A Cadet’s Experience of Warrior Forge 2012
By Cadet Stephen Beardsley, Class of 2013

Warrior Forge is the name of the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) Leadership Development and Assessment Course (LDAC). This is a 29-day leadership evaluation of Army Cadets conducted at Fort Lewis, Washington. All Cadets must successfully complete the LDAC course in order to earn a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army. Warrior Forge assesses a Cadet’s overall leadership potential and requires Cadets to demonstrate their physical fitness, knowledge of field skills, ability to land navigate, and lead Cadets during tactical missions.

I was in the third of fourteen regiments that participated in Warrior Forge at Fort Lewis, Washington in the summer of 2012. While there I found myself at a release point while leading a squad on a recon mission, and my two reconnaissance teams were a minute late returning from observing the objective. My Cadre evaluator was quick to observe this delay and challenged me by saying, “What are you going to do squad leader?” Now it’s go time. This was one of many leadership decisions that I was forced to overcome at LDAC this past summer.
Another mental challenge was leaving the comfort of World War II era barracks at Joint Base Lewis McCord. Early in the morning the Cadre provided oversight for the loading of the Cadets on to troop carriers and busses. Upon arriving at the training area many Cadets were already preparing themselves for the challenges of finding several land navigation points on a map. Being tested in the classroom is one thing, being tested at night and in the dark is another. The land navigation evaluation assesses the Cadet’s ability to use navigation skills learned at ROTC to navigate using only a map, compass, protractor, and a proven pace count. Like many Cadets in a new training area, I too experienced some trouble with the night navigation test. Time was spent searching for my first two out of five points. Struggling to locate the first two points caused stress as the realization that the finish time was getting closer. Needing to complete the course successfully and on time required a lot of sprinting in order to find the last three points on time. My confidence in my own abilities was tested that night on the land navigation training. I found myself relying on all those hours of the land navigation training received at Norwich to help me find my way around in the dark. My confidence was soon restored once I reapplied the basics of land navigation. I gained my orientation quickly and located three points and after a night of land navigation I was tired but proud that I was successful at finding my points in the dark. The next challenge was to demonstrate tactical confidence and knowledge while being evaluated at a Tactical Training Base (TTB). The majority of the 29 day LDAC course was spent at the TTB and in an Assembly Area (AA). The TTB and AA were composed of giant green tents that held about twenty Cadets. In the training area Cadets spent four days doing squad tactical exercises, which assessed the Cadet’s ability to brief operations orders and to lead tactical missions. I led two reconnaissance missions successfully and sent up the necessary reports to my higher command and received a satisfactory grade for the mission. My favorite day at Warrior Forge was completing the water confidence course. The water course is a series of obstacles high above the water. Cadets demonstrated confidence by climbing twenty feet into the air and by walking across a balance beam with a box in the middle. Once Cadets reached the box they had to step over it in order to laterally hang from a rope. On the rope Cadets demonstrated confidence in their personal abilities by falling thirty-five feet into the water. The water confidence course was one of the best challenges at Warrior Forge. Warrior Forge was a rewarding experience, and the course forced me to go out of my comfort zone in order to be successful. LDAC taught me a lot about myself and is also a great opportunity to assess leadership potential. It prepares Cadets for becoming Second Lieutenants in the United States Army.
Mountain Cold Weather KAP Week

By Cadet Meredith Lewandowski, Class of 2013

Norwich University’s Mountain Cold Weather Company (MCW) held their annual Kennedy and Palermo (KAP) week. This week of intense physical fitness training is in remembrance of two former members who were killed in combat. The Cadet upperclassmen serve as mentors and trainers while providing oversight of the rigorous physical training given during the week to the incoming candidates.

“It’s a week long program for incoming freshman who would like to be in MCW,” said Spencer Williams, 21, a senior communications major from Harvard, Mass. Williams is one of the upper level leaders and mentors in MCW.

“We started with 148 (candidates) and we’re down to about 80 right now,” said Matt Blanchard, 21, a junior international studies major from Framingham, Mass. The 68 candidates that did not make it left because of medical reasons or they decided it was not for them. The Rescue Team did not have to make a single cut, said Blanchard.

The first day of KAP week this year started out with three Army Physical Fitness Tests (APFT). Jaguar Sasmito, 21, a sophomore political science major from Sacramento, Calif. said “The second day was a fitness circuit around Paine Mountain, the third day we ran around campus doing various events, the fourth day was a run up Turkey Hill, and the fifth day was a normal PT session with a run up Dole Hill.”

The leaders in charge of training for KAP week “kept the planning from the candidates classified”, said Richard Johnson, 21, a senior Studies of War and Peace major from Aurora, Ohio. “They didn’t know when it was going to end. We made them take off their watches; we didn’t tell them what activities they were doing so they could not judge what was going to happen next.”

