

University of Michigan Wolverine Battalion

The Wolverine Tribune



December 2024 Edition

By Cadet Katherine Wys



Our seniors holding their branches at this year's Dining-In Ceremony

Dining-In

In picking up from October's edition we open with Dining-In, our yearly dinner ceremony, which took place on the evening December 6th. At the end of every fall semester, we gather as a battalion to close out the program for the year and reflect on our efforts as a group and our ongoing development into future U.S. Army Officers. This year's guest speaker was Colonel Elliot Schroeder, who detailed his experience as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations of the 412th Theater Command.

Cadets were given the important opportunity to personally engage with him in order to learn more about the Engineer Corps and leadership in the Army.

This event always marks a particularly special occasion for our seniors, who find out their Army branches in preparation for the upcoming April commissioning. A nerve-racking yet exciting experience, seniors are cheered on by their fellow Cadets as they discover how they will spend the beginning years of their Army career and prepare to begin their bittersweet transition out of ROTC.



Accompanying the dinner was our grog, a unique mixture of random and incongruent ingredients selected by the seniors to represent meaningful aspects of their college training experience. Failure to adhere to the strict etiquette of this event results in Cadets partaking in this sentimental concoction.

Overall, this ceremony represents a meaningful conclusion to our fall semester and an important reminder to us all of the importance behind our training. Congratulations to these senior Cadets for their four years of hard work in the program and their bright upcoming careers in the Army.

Our Seniors' Branch Assignments:

AJ Camarena – Military Intelligence, branch detail Infantry (Active Duty)

Caedin Carrabino – National Guard

Ari Deychman – Quartermaster (Active Duty)

Amelia Federico – Military Police (Active Duty)

Eyda Gu – National Guard

Lily Haghpassand – Medical Corps (Active Duty)

Brendan Heinonen – National Guard

Eva Holton – Nurse Corps (Active Duty)

James Lee – Military Intelligence, branch detail Armor (Active Duty)

Jonathan Li – Finance Corps (Reserve)

Joseph Lin – Signal Corps (Active Duty)

Ethan Wilmot – Military Intelligence (Reserve)

Anthony Wong – National Guard

Alex's great State Race

On Friday, October 25th, Cadets from our battalion took part in Alex's Great State Race. This event is a 64 mile relay-style run from Ann Arbor to Lansing to honor Alex Powell, a student from Michigan State University who received his cancer treatment at the University of Michigan. Carrying the game ball to the MSU game, the run is done in increments of five miles. Cadets ran anywhere from two to six of these iterations through day and night, sun and rain alongside MSU Cadets. This event



is an important remembrance of a past student, building camaraderie between our two battalions along the way. A special recognition goes to Cadet Paul Przeslawski, who ran the most by far at a total of 30 miles.

Formation of the Alumni Board

As a program, we have continually contemplated how to best connect with our alumni and maintain an ongoing partnership, a question which has led to the formation of our new and improved Alumni Association. First proposed and built through the hard work of now-2LT Devin Barz and Cadet Jonathan Li, the University of Michigan has recently officially recognized this organization to represent the UM Army ROTC program. The first members of the board of directors were chosen for their continued engagement that has critically contributed to the development of the Cadets in the program.

Board Members:

MG (Ret) Art Bartell - President, Class of '77

LTC (Ret) Daniel Allmacher - Vice President, Class of '94

1LT (Ret) Dave Babulak - Treasurer, Class of '92

LTC (Ret) Robert Vokac - Secretary, Class of '78

A word from Cadet Jonathan Li, this semester's head of alumni engagement:

“The ROTC program and the Alumni Association view each other as extensions of each other: the association hopes to financially assist and canvas university, Army, and nationwide support for the battalion. In doing so, they provide both mentorship and a powerful network of connections—not just for association members—but also our current Cadets in order to support their future careers and the development of their character. The Cadets of the current battalion will have the opportunity to honor and learn from the achievements and lives of those before them and, upon commissioning, they will join a long line of Maize and Blue that has existed since 1917, when ROTC was first established.”

