

MOHAWK ARMY ROTC



Cadet Battalion Commander Wentworth's Vision



Cadet Battalion
Commander
Devon
Wentworth



Several cadets are sworn in by LTC Beal at the conclusion of the Fall 2018 Holiday Party.

All,

As the host institution for Army ROTC in the Capital Region, the Mohawk Battalion extends its roots to more than fifteen schools. Siena College is primarily accompanied by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the University at Albany. The Mohawk Battalion has received numerous accolades over the past decades, and will only excel further. Personally, the past four year with this battalion has established an impermeable sense of character, leadership, and family from within. I want my fellow cadets that will soon fill the boots I wear to carry a vision into their future careers. That vision is that if your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, then you will become true leaders.

- Devon Wentworth, C/BN CDR

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GAFPB

CDT Cariddi fires from the kneeling position for his final qualification round.



By: Cadet Alexa Reilly

Cadets of the Mohawk Battalion took part in the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency (GAFPB) pistol shoot on 12 OCT 2018. The GAFPB is a decoration of the Bundeswehr, the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Germany, and is an option offered to allied soldiers. The GAFPB is one of the few approved foreign awards and, therefore, is sought after by many. However, few ROTC battalions receive the chance to participate. Any rank can receive the GAFPB, and all contracted cadets are encouraged to compete. Those who complete multiple events to Bronze, Silver, or Gold standards receive the GAFPB. Cadets must complete the Basic Fitness Test, First Aid/Tactical Casualty Combat Care (TCCC) test, Nuclear Biological Chemical Mission Oriented Protective Posture (NBC MOPP) test, swim test, an eight-mile road march, and a pistol shoot. Their level, Bronze, Silver, or Gold, is determined by their scores on each event that translates into an overall score. Cadets arrived at the Brunswick Sportsman Club by 1200 on Friday, October 12 where they first received a safety brief and Pre Marksmanship Instruction (PMI) until 1300. Cadets then spent time familiarizing themselves with the M9 Beretta 9mm pistols, firing practice rounds to get their groupings. After an hour, at 1400, cadets moved on to their qualification rounds. Cadets had six seconds to shoot two rounds into targets that are twenty-five meters away. They must fire two rounds while in each of the three firing positions: prone, kneeling, and standing. One at a time, the cadets stepped forward and Cadet Wentworth, range OIC, called the command "GO," signaling the start of the round. Once CDT Wentworth calls "STOP" the cadet must clear their weapon and step off the firing line while MSIVs went down range to mark their targets. If the cadet hit six out of six rounds into the silhouette target, they qualified for this event at the Gold standard, five out of six equates Silver, and four out of six is Bronze. The cadets received three iterations each to qualify Gold. Of the seven shooters of the day, six qualified at the Gold standard for this event, with one cadet qualifying Bronze. MSIVs primarily ran the range; Cadet Wentworth served as the OIC, Cadet Valenza was the NCOIC, and Cadet Reilly ran the ammo point. LTC Beal, Mr. McGlynn, SFC Whitehead, and SFC Bahruth served as cadre supervision for this event, taking their time to teach the proper firing positions and procedures to each cadet. Overall, the event was a success, and five of the cadets who competed for the GAFPB are currently on track for qualifying Gold and Silver overall. Mohawk Battalion aims to produce high-quality cadets who hold themselves to the highest standards, and the GAFPB is a way to reward those willing to put in the extra effort. Mohawk Battalion sincerely thanks the Brunswick Sportsman Club for their cooperation in support of this operation.

Association of the United States Army

Cadets Valenza, Wentworth, Lynch and Griffith stand with SMA(R) Kenneth O. Preston and MG Ray Shields NYARNG at a Soldier Recognition Reception in Albany earlier this fall.



By: Cadet Camille Valenza

The Association of the United States Army (AUSA) is an international nonprofit organization that strives to support all soldiers, veterans and families through educational and professional development. With 121 chapters across the globe, AUSA and its chapter presidents work tirelessly to provide assistance, information and opportunities to America's Army. AUSA supports all aspects of the Army to include current Active, National Guard, and Reserve's Soldiers and Officers as well as Retired soldiers, veterans, government civilians, Wounded Warriors, families and supportive citizens. Mohawk Battalion Cadets have had the special opportunity to become more involved with the Capital District Chapter in the past year. Chapter President SSG Will Valenza and former chapter President, CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt encourage all cadets to become members to begin receiving benefits from the organization. Mohawk Battalion cadets have been invited to and attended two Soldier Recognition Dinners this past year where they were able to speak with several NCOs, Sergeant's Major, Field grade and General Officers. Additionally, the Capital Region chapter has offered support to the cadets by donating gift bags of snacks, water, and AUSA gear to the battalion's Ranger Challenge team. CSM(r.) Van Pelt drove from Malta, NY to Fort Dix, NJ with his wife, Deb, to hand deliver the gifts to the team and cadre. All cadets were also provided a membership application. Cadet memberships are a new aspect of the organization. Having been established this past year with the help of the Capital District Chapter, cadets can apply for a two year membership for only \$10. Membership benefits include discounts on insurance, rentals, hotels, products and services, networking events, professional development opportunities and events, access to magazine subscriptions such as Army Times, and most importantly a voice in one's community and on Capitol Hill. All Cadets, Alumni and families are encouraged to become a member. Anyone can join online at AUSA.org or ask CDT Valenza for a cadet membership application at c10vale@siena.edu.



