface and aviation." For me, the submarine community was never even a contender (sorry LT Moreno).

Initially I was assigned a cruise on a destroyer set to last six weeks. But after speaking with an upperclassman, I learned that sub cruises were not only for physics majors with a penchant for reading discrete mathematics textbooks in a cold, dark room. Even though I'm a proud Tier 3 scholarship midshipman that had never shown interest in going subs, one of our officers told me that my major and indecision didn't matter and encouraged me to submit for a sub cruise regardless. So, I set out to change my cruise -- I took the chance, and I am so glad I did.

I was assigned a submarine cruise on the USS Mississippi (SSN-782) out of Pearl Harbor, HI. After making it through finals week in Chapel Hill, I hopped on a plane to Honolulu. The next morning the other midshipmen and I boarded the Virginia-class submarine. After settling into berthing, the TRAINO handed us a three-page list of drills and operations we should observe and take part in. The list ranged from "find the window on the boat" to "observe an All Ahead Flank Cavitate" to "don a SCBA". I didn't know how to do any of those things -- especially the window one -- but I would learn.

The week I arrived the Mississippi was preparing for Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination (ORSE). The entire boat seemed to be operating on highly-organized-high-chaos mode. As midshipmen, we were very much in the way -- but nobody ever made us feel like we were. The crew and wardroom made every effort to let us observe drills and briefings. Each of the junior officers sat down with us to answer our questions about the process of getting qualified, what Power School is like, and provided general tips about the service selection process. Many of the enlisted took time to explain their roles in depth and trained us in various U/Is around the boat. The CO and XO had multiple meetings scheduled in during the week to present briefs and answer our questions about the submarine force. The chiefs gave us many life lessons and, most importantly, taught us how to play a mean game of cribbage.

I was floored by the professionalism of the submarine force. Despite the boat's busy schedule and the added pressure of passing ORSE, every person knew and executed their job well. Accomplishing the mission was truly a team effort.

And now I want to be a part of that team. Although I initially dismissed the Silent Service, I saw a glimpse into how tightly run the submarine community is and I want to rise to the challenge. My advice to underclassmen is to reach out of your comfort zone and explore other communities. Even if you think that you're set on a certain career you can still gain an appreciation for different parts of the Navy and Marine Corps.

But I'm back to square one because I'm still torn between surface and aviation: I can't decide which is my second choice to subs.



USS Mississippi surfacing in the Pacific

SEA TRIALS

MIDN 2/C Protze

I attended Sea Trials at Officer Training Command in Newport, Rhode Island where Midshipmen participated in events that emulated a condensed version of Navy OCS. Training began with an introduction to the Marine staff in a sand pit where we conducted various exercises that clearly set the tone of the event. Throughout the duration of our stay, a few events stood out as memorable evolutions. One was the USS Buttercup, a free-floating damage control simulator in which midshipmen have to patch ruptured pipes, plug holes in bulkheads, set up shoring, and dewater the ship in a timed scenario. Familiarization with the standardized equipment and techniques used in damage control situations throughout the fleet allowed me to identify and understand the purpose of the same equipment onboard my second-class cruise.

Another Midshipmen favorite was the fire trainer, in which Midshipmen don full firefighting gear to put out multiple fires in a closely monitored evolution. In the first scenario, midshipmen rotated handling the firehose and nozzle in several teams while attacking a large main space fire. Then we moved into a confined space with air support equipment to extinguish a kitchen fire with CO2 bottles.

Each day at Sea Trials was a surprise. Somedays we would have minimal downtime and would run from one event to the next, while others were slow-paced and loosely structured. The commander later explained this was to emulate shipboard life, in which some periods contain little action and others require maximum effort and attention. Overall, midshipmen agreed that while it was a demanding cruise, the bonds created from the intensity and chaos allowed it to be an enjoyable experience in hindsight.



Officer Candidate School

MIDN 1/C Guerrero

“Congratulations, you’ve earned this, but remember what I told you. Be a professional at all times and earn this everyday. Every. Damn. Day.”

Standing there next to the water, left hand out with a small black EGA pressed hard into my palm by my Platoon Sergeant, I felt two tears fall down my dirty face. This was it, the moment I had worked towards for not only these past six weeks, but the past four years. In a heartbeat it was over, and my platoon took off at a sprint towards the house to clean and continue working, business as usual, because that’s what Marines do. 120 seconds of being “nasty” and happy and then back to being the professionals you are trained to be.