Alumni, please be on the lookout for future communications from the Alumni Association. If you or your class are interested in getting involved, please contact CPT Louis Goldstein, our PMS, at louisdg@umich.edu

Giving Tuesday

Every fall, the University of Michigan hosts a fundraising event for clubs and student organizations to welcome donations. We are proud to announce that we raised \$10,015, greatly exceeding our totals from prior years. Thank you to all who contributed and shared the information for this event. It is with this aid that we can continue to have incredible opportunities to participate in as a battalion, including the Norwegian Foot March and our Tri-Service Gala. We are incredibly grateful for this continued support to our Cadets and their development.



Cadet of the Month

We continue with our new tradition of honoring a Cadet of the Month, a student selected from our battalion for their upstanding performance and commitment to the program. Congratulations to the following two Cadets!



October

Cadet Peter Parlagreco, Junior

"It was an absolute privilege to earn Cadet of the Month this past October. In the beginning of last year, I had taken an active role in the recruitment committee c/Roberts started, with an aim to increase our battalion's size. When I became AS2 this year, I became in charge of the recruitment committee. The committee has done excellent work with uplifting our social media efforts as well as ideation for recruitment ideas we'll be acting on in the next semester. There is still much to do, and the job is not over yet, but I'm glad to be a part of such a great team."



November

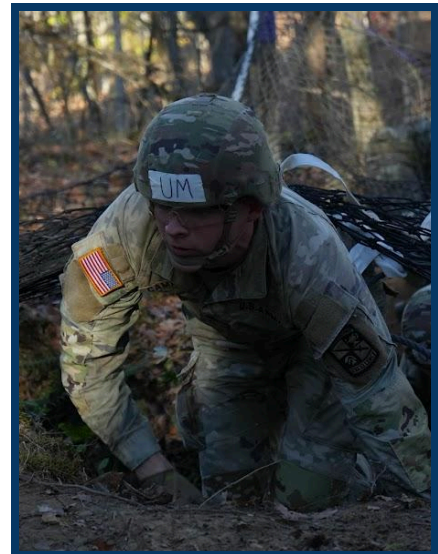
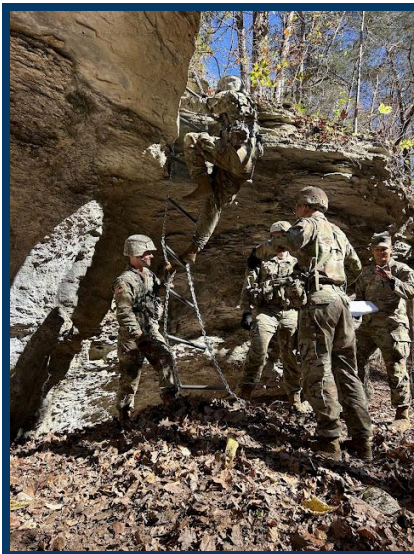
Cadet Brian Lyu, Sophomore

"The Cadet Battalion Commander Lily Haghpassand informed me that my attendance in the Fall FTX, though it wasn't required, had given a great impression. I was also mentioned several times throughout the semester as standing out in morale and dedication. This award encourages me to make further dedication and commitment to the Battalion even when the time is tough, and I'm extremely grateful for the recognition from the Battalion."



Bold Warrior Challenge

The Bold Warrior Challenge, colloquially known as Ranger Challenge, is an extracurricular physical fitness training opportunity for members of our battalion to go above and beyond and push themselves to their limits. These dedicated Cadets attend rigorous PT five days a week in order to prepare themselves for a competition held every fall at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Taking place from November 1st through 3rd, our eleven-man team participated in a number of intense physical and skill-based challenges against other Army ROTC programs from our brigade. Congratulations to these eleven Cadets who rose to the task!