“There were ones that struggled and ones that excelled. KAP week is designed to give them a taste of what they will be doing all year,” said Casey Blanchard. “The ones that came in decent physical shape had no problem with it which is the target we were going for.”

A few weeks into school, the Rescue Team went down to Norfolk, Mass. in order to pay tribute during the flag raising ceremony at the elementary school that was named after Kennedy following him being killed in action.

The team was able to interact with Kennedy’s friends and family who really understood the bond that MCW has together. “Going through your first
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Mountain Cold Weather KAP Week Continued…

year of training in MCW is what connects you with the other members, knowing that you have been through the same conditions,” said Johnson.

“If those are two people (Kennedy and Palermo) who represent our company, it’s a motivating factor in how much we put out to honor them,” explains Blouin.

“If they were willing to sacrifice for their country, that really describes what kind of person they were and how well they represented the company, the school, and the nation.”

Cadet Spotlight

By Cadet Josh Powers, Class of 2015

The Norwich University Corps of Cadets is an experience that is challenging in every aspect. The challenges range from the rigorous academia to the special units offered by the Corps of Cadets or ROTC, and the numerous clubs and sports teams found here at Norwich. All cadets live by the Norwich motto “I will try,” meaning perseverance in the face of adversity. The Regimental Executive Officer (XO) Cadet LTC Mallory Clark really demonstrates the true meaning of the Norwich Motto.

Cadet Clark is a biology major from Homer City, PA. In addition to serving as the Regimental XO, she is tackling 17 credits this semester, while participating in Varsity cross-country, the Junior Ring and Honor Committee and is maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.48.

Currently, Clark serves as the captain of the cross-
country team. She has been a member of the cross-country team since her freshman year and was admitted to the list for Greater Northeastern Athletic Conference (GNAC) Top 10 for her outstanding performance in cross-country. In addition to her performances athletically, Cadet Clark participated in Ranger Challenge her sophomore and junior year. She was a crucial member of the Ranger Challenge team that won the BOLD Leader Challenge competition at Fort Knox, KY in 2010. Last year, Clark also was a member of the Junior Ring Committee.

With everything going on, she keeps up her grades at a very respectable level. How does she do it? When asked, Clark replied, “I visit my teachers a lot, and I live in the library!”

When approaching Cadet Clark for an interview, I found her secluded in the corner of the library with her head buried in a book studying vigorously.

I almost did not want to intrude because she was under a great deal of stress from midterms. But being the nice and respectable person she is, she found time to fit me into her busy schedule.

On average, she receives about 4 to 6 hours of sleep each night during the week. Having good time management skills, allows her to complete every task she has yet endured.

Clark has received the Sojourner’s Award, and Military Order of the World Wars Award.

Being the Regimental XO is a very time consuming job. It consists of working as a liaison between the Commandants and the Corps of Cadets. She is learning to achieve better discretion by being the Regimental XO and striving to make a positive influence on the Corps of Cadets.

In dark times, Clark likes to stay motivated and be the encourager no matter what environment she is in. In Clark’s eyes, she views everything as a glass half full, and likes to tell people to “use your weakness to find your strength.” This has helped shape her into the outstanding Cadet she is at Norwich University.

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C Company (MS III’s)
Chain of Command:
Commander: CDT Paulson
Executive Officer: CDT Barry
First Sergeant: CDT Kubu
“This year the Battery continues to improve its appearance and espirt de corps...”

As the Norwich Artillery Battery begins to finish out its first full calendar year of operation many cannot help but look back on how the Battery has gone from just a start up to being a highly professional and reliable organization. The first couple months for the Battery were very repetitious and focused on training crews to perform all necessary tasks in order to fire and move the Battery’s three M116 75mm Pack Howitzers. These new skills were then put to the test with fire missions such as Cat Eye Weekend and Junior Ring Ceremony. The Battery finally finished the Spring 2012 semester, its first, with a high profile Commissioning and Commencement fire mission with VIPs such as General Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in attendance.

The beginning of the 2012-2013 school year the battery was faced with many challenges. The Battery had to conduct training and coordinate a number of fire missions to support various events such as ceremonial fire on the upper parade ground, support Athletic events, as well as supporting military skill clubs here on campus.

This year the Battery continues to improve its appearance and espirt de corps by adding red ascots to their ceremonial uniforms and one by one getting each pack howitzer restored and painted like new.

