



SPARTAN BATTALION

FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER



Summer Training



Due to the novel COVID-19 pandemic, normal Cadet Summer Training (CST) as well as other training opportunities were cancelled. In place of CST, Cadet Command created Operation Agile Warrior (OAW). OAW was a 9 day training event at Fort Knox, KY from the 1 to 9 of August which ensured that MSIII cadets from 7th Brigade were trained on tasks including land navigation, shooting, ruck marching, and leadership in a platoon size element. Below are the experiences of some of the cadets who attended OAW.

Spartan Battalion cadet group photo at the conclusion of OAW



Operation Agile Warrior (Fort Knox, KY): **MSIV Cadet Billy Kenney**

At Fort Knox this summer, I completed Operation Agile Warrior, the Army's ROTC training solution to the novel Coronavirus. Although it was far more condensed than traditional Advanced camp, I still had the opportunity to qualify on an M4, execute situational training exercises in the field, and complete land navigation courses. The time was short, but it was well spent in the safest ways available to us in unprecedented times.

MSIV Cadet Angelica Parker

At OAW, I learned that leadership is not found in any textbook, not even in the Ranger Handbook. Knowing tactics and understanding how to apply them in the real world are completely different things. Some of the best leadership came from confidence, an unwillingness to quit when events became hard, and innovation. Challenge brings out people's true character and reveals our grit. There are going to be some wonderful cadets commissioning in 2021 and I feel privileged to have gotten to know some of them this summer at Ft Knox.

Spartan Staff School (26 - 31 August 2020)

Leading up to the beginning of the semester, MSIII and MSIV cadets attended Spartan Staff School virtually. Led and taught by cadre, cadets were taught on training subjects covering Leadership, Mentorship, and other topics to prepare them for the upcoming fall semester. Cadets learned how to operate in their assigned leadership roles and how to effectively lead the battalion with only the guidance of cadre. Additionally, the cadets worked with cadre to devise solutions on how to receive proper training while also mitigating COVID risks, and answering any questions that arose around the subject. Overall, cadets were well trained during this week of preparation and received the tools necessary to execute a successful semester.



MSIV Cadets listen to instruction on the Eight-Step Training Model during Spartan Staff School

Fall Semester

Thus far, the Spartan Battalion has conducted 3 labs and 4 PT sessions. While COVID-19 has put restrictions on how training can be operated, cadet leadership developed solutions to ensure cadets were provided valuable training while simultaneously mitigating the risks of COVID-19.



Commissioning Ceremony (4 September 2020)



2LT Lindsey Wurtz being sworn in by MAJ Corner

Spartan Battalion held multiple Summer Commissioning Ceremonies. We are proud to announce that Cadets Lindsey Wurtz, Mara Tremblay, Erica Arciniega, and Connor Sloan were promoted to the rank of Second Lieutenant and have officially become the Army's newest officers! These particular commissioning ceremonies were also special for the Spartan Battalion. Three of our four commissioning cadets were female as well as our Battalion's Executive Officer, MAJ Corner, who officiated the ceremonies. We were blessed to have two distinguished guests to help celebrate this huge milestone. MAJ David Daniels sang an excellent rendition of our National Anthem. COL Lavetta Bennett provided several words of wisdom as she addressed our new officers before they stepped away from Demonstration Hall to begin their newest endeavors. The Spartan Battalion extends its deepest congratulations to these brand new lieutenants and we wish them nothing, but the best as they begin their careers. We will miss them! Go Green!

Physical Training (Monday 0600-0700):

Staying in shape is crucial in the United States Army, especially as an Officer. Our Cadre (Instructors) constantly remind us of the leadership value that we bring when we can lead PT from the front. Once a week, cadets met in person to conduct a PT session. Having PT only one day limited the time of exposure between cadets and still allowed cadets to workout in groups. Additionally, cadets split up into smaller groups, wore masks through the workouts and maintained a distance of six feet. On days that cadets did not meet for PT, company leadership devised workouts for cadets to follow on their own.

Leadership LAB: Thursday (0700-1000):

On alternating Thursdays, Junior and Senior Cadets participated in three-hour training blocks known as "Lab." Lab allowed Cadets to learn and conduct practical exercises of the skills to lead units from the squad to the company level. Skills ranged from land navigation to leadership exercises. Lab was held outside at Woodlot and masks were required for all cadets and cadre. Additionally, Cadets separated and spread out whenever possible.



Virtual 9/11 Ceremony (11 September 2020)

To honor those who died from the 9/11 attacks, cadets collaborated with Air Force cadets to organize a virtual ceremony. Before the ceremony, 15 cadets gathered at MSU's rock and painted it as a memorial. The ceremony was a short and concise memory to the fallen, featuring a short video and speeches from Army Cadet Maghran and Air Force Cadet Stevens.