Veterans Recognition Dinner

LTC Laiacona speaking at the 2018 Veterans Recognition Dinner



By: Cadet Devon Wentworth

November 13, 2018 marked a night of acknowledgement of one of Siena College's most decorated veterans. The Siena Veterans Recognition Dinner provided an opportunity to recognize Lieutenant Colonel Nicholas Laiacona who graduated from Siena in 1966. The annual event brings various veterans, civilians, and cadets together to celebrate the passion to serve and educate which the college's ROTC program has ingrained within its roots for decades. Lieutenant Colonel Laiacona received a prestigious induction in the Mohawk Battalion's Alumni Hall of Fame; an accreditation only three have received beforehand. Lieutenant Colonel Laiacona's decorated military career manifests the path every Mohawk cadet strives for as future Army officers. Beginning as a platoon leader for the 9th Infantry Division in Vietnam Lieutenant Colonel Laiacona flew over one hundred combat missions. Although sustaining injuries he led his unit through hostile fires and traps in Vietnam; never losing a man in his platoon. Later in his career, as a company commander he volunteered for three operations to destroy Viet Cong strongholds. He retired on January 31, 1991 with more than twenty-four years of service to his country. His awards and decorations include the Combat Infantry Badge, Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star for Valor with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, three Air Medals, Army Commendation Medal for Valor with four Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal with star, Vietnam Service Medal with four stars, Korean Defense Medal, and other U.S. and Vietnam service awards. LTC Nicholas Laiacona is a truly inspirational figure that goes beyond the definition of selfless service. He has also been very active with the local community; once acting as president of the Association of the United States Army, and becoming involved with the La Salle Institute Alumni Association as president. LTC Laiacona holds the honor of enhancing alumni participation and mentorship, while also extending influence to the local community.

**CDT Alexa Reilly,
LTC Laiacona,
and Veteran Gary
Thompson pose
with Siena
College
President, Br. Ed**



BG Colloton's Promotion Ceremony

The Mohawk BN Color Guard retires the colors at the conclusion of the formal promotion ceremony.. (CDTs Cohen, O'Connor pictured from left to right. Not pictured are CDTs Jackson and Arel)



By: Cadet Tim Snyder

On a brisk fall afternoon preceding the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, friends and family gathered at the RPI Alumni House to witness the promotion of COL Kim Colloton to the rank of Brigadier General. BG Colloton is an alumna of the Mohawk Army ROTC BN and a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. BG Colloton graduated from RPI with a degree in Architecture and commissioned into the US Army as a Second Lieutenant in the Engineer branch in 1992. The promotion ceremony was presided over by Lt. General Todd Semonite, the 54th Chief of Engineers and the Commanding General of The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Lt. General Semonite offered his remarks pertaining to the career and accomplishments of BG Colloton thus far and facilitated the unfurling of the general's flag as well as the presentation of the general's belt and sidearm. During his remarks he took the time to specifically address the Army ROTC CDTs present and relate this momentous occasion back to their current training and their future aspirations. Lt. Gen. Semonite offered his insight to what the five points on the star of the BG rank mean and discussed what BG Colloton has done so far in her career to achieve each of these points. He inspired the CDTs present to remain vigilant in their training and look to the career of BG Colloton as a textbook example of successful and selfless leadership. Following the retrieval of the colors by the Mohawk Army ROTC Color Guard, comprised of CDTs Noah Cohen, Kevin O'Connor, Gwendolyn Jackson and Aidden Arel, attendees proceeded to a reception in the main gathering space of the Alumni House. During this time CDTs Jacob Ferreira, Kevin O'Connor, Tim Snyder, Chris Howes, Thomas Gall, Abby Borchert and Peter Cariddi were given the opportunity to have lunch with Lt. Gen. Semonite. During this time the CDTs were able to ask questions and receive priceless advice from the 39-year Army veteran. Lt. Gen. Semonite was interested in how the Mohawk Army ROTC BN operates across the entire NY capital region and especially how ROTC CDTs meet the demands of a demanding leadership development program while attending a demanding institution such as RPI. At the end of the event CDTs received a challenge coin from BG Colloton to commemorate the event. When CDTs thanked BG Colloton for sharing this momentous occasion with them she responded kindly saying, "It was all of you (CDTs) here at RPI that made this day special."