As the Battery completes the fall semester, it stands poised and ready to undertake any mission that it’s called upon, as well as to train and develop the Norwich Artillery Battery and new and eager “Redleg” members. The Norwich Artillery Battery Redlegs are ready to establish and continue a long and illustrious existence as a tradition based artillery battery that represents the school and Army ROTC as a whole.
Cadets Training with the Reserve Component

By Second Lieutenant Jake Isham, Class of 2012

The Army ROTC program trains leaders. It develops young Cadets into future officers for the Active, Reserve, and National Guard branches of the Army through lessons learned both in the classroom and in the field. Many of these Cadets though have taken a different path than their peers.

Norwich University, being the oldest private military college in the nation, has a large amount of students with the desire to serve in the military. The National Guard and Army Reserve offers Cadets the opportunity to participate in the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP). If a Cadet chooses this program they have the opportunity to participate in both the Guard/Reserve and in Norwich University Army ROTC. Those Cadets are mentored by an officer and get paid for going to drill once a month with their unit. Norwich Cadets however primarily join the Vermont National Guard.

The National Guard office in Jackman Hall, at any given time, has around 200 enlisted and SMP students. Just this past summer, 53 students attended either basic training or advanced individual training, while another 120 estimated students attended two week long summer annual training with their National Guard units. Of these students, approximately 30 will graduate and commission as officers.

Cadet Matthew Fortuna is a Norwich Senior who is in the Vermont National Guard and is a part of the program. He said that being in SMP gave him the chance to shadow an actual Lieutenant in the National Guard to understand the responsibilities and duties of a platoon leader in his respective branch, Field Artillery. He was able to gain practical knowledge about being a Lieutenant, whereas ROTC, he believed was less immersive in the actual duties of a platoon leader. He described his experience almost like being in an internship, working at drill and annual summer training, while receiving the same pay as that of a Sergeant.

Another learning experience, according to Fortuna, was being able to get a sample of the branch a Cadet believes he/she wishes to join. He described an experience where a Cadet believed he/she had wanted to be in a certain branch but after spending time with their unit decided it would be more fitting to join an engineering unit instead. This experience gives Cadets the opportunity to solidify their career choices for post-graduation and commissioning...

“This gives the opportunity to solidify their career choices for post-graduation and commissioning...”
Experiences from the Leadership Training Course

By Cadet Chelsea Niemeyer, Class of 2014

For the first 20 years of my life, I watched my father put on his uniform 5 days a week and head off to work to serve his country in the United States Army. Never in my life, did I think that I, his daughter, would be putting on the same uniform to serve my country. Although I was brought up as a military child, I could never imagine myself joining the Army. As a small young woman, I would not consider myself the poster child for what an ideal soldier might look like. So when I told my parents that I was joining the Army, they were of course, very proud, but also somewhat confused. Why the sudden change of heart?

On June 23, 2012, I landed in Louisville, KY and was shuffled onto a bus with 200 other cadets, then transported to Fort Knox to participate in the Leadership Training Course (LTC). For 28 days, I was trained by Drill Sergeants, Lieutenants, and other Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO). I was taught the basics of drill and ceremony, land navigation, basic rifle marksmanship, and combat water survival training. I developed my leadership skills through Squad Tactical Exercises (STX), Field Leadership Reaction Courses (FLRC), and garrison leadership positions. I learned the meaning of teamwork through confidence courses, such as the high ropes course, the zodiac boat challenge, and the repelling tower. Most importantly, however, I learned that I was stronger than I thought I was. Throughout the toughest times at LTC, I always kept a famous Shakespeare quote in mind, “And though she be but little, she is fierce.” And sure enough, I continued to excel. As LTC progressed, I became more and more confident with my ability to lead people.

At the end of LTC, I was awarded three awards. One for achieving an Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) score over 270. The Gauntlet Award for excelling in Land Navigation, Physical Fitness, and Rifle Marksmanship, as well as the Iron Leader Award, for being the top cadet in my platoon. When I returned

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-William Shakespeare
Leadership Training Course Continued…

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to Norwich, I was not only offered my contract, but I was awarded with a two-year active duty scholarship. The most rewarding thing I obtained was my experience at LTC. Although I didn’t complete those first two years of ROTC, I still feel as if I’m competent enough to perform well amongst my peers during my MSIII year and later on at LDAC.

This entire process taught me how to be a resilient leader. Rather than giving up back in November, I continued to fight for a contract. At LTC while other females fell out of foot marches because they had blisters on their heels, I continued to march even with open blisters on my feet. It is through these experiences that I have learned the most about myself. Although I’ve had a round about way of joining the Army, I would not trade this journey for anything.

