

University of Memphis Naval ROTC Tiger Cruise Newsletter

Fall 2018

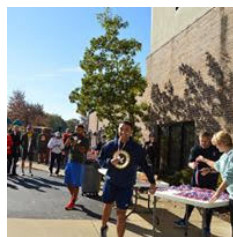
A Ball of a Time

On November 9th, 2018, the University of Memphis Naval ROTC hosted its Sea Service Ball at the Columns in downtown Memphis to celebrate the 243rd birthday of the United States Navy and Marine Corps. The night began with a cocktail hour which gave midshipmen a chance to speak with each of the officers, along with other special guests and staff. Shortly after this, the ceremony kicked off with a ceremonial sword detail and presentation of the national ensign lead by MIDN 4/C Baker and MIDN 4/C Cline respectively. After this initial introduction into the ceremony, the guest of honor, Major General Albert C. Harvey, shared a meaningful story of how the Marine Corps came to be and how it became a part of the Navy. After his speech, the Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps wished everyone a happy birthday via a fleet-wide video. The ceremony eventually ended with music and dancing hosted by a live DJ. Midshipmen, active duty staff, the guest of honor, and their dates all enjoyed the rest of the evening bonding with each other and creating lasting memories.



Tim Creager Memorial 5K

On November 17, 2018, our unit partnered with the Bartlett Hills Baptist church to honor and celebrate Lance Corporal Timothy R Creager, a former member of the church and fallen marine. Tim was killed in action on July 1, 2004, leaving behind a legacy of integrity, patriotism, and faith. The turnout was very positive and intimate as his mother and old friends attended. Over forty runners participated in the run including midshipmen and officers from our unit. After the 5K, awards were given out to age groups ranging from seven to sixty and above. Awards included medals, gift cards, and free gym memberships to the YMCA. Some of the winners from our unit included Captain Thomas Montalbano, MIDN 3/C Prewitt, and MIDN 2/C Miller. Overall, the event was an excellent experience for our members along with the other participants. This event will continue into the next few years and keep growing as our unit and the members of the Bartlett Hills Baptist church put forth their best effort to keep Tim Creager's spirit alive.



NROTC New Student Orientation

New student orientation took place at Camp McCain, an Army base in Mississippi. Twenty-five new students worked toward becoming midshipmen through a one-week introduction program. After receiving their uniforms, the new students were driven down to Camp McCain to begin orientation. The first morning started bright and early with a PRT and PFT for Navy options and Marine options respectively. Throughout the week, they went through many more physical challenges such as a six-mile hike, swimming test, and confidence course. The biggest obstacle at the end of the course was climbing a rope over a small lake; if you fell in you had to keep trying until you were successful. The new students had a chance to practice fireteam drills that resemble formations used in real combat situations. On the last day, the twenty students who made it through orientation were awarded the title midshipman and reunited with their families. The day ended with a great cookout hosted by the upperclassmen in our unit.



NROTC Car Show

This year our unit hosted its very first car show, the Millington Auto fest on October 6th, 2018. This event was planned and ran by our very own member, MIDN 3/C Branson Bitzer who has a passion for cars. The car show attracted all different makes and models ranging from old Ford Broncos, Camaros, Mustangs, and even a classic Lamborghini Mucielago. The event kicked off early in the morning at the Millington Air Base and ended later in the evening with an award ceremony. Awards included the best import, the best American classic, and best truck. Each car was graded on after factory modifications, body style, paint, interior, and engine complexity. The car that won the entire show was a classic Ford GT350 with over 900 wheel horsepower and 750 horsepower. After the award show, drivers also competed in a revving contest to close out the day. Overall the event was a success for our unit, and we plan on making this an annual event

Fall 2018 Commissioning

This past December the former 1/C MIDN Paul Posey graduated from NROTC and commissioned as an Ensign in the United States Navy. Commissioning is the goal a Midshipmen hopes to achieve throughout their NROTC journey and is very important to all of them. It is the epitome of their hard work throughout college and begins their long-awaited career in the Navy. Ensign Posey was our only commission for the class of fall 2018, and he graduated with a degree in civil engineering. His commissioning ceremony was very meaningful as he was sworn in by his brother, and his first salute was given to him by his best friend. The rest of his family also participated in the ceremony as his grandmother gave him his coat, his parents placed his shoulder boards, and his fiancé presented his cover. Our commanding officer, in his closing speech, shared with Ensign Posey lifelong advice to be utilized in his career. At the very end of his commissioning, Ensign Posey will pursue a career later this year as a pilot.



Admiral Visit

This past fall, our unit was lucky enough to be visited by the commander of naval service training, Rear Admiral Bernacchi. He is the commander of every NROTC unit as well as officer candidate school. During his arrival, he was given a tour of the school and our unit by some of our upper-class Midshipmen. After his visit, we were able to ask him questions and hear his ideas on new scholarships that would be available to new members and his thoughts on how to make NROTC a better program. One project he talked to us about was giving each unit its sea navigation simulators to allow students to be able to understand better traveling at sea along with preparing them for their careers in the Navy. Currently, the scholarships Midshipmen are offered do not cover room and board, and many midshipmen join the unit as a college programmer meaning they don't initially start college on scholarship and that they must pay full tuition. In an attempt to attract students in Memphis, specifically, and give students a better chance at earning a scholarship, Admiral Bernacchi spoke with the dean of the University of Memphis and created a new one-year scholarship for first-year students that will both cover their first year's tuition and room and board while they work towards earning the next scholarship that would pay for the rest of college and allow them to commission as an officer in the navy. According to him, this scholarship will be available next year and will be more focused on the incoming freshman who used to be in JROTC in high school. To finish his visit, Admiral Bernacchi gave us all advice on how to properly manage our future careers in the Navy and how he dealt with his challenges of balancing work, deployments, and family. To thank him for his time our company commanding officer MIDN 1/C Bowery presented him with unit's challenge coin.