"CAPTAIN'S CALL"

Happy (belated) 2022 NROTCU Berkeley alumni, friends, and supporters!

Fall 2021 saw us back on campus and back to in-person instruction and activity, a most welcome development. It also kept us busy as we got back to some of those things that make the NROTC experience special – Berkeley staff and students once again got to hear their midshipmen sing cadence as they ran around the campus, and watch those same midshipmen march out the colors for a Cal football game. A small contingent of midshipmen even showed up on North Field every week to engage in friendly, but competitive, team sports (such as flag football and touch rugby) against their shipmates.

We also returned to local events; Berkley midshipmen were present at San Francisco Fleet Week, and a few attended the annual Pearl Harbor remembrance dinner hosted by the San Francisco Commandery of the Naval Order of the United States.

And we plan to continue our return this spring, with our midshipmen getting ready to compete at the Annual Colorado Drill Meet, and an in-person annual Nimitz Lecture. Our guest speaker this year will be Berkeley’s own Janet Napolitano; however, due to scheduling we are currently targeting Tuesday, 5 April. We will send out official invites once we lock down the schedule. And finally, we are planning on a full return to in-person commissioning events, which for our Berkeley grads will be on Monday, 16 May, and for our Davis and Stanford grads on Monday, 13 June. Again, we will advertise when we finalize the arrangements.

Our seniors received their prospective warfare community assignments. MIDN 1/C Nathan Moore was assigned to submarines and has already passed his interview with Naval Reactors, while MIDN 1/C William Farrell, Spencer Le, Ethan Tae, and Wylen Winchell were also assigned to submarines and are diligently preparing for their interviews. MIDN 1/C Everett Bang was assigned as a Naval Aviator, and MIDN 1/C Morgan Markow is looking forward to being a Naval Flight Officer. And finally, MIDN 1/C Yiannis Alexander is going to be a surface warfare officer aboard USS SAMPSON (DD 102) out of Everett, WA.

All of us at NROTCU Berkeley continue to appreciate the support all of you who read this letter have steadfastly provided throughout this challenging period. But now I can happily say – see you around campus and town. Go Bears!

Sincerely,

CAPT Travis Petzoldt, USN
Commanding Officer
WELCOME 4/C's

In October, NROTCU Berkeley kicked off the semester with this year’s New Student Orientation (NSO). Our 4/Cs went through extensive physical training along with various team building exercises in order to begin their midshipmen career.

To start the day off, our 4/Cs completed a series of workouts involving ammo can presses, pushups, lunges, planks, and more. Next, was an event known as “Kim’s Game.” Squads of 4/C MIDN were tasked with navigating UC Berkeley’s campus to notable locations and asked to memorize distinct facts about the location. At the end, squads were judged upon how many facts they could correctly recite and how long it took them to hit all the locations around campus. To end the day, 4/Cs swore into the program and took the Midshipman Oath, led by NROTCU Berkeley Commanding Officer Captain Petzoldt. NSO physically and mentally challenged the 4/C MIDN in order to prepare them for their next four years in the NROTC program.

SEMESTER RECAP

NROTCU Berkeley had a tough but successful transition from a virtual to an in-person environment. Each midshipman was issued the proper components for their uniform/gear, and taught how to wear or use them appropriately. The NROTC active duty staff and midshipmen in leadership billets effectively led, taught, and advised the entire unit on different drills, marches, and standard etiquette for effective communication and military bearing. Although each midshipman’s experience with drill and military etiquette varied significantly due to the COVID pandemic, NROTCU Berkeley came back together in admirable cohesion for their first in-person semester since the beginning of the pandemic.

NROTCU Berkeley celebrated both the US Navy and US Marine Corp birthdays on the drill days nearest to October 13th and November 10th, respectively. But before the tradition of cutting the cake with the most junior and senior member of each service, midshipmen participated in timed physical training exercises including a combination of tug-of-war, running, and burpees.

The unit also took on a special visit from nuclear-trained surface warfare officers who briefed midshipmen on the requirements and demands of a life as an officer onboard a surface ship. The surface warfare officers subsequently had dinner at Cafe Mezzo with midshipmen who wished to ask more questions and gain personal advice from these experienced officers. One of the officers commissioned straight from MIT’s ROTC Unit, and the others were prior enlisted. Midshipmen were also given the opportunity to meet and talk to naval aviators in the Palo Alto area, explore the aircraft they fly, and wear the gear donned by pilots during their flights.

NROTCU Berkeley Midshipmen’s last drill of the semester on December 2nd was eventful. Midshipmen performed a khaki inspection in order to test their knowledge of general orders, code of conduct, sailor’s creed, ranks, and their ability to properly wear their uniform. Midshipmen were marked down for improper wear or failing to answer a question correctly.
Each term, the NROTC program recognizes one exemplary student by awarding the Midshipman of the Semester. This award highlights the midshipman who impacted their peers positively, exemplified superb leadership, demonstrated great professionalism, and presented themselves in a manner consistent with Navy and Marine Corps values. For the fall of 2021, NROTCU Berkeley recognized MIDN 4/C Mailander as the midshipman of the semester.

Even as a relatively new member to the unit, MIDN Mailander showed strong work ethic and consistency. He already displays qualities developed in upperclassmen; he is a solution seeker and good at executing them. Throughout much of the semester, he served in the role of ‘combat camera’, and many of the unit photos are a result of his photography skills. He frequently took full advantage of opportunities offered to him, and he showed up and put himself out there at every unit sponsored event including optional morning PT. He is a member of the Endurance Team, and was recently chosen along with five other midshipmen to be a part of the team competing in Colorado representing NROTCU Berkeley. Congratulations to MIDN Mailander for his achievements this semester!

During this past fall semester, the Berkeley Naval ROTC Unit commemorated the 80th anniversary of Pearl Harbor with a “Pearl Harbor Remembrance” brief during drill. The Berkeley ROTC Unit has many ties to the historical events that took place during World War II through alumni, faculty and historical artifacts. For example, the USS California battleship was present during the attack on Pearl Harbor and suffered the blow from a pair of torpedoes and a bomb from the air raid. The battleship slowly sank over a period of three days before being raised, rebuilt, and returned to service in January of 1944. The steering wheel of the USS California now is preserved and displayed within the Berkeley ROTC Unit.
Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt selected Rear Admiral Nimitz, the founder and first commanding officer of the Berkeley NROTC Unit, to be the commander-in-chief of the United States Pacific Fleet. The change of command ceremony took place aboard the top deck of the submarine Grayling instead of on a battleship because all the battleships were either sunk or damaged from the Pearl Harbor attack. In April of 1924, Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle, a Cal Alumni, led the air raid against the mainland of Japan. The airstrike hit the capital of Japan, Tokyo, and served as retaliation for the Pearl Harbor attack. The success of this air raid under the command of Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle showed that Japan was vulnerable to the American forces and greatly boosted the American morale during World War II. Finally, in June of 1942 the Berkeley professor of physics, J. Robert Oppenheimer was selected to head the Manhattan Project’s secret weapons laboratory. His work along with the other scientists of the Manhattan project led to the development of the atomic bomb which brought an end to World War II.