NRASP consists of 10 days of rigorous morning physical training and afternoon training. Over the two weeks, we had them go through events such as the obstacle course, a three mile canteen run, individual movement techniques, weapons familiarization and other mentally and physically challenging events. 60 Cadets showed up for the first day of training and by the tenth day we ended with 32 successful students that completed the entirety of the training events, culminating with a road march up Turkey Hill. Afterwards the students earned the Ranger Company patch to wear on their Class B uniform jackets to show they made it through NRASP.
Ranger Company Continued…

Now that NRASP is complete, we will start training the cadets in individual tasks for the first half of the semester, which will include land navigation, more weapons familiarization, operation orders and other individual tasks. Then we will move into collective tasks like team movements and squad movements for the later half of first semester. Second semester we will focus on leadership tasks by putting them into Team Leader, Squad Leader, Platoon Sergeant, and Platoon Leader positions for squad and patrol missions. Cat-Eye Weekend will be the final test that will determine how well the students grasp all the concepts we taught them over the course of the year and determine if they are worthy enough to earn the coveted Cat-Eyes on the back of their patrol cap and officially be a part of the Norwich Ranger Company.

Cadet Troop Leader Training

By Cadet Michael Settle, Class of 2013

My experience at Cadet Troop Leader Training (CTLT) in Miseau, Germany, at the 212th Combat Support Hospital, was simply amazing. I learned an ample amount of information as to how a unit runs, and information regarding becoming an excellent Second Lieutenant. My personal experience at the unit was a very friendly environment for learning. I shadowed the administrative staff of the unit and learned a plethora of tasks and insight it takes to run a proficient S1 shop.

However, along with learning some of the “do’s,” I also learned some of the “don’ts” while I was shadowing this unit. My mentor for the unit definitely showed me how a leader should act in certain situations that concern your subordinates in sensitive situations. For example,
I got to sit on a counseling session regarding a subordinate’s strife with the command environment in the mailroom that she was working in. I also got to see how this unit ran their command and staff meeting; I was even able to brief the Colonel twice in regards to the readiness of her unit.

Germany combined with the CTLT experience was amazing. I was able to have some free time to travel and explore the culture of Germany attending festivals and tourist attractions. The culture shock was definitely present and communication was difficult because I wasn’t able to speak the language fluently. Overall it was a great experience where I learned a lot about how a unit functions and immersed myself in the German culture.

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The Rook Experience

By Cadet AJ Johnson, Class of 2016

Within five minutes of being a Rook at Norwich University, I knew my life had changed. In high school I was a hero, captain of the soccer team, president of clubs, every underclassman knew me, but now, I was a Corps zero.

This transition was not easy for me; I struggled with the fact that during Rook Week I had lost so much. I was cut off from all my friends, my girlfriend of three years broke up with me after only eight days of being here, and time talking with my family was limited to ten minutes on Sunday. The support system that had kept me so strong during high school was now gone, I had to endure this by myself and it was a challenge. Every night I had to dig deep to remember why I was here, why I was going through this, and not taking the easy road. Rook Week was the hardest week of my life; I was constantly on edge, nervous, and scared. My roommate and I frequently reminded each other that we could get through this; to keep pushing forward and not to give up. It was a struggle every day. You were reminded constantly of your place as a Rook.

“I attended some festivals and tourist attractions, such as castles that reside in just about every town in Germany.”

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The Rook Experience Continued…

Nevertheless, I knew it would make me a better person. I knew it was something I had to persevere through.

During the academic week I am constantly running from class to class and then to soccer. From soccer I have to square as quickly as possible to chow so I don’t have to eat by myself or with a half dozen officers. To be honest, it is always nerve racking outside of my room. I always have to be aware of who is around me and what I am doing. As a Rook I am always being watched. Mistakes are always corrected and punishments for failure can be ruthless. I quickly learned that being a Rook is not physically hard, but a massive mental game you must overcome. It is meant to break you down to make you stronger.

I wake up exhausted every morning. I find my bearing and hop down from my bed having to mentally force myself to begin the next day. With all the work I have to do every day it is very tempting to give up and just quit. However, being in the Army Department helps a lot with this. It reminds me of why I am here, to serve and to become a soldier. The Army Department is no cakewalk, but it provides motivation and helps me realize that I am doing all this for a cause greater than my sole existence could ever amount to. Having this motivation and knowing that one day it will be worth enduring this pain is what keeps me going. I focus on my studies regularly because I realize the importance of them to commission and they provide an escape from being a Rook.

In high school, I did the minimum in my classes to get okay grades, now I am spending double the amount of time I used to for academics. Now I actually enjoy the feeling of getting lost in my textbooks and losing track of time while doing homework. I look forward to doing projects in the library and study hall every night. Life is still very difficult, but after hearing how many classes my friends have missed, and how they only party, I know that this pain will be worth it in the long run. I know I will leave a better person than I entered, living a life of integrity and honor, something I am very proud of.