In the end, I loved it, and even miss Officer Candidate School (OCS). Built up to be a spartan like challenge by my peers who passed ahead of me, I worried each day as it drew closer. During the chaotic six weeks we all were tested constantly by a tough staff and at times I felt like it would never end. There were moments where it was hard, and others where I felt in control, but looking back I’m thankful for the opportunity to attend OCS. I believe that OCS doesn’t change you, it merely shows you who you are. I know how I react under stress, whether it was the yelling from our instructors or the build up of fatigue. I understand how to utilize different leadership styles based on the situation, and I know how to deal with all sorts of people. Most importantly I left OCS with inner confidence, a drive to be uncommon amongst the uncommon, and the knowledge that I must earn it everyday. Every. Damn. Day.



Top: MIDN 1/C Gumbel
Bottom: MIDN 1/C Dremann

MIDN 1/C Guerrero buddy-carrying a fellow candidate

Editor’s note: All UNC-NROTC Midshipmen who attended OCS completed it successfully. Congragulations to MIDN 1/C Carriero, MIDN 1/C Dremann, MIDN 1/C Guerrero, MIDN 1/C Gumbel, MIDN 1/C Hamby, MIDN 1/C Harris, and MIDN 2/C McPhail.

AVIATION CRUISE

MIDN 1/C Skoczek

For my 1/C Aviation Cruise, I spent three and a half weeks with VAQ-131, the Lancers, at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. This being my first cruise, I found myself intrigued by every small detail. Over the course of the cruise, I was able to observe the ground crews performing preflight checks and full startup for both the EA-18 Growler and the P-8A Poseidon and their takeoff sequences, as well as the general day-to-day operation of a Growler squadron. I was given opportunities to sit down and talk with the unit's leadership, including the XO, the CO, and the CMC. Doing so gave me valuable firsthand insight on what kinds of expectations Junior Officers are held to early on in their careers. I also learned ways in which I can begin to improve myself now to be better prepared for my upcoming career.

As for hands-on experience, I was able to spend several hours in the Growler simulator, and I was lucky enough to get two flights on a Growler and a third flight on a Poseidon. I was thoroughly impressed with the Poseidon flight. I had expected the flying to be rather calm, but that was true only for the transit from Whidbey Island down to the area of operation and back. Once at the area, there was a lot of very low-level flying, with frequent sharp turns. I also witnessed the crew running an actual training exercise to find a submarine in the water, and the excitement of the crew upon positive contact was tangible. The first flight on the Growler was focused on the aerobatic ability of the aircraft, while the second was a low-level flight along routes VR 1350 and 1355. While the flights along the low level routes simply cannot be beat, the flight on the Poseidon was a blindside to my expectations. I had gone into the cruise thinking that I would only want to fly jet aircraft, but the experiences I had over summer cruise made me rethink that one! Regardless of the airframe, my experiences at Whidbey Island made my mind clear: I want nothing more than to earn my wings and Fly Navy.



MIDN 1/C Skoczek in an EA-18 Growler

EOD CRUISE

MIDN 1/C Weinstein

This summer I had the privilege of being selected for an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Summer Cruise. I spent three weeks in San Diego with nine other midshipmen from other ROTC units and the Naval Academy competing with and against them and “trying out” for the community. Every day was a challenge physically and mentally as we went through countless evolutions that tested our ability to cooperate as a team and push ourselves as individuals. There were always eyes on us and an acute pressure to be giving 100% effort no matter what we were doing.

One of the first lessons we learned as a group of strangers was how to be a team, and it was a tough lesson to learn while getting wet and sandy. From stretcher carries to swimming and running boats around the Point Loma Annex, we learned the importance of working for the team rather than ourselves.

The EOD community is one of the smallest in the Navy and is known for the high caliber of both its officers and enlisted. That is a huge part of what draws me to the community, and I was able to experience that firsthand by spending time with platoons from many different EOD mission sets. I learned more about EOD than I ever expected during my time in San Diego. I am thankful for the chance I was given to attend this cruise and know I will take the lessons I learned into the fleet no matter what community I service assign.



Top: MIDN 1/C Weinstein (3rd from right).
Bottom: EOD technicians searching for a simulated underwater mine.

CREDITS

Thank you to those who contributed to this edition of Anchors Aweigh:

MIDN 1/C Guerrera
MIDN 1/C Skoczek
MIDN 1/C Weinstein
MIDN 2/C Patrick
MIDN 2/C Protze
MIDN 2/C Strong
MIDN 3/C Anspach
MIDN 3/C Slight
MIDN 3/C Sherman

Photo on page 1: USS Mississippi in the Pacific Ocean.

Photo on page 8: Petty Officer 2nd Class K. Engrums (n.d.). 170523-N-HM829-181. photograph, Whidbey Island.

Photo on page 8: <https://www.navy.mil/management/photodb/photos/170606-N-1K959-320.JPG>

Photo on page 11: File:U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Technician 2nd Class Zach Eldred, Right, with EOD Mobile Unit 5, and a Singapore Navy EOD Technician Search for a Simulated Underwater Mine. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title>

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Photo on this page: USS Ralph Johnson.

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