



Cadets practice aiming the M4 Rifle during personal marksmanship training)

SAN DIEGO STATE ARMY ROTC MARCH NEWSLETTER

Happy March Everyone!
Almost halfway done with the Semester! We have a lot in store for you so buckle up and see what has happened and what is yet to come!

Calendar for February-March

FEBRUARY

- 15: Cadet Garland George C. Marshall Seminar recognition
- 22: Col. (RET) Bill Edwards talk on Abu Ghraib
- 24 Commander's Cup Dodgeball Tournament
- 25 M4 Qualification Range

MARCH

- 11 Mission Beach Clean Up
- 15 ROTC Recruitment event at Mount Miguel High School
- 16 Guest Speaker in MILS 110 WWII Vet
- 20 Hot Chocolate 5k volunteer event
- 22 Best Squad Physical Training Competition at SDSU
- 25 Junior Officer Mentorship Panel



Cadet Senn pulls security with his M249 (Rubber Machine Gun) during Platoon Attack Training at Marine Corps Base Miramar

M4 Carbine Qualification Range

On 25 February 2022, the Aztec Battalion conducted the M4 Qualification Range at Fort Irwin, CA. This was an all-day event where Cadets practiced their skills of zeroing the M4 carbine rifle and shooting the Army's table six M4 qualification.

The day started at 0300 in the morning outside of the Fowler Athletics Center located on San Diego State's (SDSU's) campus. All MSIIIs, MSIVs (along with some Ranger Challenge MSIs and MSIIIs) arrived on time and boarded the bus to take them to Fort Irwin. The bus drove through early morning traffic arriving at Fort Irwin at 0730. Cadets filed out of the bus and proceeded to sign out their M4 rifles and three Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) for the day.

Cadets received a safety brief by Captain (CPT) Laxamana, who instructed them on the proper



Cadet Andrews marks holes in Cadet Scott's target to help him zero his rifle.

procedures to ensure a safe range day. MSI, MSII and

MSIII Cadets were then split into groups of nine and the first group was led onto the range by Cadre and MSIV instructors. These Cadets were sent to nine different shooting lanes where they were instructed to lay in the prone position, prop their weapons on their lane's sandbags and prepare to shoot at their lane's paper targets located 25 meters away from their positions. Cadets would shoot five rounds, then clear and step away from their weapons. When all Cadets had expended their five rounds, Cadre and MSIV instructors would proceed to walk down range with their designated Cadets to observe where their Cadets' bullets had hit on the paper. Cadre and MSIV instructors would inform the Cadets of adjustments they needed to make to their weapon's red dot sight in order to get their shots landing in the middle of the



Cadet Davis takes aim at pop up targets during the Table Six M4 Qualification

paper. Cadets repeated this process until they had zeroed their rifles.

Next, Cadets cleared off the range and were sent to the Table Six qualification. The Table Six qualification consists of 40 pop-up human sized targets that range from 50 meters all the way to 300 meters. Cadets are only given 40 rounds (ten in each magazine) to shoot at these pop-up targets that they must shoot from five different firing positions at designated points during the qualification (standing, prone unsupported, prone supported, kneeling and standing supported).

From 0800 to 1400 (2:00 pm) Cadets spent their time zeroing their rifles and shooting table six. At 1400 Cadets cleaned their rifles and picked up spent shell casings from the range. At 1700 (5:00 pm), all weapons and gear were packed up and Cadets entered the bus to head back to SDSU. At 2100 (9:00 pm) the bus dropped all Cadets off at SDSU and all Cadets then proceeded to get into their personal vehicles and drive home safely.

Three highlights from the day were the impressive shooting skills of Cadets Nicoloff, Moy and Rascon. Cadets Nicoloff and Moy both achieved a score of 39/40 targets hit and Cadet Rascon earned a score of 38/40. These are impressive numbers to reach and are by no means easy. We also had some Cadre members participate in qualifying due to our large amount of ammunition and friendly competition. Notably, 1LT Price and SSG McGee both shot the table six qualification, helping inspire Cadets to continue practicing their shooting skills.

In conclusion, the M4 qualification range was a huge success. This range helped equip MSIII Cadets to qualify at Advanced Camp and also helped the Ranger Challenge Cadets get some good practice before they qualify for table six at the Sandhurst Competition at West Point next month. Great Work Aztec Battalion! Tip of the Spear!

Cadet of the Month: Paige Chimento

This month's Cadet of the Month is Cadet Paige Chimento from Alpha Company. Cadet Chimento goes to SDSU and is studying Biology along with being a part of the pre-medicine program. Cadet Chimento is highly motivated and is heavily involved in our program.

Cadet Chimento is currently one of three females on the Ranger Challenge team. She consistently shows up to Ranger Challenge practice and always has a good attitude even when the workouts get very difficult.

Cadet Chimento also was a four-sport Varsity Athlete in High School. She did Cross Country, Soccer, Track and Field and Swimming! She is constantly finding ways to better herself and maximize



Cadet Chimento at SDSU

her time. Her major and the Premed program are not easy to juggle while also going to ROTC classes and waking up at 0500 in the morning to take on difficult Ranger Challenge workouts!!

Cadet Chimento is an inspiration to her fellow Cadets because she embodies hard work and grit as she strives to maintain good grades, graduate college, get into Medical School and commission in the United States Army.

I asked Cadet Chimento some questions about her ROTC experience and what motivates her. Here is what she had to say:

What/who inspired you to join the military?
My dad and grandfather were both in the Navy and would often talk about it and tell stories about their desire to be involved in the military. This made me grow interest with possibly attending an academy but after some thought and discussion with my older brother who is a 3rd year Army ROTC Cadet, I decided to apply for Army ROTC. I would say, in a way, they all inspired me to want to serve.