A word from Cadet Eva Holton, this year's captain:

“Being chosen as Ranger Captain for my fourth and final year competing in the Bold Warrior Challenge was a great opportunity for me to challenge my quick-thinking skills, build my strategic skills, and motivate my team to do the best that we could. Our team's strong group cohesion, go-getter attitude and willingness to put in their all throughout the entire weekend made the job easy. The past few years of five days a week of hard PT leading up to the competition have led to a lot of fun memories and some of my closest friendships through embracing the suck together.”

A word from Cadet David Roshu, next year's captain:

“Training with my teammates and preparing for the Bold Warrior Competition at Fort Knox has been my favorite experience in ROTC. Spending my mornings with the team and working to improve ourselves each day makes those 5 a.m. wake-ups worth it. As Ranger Challenge Captain next year, I hope to start our training as a team earlier, push the team to perform at our best, and acquire resources and experiences that will make us true competitors. Suffice it to say, I am very excited for what's to come. Go Blue!”

Reflecting on Cadet Leadership

Every semester, Cadets are assigned into new leadership positions. These roles place an incredible level of responsibility on students, pushing them to support the battalion and develop the leadership skills that will be critical for their future careers as Officers. On the following page we hear from this semester's top leadership and how they rose to the challenge.



**Cadet Lily Haghpassand, Battalion
Commander**

“Holding the position of Cadet Battalion Commander this semester has been incredibly rewarding. In our program, my role has been to set the standards and intent that allow Cadet leadership to take charge. This semester we took on new priorities including improving morale and university outreach. In this position, I learned how to communicate more effectively and concisely as well as how to lean on those around me. Having an incredible CSM, XO and S3 made this role enjoyable, even during the more stressful weeks.”



Cadet Brendan Heinonen, Executive Officer

“I am the Cadet Executive Officer (XO) this semester. I see my role as an executor, working closely with the BC and Cadre to ensure the Battalion is functioning well, staying on track and accomplishing our goals. My most visible role this semester is at CTO Time where I typically teach the second half — a role I really enjoy! I think this role is really well-suited for me and I feel like the experience has helped me develop as a leader, particularly in taking decisive action. It is an honor to work with some of the most hard-working and dedicated people I’ve met, and I’ve been thoroughly impressed by everyone’s hard work this semester.”

**Cadet Amelia Federico, S3**

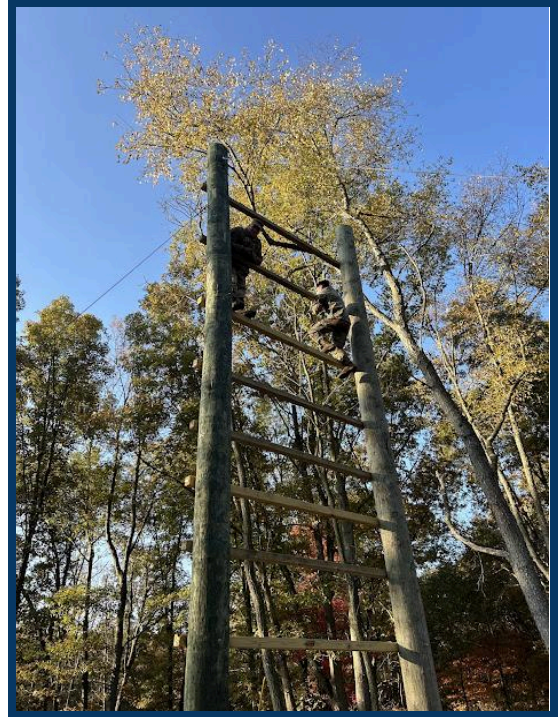
“Serving as the Battalion S3 has been an amazing and enriching experience. I have learned countless lessons on leadership, organization, and planning that I know will help carry me throughout my future military career. Additionally, I enjoy the ability to help the program continue to grow. Providing resources and experiences to the underclassmen to help guide them to future success is quite fulfilling. I can not imagine a better experience than giving back to the program that has given me so much.”