Combatives Training

By: Cadet Paul Serino

Mohawk Battalion Army ROTC had the privilege of working with Renzo Gracie Academy in Latham, NY on the 17th and 18th of October 2018. Cadets meeting the Army fitness standard were given the opportunity to partake in combative training as a change of pace from traditional PT. Under the tutelage of 3rd degree black belt Professor Bruno Tostes, cadets learned the basics of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. BJJ is a martial art that focuses on controlling your opponent through positional advantage and grappling. Being able to break or maintain contact with your opponent is key to gaining superiority over your opponent. According to the Renzo Gracie website, "overcoming an opponent of greater size, strength, and aggression with lesser size and strength is the unique aspect of the sport." This technique and philosophy surrounding the martial art aids in the development of future Army officers by building confidence in themselves and their physical ability. BJJ is not only physically, but mentally demanding since you must remain keenly aware of your opponent's movements as well as your own in order to put yourself in a more advantageous position. In addition to being fun, these workouts were a means of broadening cadets' horizons by introducing them to an exercise and style of training they otherwise would not experience. Being novices, cadets were taught fundamentals such as bringing an opponent to the ground, maintaining control, and following their attempts to escape. After Professor Bruno's clear step-by-step instruction for a maneuver, cadets were practicing the skills themselves right away with their sparring partners. Movements flowed into one another making the exercises dynamic. By the time the instructional period was over, cadets were able to perform a multitude of Jiu Jitsu movements one after another despite the relatively short instructional period. This is a testament to the instructor's knowledge and teaching method. Cadets were taught ways of forcing an opponent to submit as well. Cadets also learned how to perform a proper chokehold to force a submission. Despite the clear enthusiasm for learning such holds, no cadets were harmed during these instructional periods! The Mohawk Battalion would like to thank Renzo Gracie Academy for spending their time and resources to help train our cadets in the fundamentals of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.



Above: Mohawk cadets pictured with BJJ instructors at Renzo Gracie Academy

Below: CDT Colucci learning to perform the Arm Bar



Below: CDT Woodyatt, Ferreira, and Cohen recruit prospective cadets at the Union vs. West Point Hockey game.



Union Vs. West Point

By: Cadet Christopher Howes

The Union College Dutchmen played its opener in hockey against the West Point Knights on Friday, October 7th, 2018. They also used the night to show their appreciation for the military. Several cadets from the Mohawk Battalion attended and a group of them rendered the colors for the National Anthem. Union College is actually one of several institutions with cadets in the battalion. The host program is located at Siena College and cadets from there as well as Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, University of Albany, Russell Sage College, Hudson Valley Community College, Union College, College of Saint Rose, and the Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences all enroll in the program. The battalion is broken up into 3 companies, located at Siena, RPI, and U-Albany. Each company conducts PT at its respective school 3 times a week and hosts military science classes for freshmen and sophomore students. The game remained close for most of the first period, but rapidly got out of hand in the second. At the end of the game, the Union Dutchmen had outscored West Point 4 to 1. Jack Adams, a sophomore who recently lost a brother to medical illness, assisted one goal and scored another. After the game, players from both teams congratulated him on his strong performance and offered condolences for his loss. When asked for comment on the matter, the Army Coach, Brain Riley, remarked "What people don't realize is one of our players, Derek Hines, was killed in action; Jack's dad stepped up in a huge way for the Hines family. Derek was killed in 2005, in Afghanistan. Mr. Adams is good friends with the Hines family. I saw it first-hand how he rallied around the Hines', so when this happened, I told our guys before the game that, as far as I'm concerned, the Adams family is part of the Army hockey family." During the game, cadets set up a recruiting table by the bleachers and offered to talk about Army ROTC. Several students and parents expressed significant interest in the program. Students, parents, and family interested in the program could win prizes for completely physical challenges. At first, cadets made the challenges easy. However, as the table began to run out of gear, cadets quickly increased the difficulty. Towards the end of the game, a large group of children gathered, and CDT Dunn organized a competition of push ups and planks. The children were able to do a surprising number of push-ups and competed in the competition with enthusiasm.

