

# USC NAVAL ROTC NEWSLETTER

September 2023

Edited by: MIDN Bella Sanchez  
and MIDN Rylan Giorgetta

## Honor Flight

By: MIDN Ryan Tran

Honor Flight Southland disembarked on one of their many journeys on the 15th-17th of September to the nation's capital for a weekend of remembrance. The mission of the organization is to honor the veterans by offering the opportunity to commemorate their service and pay respect to their fellow men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice. At the heart of the trip are the war monuments where veterans of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War can come together to share their stories. For many of the veterans, this journey is their final opportunity to visit the memorials dedicated to their war.



Midshipmen arriving at Los Angeles International Airport

At the early hours of 0400 Friday morning, USC Midshipmen ranging from 4th class to 1st class traveled to LAX to connect with the veterans and accompany them until they boarded their flight. The MIDN served as a bridge for veterans to share their invaluable war stories to the younger generation where they can learn from their experiences. As the veterans talked, tears were shed and laughter echoed but they all were happy to share their stories. During the event, MIDN had the privilege to connect with heroes spanning World War II and beyond.



MIDN Deolalikar and Stankus in a conversation with veterans

Two days later on a Sunday, another group of eager MIDN awaited for the veterans as they returned home from their journey. There, they participated in a welcoming party giving the veterans a proper homecoming as they walk through the boarding gate.



MIDN Aragon with Veterans



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# 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

by: MIDN Matt Merone



*Participants of the 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb*

In the twenty two years inside the attacks on 9/11 our world has changed dramatically. What it means to “Never Forget” has taken on a different meaning as the raw emotion of these events has become a monument of our past. For the Trojan battalion, where the majority of Midshipmen had not even been born yet on 9/11, Never Forgetting means doing what we can to honor the memory of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

On September 11th 2001 members of the FDNY and NYPD raced up the 110 story World Trade Center Towers 1 and 2 to save those injured by the attacks. As we know not all of them made it back down. While we can never truly match the courage and sacrifice they made that morning, we can take a little time out of our day to keep their memory alive.

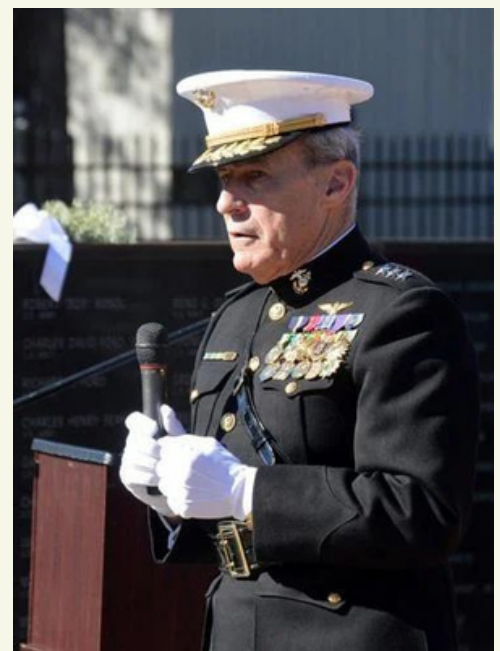
Spearheading the effort this year was the Joint Assembly for Military Associated Students (JAMS). Midshipman Bella Sanchez and her executive board organized a 110 story memorial stair climb for the second year in a row, the beginning of a long standing ROTC tradition. At 0700 Monday, September 11th 2023, Air Force, Army, and Navy ROTC climbed the 14 story Web Tower 8 times. Some walked, some ran, some climbed with weight vests and rucks but everyone moved with a sense of purpose and reverence. Cadet Riley, one of the co-directors of JAMS summarized the event well, “To me, it’s a way to honor the ultimate sacrifice paid by the firefighters and other first responders on 9/11... We organized this so that we may never forget what happened 22 years ago.”

Along with being an important memorial, this event provided a unique opportunity for each of the ROTC branches to interact and bond with each other. While we rarely have overlapping training evolutions, the stair climb allowed us to meet our peers and push each other while working towards a common goal. The event was a huge success this year with around 96 attendees and we look forward to reporting on the success of this event in coming years.

## LtGen McCorkle Talk

By: MIDN Brice Brown

The USC community recently celebrated the official unveiling of the Thomas Lord Department of Computer Science. A significant highlight of the event was the presence of retired Marine Lieutenant General Fred “Assassin” McCorkle, who, along with Paul “Mickey” Pohl, served as directors on the Lord Foundation’s board. Both were invited to the stage by USC President Carol L. Folt. Pohl emphasized the importance of the Lord Corporation's history, describing it as a "great American story." The company, founded in the early 1920s, became a national leader in mechanical noise and vibration control, addressing challenges in the automotive and aviation sectors. The sale of the corporation in 2019 provided over \$1 billion to support research institutions. For Naval ROTC students and parents, Lieutenant General McCorkle's involvement underscores the intersection of military leadership and the advancement of technology and education, highlighting the potential for ROTC students to make impactful contributions in diverse fields.



*LtGen Fred “Assassin” McCorkle at a speaking event*

## MIDN of the Month

by: MIDN Jerry Xie

The Midshipmen of the Month is a title given to a Trojan midshipman who demonstrates dedication and excellence to the Trojan Battalion. The selected midshipman exemplify the Navy and Marine Corps service values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. The midshipmen also display significant potential for growth as a leader, and, in the near future, a capable officer in the Naval services. This month's midshipmen of the month is Midshipmen 3/C Briand.

From Westport, Connecticut, MIDN Briand studies aerospace engineering. This August, MIDN Briand placed third nationally in the US Naval Institute Chief of Naval Operations Naval History Essay contest. His essay "Rivalry and Confusion at Leyte: Lessons for Sea Control in the Pacific," uses the Battle of Leyte Gulf to explore the importance of unified command structures, clear objectives, and joint service cooperation in the modern day.

His excellence and dedication in his billets as a supply officer and squad leader display great leadership potential and commitment to our unit and are demonstrated through his community service as a reading mentor to middle school students in the Los Angeles area.



*MIDN Briand accepting an award for placing third in the national US Naval Institute Chief of Naval Operations Naval History contest*

## A Word from BNCO

by: MIDN Will Durban



*MIDN Durban and Colonel Gil Juarez*

I'm MIDN 1/C William Durban, hailing from Long Island, New York. Currently, I'm pursuing both bachelor's and master's degrees in Electrical Engineering.

This fall, I'm privileged to serve as the Battalion Commander. The role of BNCO has been on my radar since my initiation into the unit over three years ago. The journey thus far has been a blend of enjoyment, learning, and immense responsibility. Transitioning from observations as an underclassman to actionable leadership is indeed a difficult task. Growing from an individual contributor to a leader of an organization has taught me a tremendous amount about the complexities of leadership, but I know I am only just getting started.

As we navigate this semester, my team and I are ardently working to enhance the training and development of future Navy and Marine Corps officers. Our ambitions are high, but our battalion is deeply committed to excellence and we are learning plenty along the way.