**Cadet Samuel Roberts, Command Sergeant Major**

“Being the Cadet CSM this semester, I learned a lot about communicating effectively, maintaining discipline, and enforcing Army standards. After this semester, I can confidently say that I believe in leading by example, especially in a military environment. I also believe that a team is only as strong as its weakest member, and that the first step to mission success is ensuring everyone is prepared and motivated to face whatever challenges lay ahead. If future Army officers can understand this, then they are one step closer to leading at the highest level.”

Fall Field Training Exercise

This fall we returned to Fort Custer, Michigan on October 18th and 19th for our semesterly Field Training Exercise, or FTX. Partnering with Eastern Michigan University, senior Cadets from both schools took charge in planning and leading the exercise to teach their underclassmen. Using their combined experience, they provided instruction on a wide range of skills that will be relevant to our summer training at Fort Knox and future Army careers. This FTX included day and night land navigation, an electronic shooting simulation, the Confidence Obstacle Course, and the Field Leadership Reaction Course.



Top: Jacob's Ladder on the Confidence Course
Middle Left: Seniors provide instruction on disassembly of the 240B weapon system
Middle Right: Cadets plot map points before embarking on the land navigation course
Bottom: Cadets participate in a the FLRC, a series of scenarios designed to test problem-solving and leadership abilities

Partnership With the National Guard

This semester, we had the incredible opportunity as a battalion to begin an ongoing partnership with Alpha Company, 1-125th Infantry Regiment of the National Guard through 1LT Varun Dutta. Their members have been a vital part of our education at our Leadership Lab and classes as they share the tactical knowledge and experience accumulated throughout their careers. Importantly, the Michigan National Guard has also expressed interest in scaling this partnership to other ROTC programs within the state. We hear from them below about their purpose and goals in working with us:

“Alpha Company, 1-125th Infantry Regiment is an Infantry Rifle Company in the Michigan Army National Guard that has partnered with Wolverine Battalion to develop Cadets into successful Officers. Currently, we support the Wolverine BN by providing Officers and NCOs to mentor Cadets during Military Science classes and Leadership Labs. Looking ahead, we aim to deepen our collaboration with the program by teaching Cadets essential Infantry tasks and skills through hands-on training at our home station drills, providing opportunities for them to shadow key leaders within the Company, and allowing them to attend our upcoming field training exercises in the spring.” -LT Dutta

This partnership was made possible through the efforts of LT Dutta, whose background is expanded on below:

“I am currently a graduate student at the University of Michigan pursuing a Master’s degree in Computer Science and Engineering. I graduated from Case Western Reserve University in May 2022 and earned my commission through the Wolfpack Battalion at John Carroll University. I now serve as the Executive Officer (XO) of A/1-125th IN and am eager to continue strengthening this partnership to support the Wolverine Battalions’ Cadets in their development as the Army’s future leaders.”



Upcoming Events

- On January 25th, we will be participating in a tri-service War Game event (more details in the PMS Corner below)
- The Bataan Memorial Death March will take on March 22nd
- Our next Field Training Exercise will take place on April 10th-13th and is a joint effort with Eastern Michigan University and Notre Dame University
- The Norwegian Foot March will take place on April 19th
- Our Tri-Service Gala will take place on April 3rd
- Commissioning will take place on May 2nd

PMS Corner

A word from Captain Louis Goldstein, our Professor of Military Science:

“As the fall semester winds down, the Wolverine Battalion has plenty to celebrate. Our Cadets have exemplified dedication, balancing the rigorous academics of the University of Michigan with the demanding responsibilities of ROTC. Their determination and commitment bring our mission, purpose, and end state to life, ensuring we remain focused on transforming Cadets into leaders prepared to guide the Army into the future. This semester has been a testament to their perseverance and vision, and I’m excited to share their remarkable achievements and preview the impactful initiatives awaiting us next semester.