Ranger Challenge

By: Cadet Michael Lynch The Mohawk Battalion is an exceptional ROTC program. We have mastered the ability to push cadets to the next level and show our cadets the good that we can do as a battalion. An incredibly good example of this is our Ranger Challenge Team. This team is a group of 11 cadets that go to Fort Dix NJ for a weekend-long event where they display their physical and intellectual abilities. While the events vary from year to year, the first event this year was a physical test designed to tire the team out and make the rest of the weekend more difficult. The team did well at this event and pushed themselves heavily during the first major challenge for the team. From this initial challenge the team grew and proved themselves to each other. That afternoon the team went back to the tent that they set up earlier that day. At this location, the cadets recover and strategize. This strengthens the already strong bonds between the team members. The first night the captain and a scribe go to a briefing where they receive information on all the events that will follow. After this, the captain makes a plan for the remainder of the weekend and briefs the rest of the team on what he/she desires for the rest of the competition. Over the course of the next day, the team will be tested on their military knowledge and physical resilience. The events include Land navigation, a grenade lane, a TCCC medical evaluation lane, and an obstacle course. All of these events challenge the team's intellectual ability under physical endurance. Everything is timed and measured forcing all members of the team to push themselves the whole time. This forces the team to grow and mold into a coherent group. With every failure, the team grows and learns while with every success the team gets more and more motivated to push forward. The second day ends with a tug of war competition. This occurs later in the evening with bonfires for light. It is an incredibly motivating and hard, yet fun event. After this, the team heads back to the tent and prepares for the final event, the 7-mile ruck. The last day begins with a gear layout to check everyone's integrity. The completion of this initiates the 7-mile ruck. This is the final big test of the team's ability and is easily the hardest challenge. The weekend is completed after the ruck with an award ceremony where the winner is announced. This competition brings the absolute best out of this team. It is one of the hardest things in ROTC and the team accepts the difficulty with pride.



By: Cadet Rhys Jacobson

The Mohawk Battalion ROTC unit trains cadets across the country to become future US Army officers. Cadets are involved in their daily academic lives, on top of the rigors of physical training, military education, and leadership. This is something that not every college student faces. Army ROTC helps to take a normal college student, and transform them into someone who can do much more than they thought possible.

A normal week for a college student and an Army ROTC cadet are very different. Army ROTC teaches cadets the importance of time management, and a healthy lifestyle of food, sleep, and exercise. While most college students are sleeping-in late into the day, cadets are already up, having exercised and gotten ready for the day. While most college students are struggling to stay afloat with normal demands, Army ROTC gives cadets the tools to succeed with multiple academic demands. The biggest, and most overlooked difference in experiences actually happens over the summer, while most college students spend that time working, or not doing much, Army ROTC offers truly unique experiences, from paid travel, to paid training.

One of the cadets in Army ROTC is Peter Cariddi. Cadet Cariddi joined Army ROTC and hasn't looked back on his decision since. This past summer, Cadet Cariddi went to the US Army Air Assault School, in Fort Drum, NY. Air Assault School is a 10-day course designed to prepare soldiers for missions involving helicopters. It involves mastery of many skills, to include rappelling. Cadet Cariddi, among many other cadets, was selected to go over the summer, and was able to ride in a US Army helicopter, and even rappel out of one! He was awarded the coveted Air Assault Badge.

Cadet Cariddi gained the knowledge, and confidence, in rappelling that no other college experience could compare to. Cadet Cariddi's skills ultimately led to his participation during an RPI Hockey game, where he rappelled from the catwalk above the ice rink.

Stories like Peter's are not unique to just him. Every year, the Mohawk Battalion trains cadets, and prepares them to be future leaders, but also affords them opportunities to enrich their training with experiences. From rappelling out of helicopters, to travelling abroad to Europe, Asia, South America, or Africa, the Army not only supplies these opportunities free of charge, but will also pay cadets to go. Cadet Cariddi and many cadets like him will graduate from college, with a degree, the same as every other college student. The difference? Cadet Cariddi will leave with no debt, a guaranteed job, priceless leadership skills, and incomparable experiences.

At the fall 2018 holiday party, the Mohawk Battalion recognized several cadets for their achievements over the past year. Cadets were recognized for completion of Basic and Advanced Camp, participation in Ranger Challenge, graduating Army Mountain Warfare school, Air Assault School, and receiving the Department of the Army ROTC Distinguished Military Student Award and German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge. The following cadets were sworn in and contracted into the ROTC program

- Lucy Belden
- Brandon Chasse
- Noah Cohen
- Nicholas Colucci
- Andrew Kazmer
- William Lee
- Steven Lynn
- Marie Cuvillier
- Patrick Connerney
- Alexandria Bisaccia
- John Douglas
- Adam Branch
- Zachary Bult
- Abigail Draiss
- Jevon Schmitz
- Charles Coley
- Andrew Hur
- Adrian Hyman-Martin
- William Tilkemeier
- Nathaneal Landrieu

Congratulations to all newly contracted cadets and awardees!

Contact Information

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Click the links to see what our cadets are up to!

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