Cadets pose in front of The Rock after painting it on 9/11



Virtual 9/11 ceremony showing photos of cadets painting the rock earlier that day

Extracurricular Activities

Following COVID-19 mitigation procedures, extracurricular clubs could not meet in person as they normally would. Despite this, each club developed solutions to overcome these challenges and ensured that its members received extra training. Meeting virtually, these clubs continue to prepare their members for the future when they can once again meet in-person. Below is a rundown of some of the items covered in these groups:

Color Guard – mission to execute professionalism and be the face of the program, becoming highly trained in drill and ceremony. They are looking at future events to hold and are preparing for the Veterans Day ceremony.

Marksmanship Team – an extracurricular club comprised of cadets who are passionate about marksmanship and competition shooting. They presently review items such as weapon assembly/disassembly and proper practice for weapons safety.

Ranger 1 – develops high physical, disciplinary and tactical skills and prepares many future officers for effective combat arms leadership. They presently practice skills such as map reading, hand and arm signals as well as break down battle drills.

Pathfinders – endeavors to provide an environment for the development of a high level of physical fitness and leadership skills among its members. Currently, it practices skills such as squad raid and air assault ops.



Endurance Club – an extracurricular group that offers students the opportunity to train and race while pursuing individual health and fitness goals.

Ranger Challenge – team who trains every semester for the Ranger Challenge Competition, focusing on both physical fitness and tasks such as marksmanship and land navigation. With the event canceled, cadets are looking at preparing for next semester.

Cadet Fund – in charge of managing funds for the battalion. At present, cadets hold monthly meetings to discuss allocation of funds.

Social Committee – runs the social media pages for the program, dedicated to promoting the image of the battalion. Currently, they hold weekly meetings to ensure everyone is on task and they post photos of lab on social media.

7th Brigade Cadet of the Month – Angelica Parker

For the month of September, Cadet Parker was recognized as Cadet of the Month for the 7th “Bold Warrior” Brigade ROTC. CDT Parker is a proactive, self-motivated professional who seeks and takes responsibility. With no material incentives, CDT Parker volunteered her time to coordinate the efforts of 15 students from Michigan State’s Army and Air Force ROTC Programs to host a joint 9/11 memorial. This virtual event provided its more than 50 attendees an opportunity to pay tribute to the 2,977 personnel who lost their lives in the 2001 terror attacks. CDT Parker's commitment, tireless service and initiative set the example for others to follow. She is an asset to Michigan State University, where she currently serves as the Cadet Executive Officer. Congratulations CDT Parker!





Meet our Command Team

Spartan Battalion is cadet-run, with the MSIV Cadets leading in Battalion Company level officer positions. Below is a short background on Cadet Gavin Hubbard (MSIV, Battalion Commander) and Cadet Gennie Martin (MSIV, Cadet Sergeant Major). They have also provided the following words of wisdom for the upcoming semester!

Cadet Battalion Commander Gavin Hubbard:

My name is Gavin Hubbard and I am the Battalion Commander for the Fall Semester 2020. I am majoring in Finance with a minor in Insurance and Risk Management. I am also currently the XO in Ranger 1 and have been involved in Ranger Challenge over all four of my years here. I am originally from Maryland, so having this home at MSU and the bond that I have made with all of my fellow cadets have been extremely important to me. I look forward to working with all cadets in the battalion and helping each person to improve his/her leadership and personal skills throughout this semester. GO GREEN!



MSIV CDT Gavin Hubbard (left) waiting in line during CWST in Spring 2020

Cadet Command Sergeant Major Gennie Martin:



MSIV CDT Gennie Martin (Left) during the Patrol Base Intro Lab

Hello, my name is Gennie Martin! I am an MS4 and I'm honored to grow in my leadership this semester as the cadet Command Sergeant Major of the Spartan Battalion. I am majoring in Finance in the Broad College of Business. I am the Co-Captain of the Ranger Challenge team which competes each Fall in the 7th Brigade Bold Warrior Challenge as well as the Executive Officer of the Pathfinder's Club that trains weekly in Land Navigation, lanes and other tactical knowledge. I am excited to help cadets increase their military bearings and confidence virtually and in person this semester as we mitigate coronavirus risk. Spartans Will!



Events

Virtual September 11th Remembrance- 11 September 2020

Virtual Veterans Day Ceremony - 12 November 2020

Virtual Contract/Commissioning Ceremony – 18 December 2020

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