At the heart of our work is a mission to cultivate the leaders of tomorrow—a mission brought to life through intensive training, leadership development, and the strength of mentorship. Every Cadet’s journey is designed to build a foundation for an impactful military career, one rooted in purpose and service. This semester, 13 of our seniors reached a pivotal milestone, receiving their branch and component assignments. This achievement reflects their hard work and leadership—qualities we will continue to nurture as they prepare for commissioning as Second Lieutenants. Together, we’re driving forward with clarity, ensuring they remain sharp and focused.

Meanwhile, our MS3 Cadets are demonstrating relentless focus as they gear up for Cadet Summer Training (CST). Their exceptional work this semester underscores their potential and sets the stage for even greater accomplishments. At the same time, our MS1 and MS2 Cadets will face new challenges in the upcoming semester as we work to provide them with expanded leadership opportunities. We remain committed to growing their knowledge and skills, ensuring they continue to develop as adaptable, confident leaders ready to meet the demands of tomorrow.

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce several initiatives that align with our mission, purpose, and end state:

1. Establishing the ROTC Alumni Association The ROTC Alumni Association has been officially recognized and is ready to begin its work, strengthening ties between alumni, parents, and the current program. This initiative focuses on fundraising and advocating for ROTC at the University of Michigan, supporting recruitment efforts while providing invaluable networking resources for current Cadets. Additionally, the association will organize events to foster meaningful connections between alumni and the ROTC community. Its success serves as a model for similar alumni efforts across the Navy and Air Force ROTCs, enhancing collaboration within Michigan's tri-service ROTC community.

2. Strengthening National Guard Partnerships In collaboration with the 1-125 INF Battalion, Alpha Company has launched a program incorporating 10 National Guard Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) into Cadet training. This partnership enhances Cadet readiness for CST through hands-on mentorship and skill-building, leveraging the expertise of seasoned NCOs. The Michigan National Guard, at the highest levels, is closely monitoring the outcomes of this initiative and has expressed a strong interest in expanding this model to additional battalions and ROTC programs statewide, should we prove the concept successful. This opportunity underscores the Wolverine Battalion's role as a trailblazer in fostering innovative inter-agency collaboration.

3. Expanding Character-Based Leadership Training Through our partnership with the Travis Manion Foundation, a nationally recognized non-profit organization dedicated to character-based leadership development, Cadets are engaging in "Character Does Matter" programming. This initiative equips Cadets

to develop and apply mentorship skills that will serve them as officers, mentor local high school students to foster leadership and community engagement, and collaborate with the Graduate Student Veterans Association to extend training to graduate students and underclassmen. These efforts strengthen ties between veterans and Cadets on campus, creating a cohesive and supportive community while reinforcing the importance of character and leadership in every facet of their lives.

4. Tri-Service War Game Initiative This January, the Wolverine Battalion will host a groundbreaking Tri-Service War Game, uniting Army, Navy, and Air Force Cadets in a simulation of a South China Sea conflict. This inter-service collaboration prepares Cadets to tackle complex global challenges and fosters the teamwork essential for future joint operations. With support from the Army War College, this initiative exemplifies the innovative training opportunities available at the University of Michigan.

As we reflect on an incredible semester, we could not be prouder of all that our Cadets have achieved. Their unwavering commitment to excellence, leadership, and service inspires us daily, and we eagerly anticipate another semester of growth and success. To our alumni, we encourage you to actively engage with the Wolverine Battalion through the officially recognized ROTC Alumni Association. This is your opportunity to stay connected, mentor Cadets, and shape the future of this storied program. Your involvement strengthens our community and helps ensure the continued success of our mission. For parents, we invite you to remain closely engaged with your Cadets' journey, supporting them as they navigate the challenges and triumphs of ROTC life. Together, we can build on the proud legacy of the Wolverine Battalion and prepare our Cadets to lead with honor and distinction.

Here's to an exciting semester ahead and a bright future for the Wolverine Battalion! It's great to be a Michigan Wolverine!"