What do you want to branch or what branches interest you?

I really want to branch Medical Corps because I hope to go to medical school after undergrad and become an Army Physician.

What is your favorite memory of ROTC so far?
My favorite ROTC memory so far is when we would ruck at Mission Trails for Ranger Challenge on Fridays last semester.

If you could give one piece of advice for someone interested in joining ROTC what would it be?

Be open to learning new things and even though the information can be overwhelming at times, it is worth it for to help prepare you for your future in ROTC. I would definitely also recommend talking to an ROTC Cadet to see if it's right for you!

What motivates you to get out of bed in the morning?
Honestly, getting my peanut butter overnight oats for breakfast is what motivates me to get out of bed. But also, being able to wake up and go and spend about two hours lifting at the gym is what keeps me going as well.



Cadet Chimento at her High School Graduation

Alumni Spotlight: 2LT Christina VanWert

This month's alumni spotlight is on 2LT Christina VanWert (some of you may remember here as Christina Hallock). She graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University's Masters program in 2020 with an M.A. in Clinical Counseling and commissioned the same year into the Army National Guard! She branched Medical Services!

2LT VanWert was the Cadet Battalion Commander during the Fall of her MSIV year and helped lead and supervise training. I asked her a couple questions about her career in the Army National Guard, and about her civilian career and life. Here is what she had to say:



2LT Christian VanWert at Balboa
Park in San Diego

What was the first unit you joined after BOLC?

My first unit is the 109th Field Artillery in Pennsylvania, I was commissioned into the PA National Guard.

What leadership positions have you held inside your first unit?

So far, I am in two leadership roles. I am the Platoon Leader (PL) for my unit's Combat Medics. I am also on Battalion (BN) staff as the BN Medical Operations Officer (aka MEDO). I am responsible for the Medic Platoon that ranges from 12-20 Soldiers as well as staff responsibilities that require more hours than any other 2LT in the Battalion. I have about five different bosses/leaders I report to.

My advice for anyone interested in Medical services or these leadership positions is to take advice from everyone, always ask questions when you are struggling, and never use the word NO without providing alternative options.



**Christina VanWert with her
husband Jacob VanWert on
their wedding day**

What are some of your hobbies, your plans for the future, your civilian psychology practice, etc you would want to share with the Aztec Battalion?

If you are entering a unit with a civilian career or specialty that you believe can be beneficial to your unit, speak up! I am a licensed Mental Health Therapist and although my position in the unit is not behavioral health-I have the knowledge of resources to help the soldiers in my battalion with connecting to mental/behavioral health services and my unit is extremely grateful for it!

Another word of advice I have is to give yourself grace and understand life does not always go as planned- and that's okay! When we are in ROTC and preparing for BOLC, we are so ambitious and ready to take on the Army. Your unit will love your ambition and determination to learn-but remember, you are human, and you have a life of other responsibilities, make sure you practice a stable home/work life balance.

If you have questions for 2LT VanWert about the Army National Guard, the Medical Services branch, or the civilian Mental Health field email us at sdarotc@sandiego.edu and we can get you connected with her.

Great job 2LT VanWert! Keep up the good work!

Colonel (Retired) Bill Edwards Mentorship Panel

On February 22, 2022, SDSU Army ROTC Alum and COL (RET) Bill Edwards, traveled to SDSU to present leadership lessons and share [Inside Abu Ghraib: Leading Through Adversity \(A Lesson in Leadership\)](#), a book that he recently co-authored.. As an alumni of SDSU and an Iraq War Veteran, he discussed the importance of leadership to Cadets and Cadre in attendance. During his time as an officer, COL (RET) Edwards faced the challenge of helping secure Abu Ghraib (an Iraqi prison) and care for the Soldiers, NCOs and Officers in his unit, when they were directed to go their and “fix it” after the mistreatment of prisoners from the former unit’s guards was discovered.

During his time there, he focused on forming, training, and empowering his team to achieve



COL (RET) Edwards about to take off in a Blackhawk Helicopter

mission success. He also illustrated how, "Leading is about People" to emphasize the importance of mentoring and working with Officers, Families, and Soldiers. Cadets asked questions about his personal experiences and how to prepare themselves as future officers. COL (RET) Edwards stated, "Be genuine, provide predictability, and enable stability."

Thank you, COL (RET) Edwards, for coming to SDSU and sharing your experiences and mentorship with our Cadets and Cadre in of the Aztec Battalion! Tip of the Spear!

Contracting Corner

We want to recognize a couple of our Cadets who took the next step in their Army Career by contracting with the U.S. Army as Cadets. Contracting is the process of officially joining the Army, and it consists of a lot of administrative and medical paperwork in order to qualify to be a future Army Officer. Contracting also includes Cadets being paid \$420 per month, a book stipend of \$600 per semester and for those who have received a partial or full scholarship for tuition or room and board, once they contract is when their scholarship starts paying for their schooling. This month we had four Cadets who contracted! These Cadets are now officially on their way to become future Army Officers and we are so proud of their achievement! Let us give a big hand to February and March’s contractees! Cadet Jacob Abdalian, Cadet Paige Chiumento, Cadet Max Cohen and Cadet Mia Hernandez! Well done!



Cadet Jacob Abdalian (Top Photo with Parents)
Cadet Paige Chiumento (Bottom Photo Far Left)
Cadet Max Cohen (Bottom Photo Middle)
Cadet Mia Hernandez (Bottom Photo Far Right)