

USC NAVAL ROTC NEWSLETTER



December 2023

Edited by: MIDN Nicholas De Fina and MIDN Ty Majam

A New Chapter: MIDN Kott and MIDN Gallo Commission as Ensigns in the U.S. Navy By: MIDN Nicholas DE FINA

In a celebration of commitment, dedication, and the fulfillment of a significant chapter in their lives, Midshipmen (MIDN) Kott and Gallo have officially commissioned as Ensigns (ENS) in the United States Navy. The commissioning ceremony, held inside the PED entrance, and the end of their years at the University of Southern California's Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC), was a poignant event that resonated deeply with all who attended.

As the attending guests took their seats, Colonel Juarez began his speech celebrating the journey of the two midshipmen and the opportunity that will follow, bestowing words of advice and wisdom to be kept close to their hearts. The Oath of Office was then delivered promptly thereafter to the two midshipmen and was followed then by a changing of cover insignia, as assisted by family, from the NROTC Midshipman emblem to that of a U.S. Naval Officer's. For ENS Kott, his father, Chris Kott, and Step-father, Jerome Smith, helped in changing the insignia. For ENS Gallo, his mother and father assisted in the insignia change. The two were then greeted with their first salutes; ENS Kott's being MIDN Jensen and Ensign Gallo's being MIDN Harrison. After the ceremony, Colonel Hull (USMC Retired), the President of the USC's NROTC Alumni League, welcomed the two to the league as new members as many smiles were shared.

Insignia Change



The Oath

The first salute emerged as a standout moment, symbolizing not only the guidance received from officers but also the influence of those led within the unit. The setting of the ceremony, with Ensigns Kott and Gallo taking their oath in front of the American flag, left a lasting impression on many. The symbolism of the moment illuminated the profound impact their commitment would have on the lives they would touch.

The two are now off to their respective service selection evolutions with ENS Gallo heading to Pensacola, Florida for further training in flight school to one day become a naval flight officer (NFO) and ENS Kott heading off to Nuclear Power School in Charleston, South Carolina with the aspirations of becoming a nuclear officer.

As fellow midshipmen who shared the arduous journey with Ensigns Kott and Gallo, the prevailing sentiment was one of excitement and pride. "Excited," said one midshipman, capturing the anticipation in the air. Expressed by a midshipman who was inspired by the commissioning, they themselves cannot wait to "have my family witness me and my best friends stepping into a big career and enter naval service." The ceremony was inspiring to all who attended and as they set off into their new roles in the Navy, the two new Ensigns leave us with words of advice:

"Be careful how [you] choose to spend [your] time and make the most of everything [you] do. Volunteer for the unit a lot and be a selfless leader." - ENS Kott, U.S. Navy

"Seek every opportunity you can. There are a lot of great possibilities that the Navy offers and are here for you now at school" - ENS Gallo, U.S. Navy

The USC NROTC community eagerly awaits the contributions of these newly commissioned officers as they embark on their journey in service to the United States Navy. Congratulations, Gentlemen.

Midshipman of the Month

By: MIDN Nicholas De Fina

Midshipman (MIDN) Hunter Brophy, an avid pickleballer and cliff diver, has earned this December's Midshipman of the Month award. Hailing from Carmel California, MIDN Brophy is proudly embraced by our Battalion as he brings with him a unique blend of interests, hobbies, and a strong commitment to service in all he does and lives.

We all know MIDN Brophy around the battalion for his unmatched charisma, leadership, drive and humor. Outside of the battalion, he can be noted for his interests in hiking and in performance optimization which is made evident through his unrivaled PT abilities. His interests lie in understanding the intricacies of training and recovery that yield the best results. This curiosity extends to his current billet as the Operations Platoon MPO, where he will actively contribute to the strategic planning and upcoming execution of orders and events within the next semester.

In reflecting on his journey, MIDN Brophy's impactful contributions to the Battalion this year include the development of innovative training programs applied in the fleet. Moreover, he played a pivotal role in creating assessments to evaluate the Battalion's knowledge in key areas such as swimming, Personal Qualification Standard (PQS), and celestial navigation—an achievement that underscores his growing responsibility. No small feat by any means, it marks a significant step in his journey of leadership.

Top: MIDN Brophy at sea on his 2/C cruise

Bottom: MIDN Brophy and MIDN Villena enjoying the Fall Ball



Top: MIDN Brophy on his 2/C cruise

Bottom: MIDN Brophy receiving one of the four Alumni League Scholarships

With aspirations of joining Naval Special Warfare (SEAL), MIDN Brophy shares a profound motivation for his career choice. His desire to make a meaningful impact on the world by saving lives reflects a deep sense of purpose. He states, "I was given a life, and I want to make it worth it. There is no better way to help others than to save their life. As a SEAL, I believe I can make the largest impact in the world and feel as though my life was given to me for a reason." A recent achievement worth noting is MIDN Brophy's successful completion of the United States Naval Academy Naval Special Warfare (USNA NSW) Screener in November, showcasing his dedication to the rigorous training required for Naval Special Warfare. An achievement very few worldwide can boast.

MIDN Brophy's many contributions, from strategic planning to hands-on training innovation, and his unwavering commitment to service make him a standout choice for the Midshipman of the Month award. His passion for making a positive impact reflects the values upheld by the Trojan Battalion. As a Battalion top performer and fan favorite, we congratulate you for your work this year and look forward to what is to come.

Congratulations Midshipman of the Month!

JROTC Symposium

By: MIDN Nicholas De Fina



MIDN Ruiz Conducting Cadet Inspections

On the morning of December 9th, 2023, a number of Trojan Midshipmen (MIDN) assisted in the Cabrillo High's JROTC symposium in Long Beach. From conducting inspections alongside the staff to holding assessments of the students' physical fitness abilities, our own midshipmen aided in every effort to make that day a success.

The symposium consisted of fifteen different schools from across the Los Angeles area and was run by current active duty and retired military. From the accounts of the attending midshipmen, these students were truly "passionate," and "committed," to their crafts. It truly gave an opportunity for JROTC students from all around to showcase their abilities in what they have been training for and find interest in.

MIDN 4/C Deolalikar and MIDN 1/C Ruiz offered an insight to the events of the day and their roles in running the event. The day began with an inspection of each respective JROTC unit which MIDN Ruiz contributed to greatly. In any aspect from hygiene to knowledge, these cadets put out their very best, many of whom boasted an impressive ribbon stack from their achievements within their JROTC units. Following inspections, the schools competed with one another in a drill competition and as one midshipman put it "would blow us out of the water." As described by MIDN Deolalikar, these candidates would attribute "3 hours Monday through Friday, along with 8 hours on weekends," just to their JROTC activities alone. To conclude the day, our midshipmen watched as the JROTC cadets competed with one another in a number of fitness tests like relays, pushups, and crunches. MIDN Deolalikar, tasked with officiating a fair rep and start, described their work ethic to each as "dedicated."

The day was a success. It allowed for cadets and midshipmen alike to gain insightful experiences while also having a chance to show off their skills in leadership and competition. In all the fun that our midshipmen had in running the event, what truly made the day a success was its ability to develop the cadets as well as our own commitment to service whether it be in the military or as citizens. The opportunity of introducing NROTC students with JROTC students gave the highschoolers a chance to understand what the next step in their journey could be. It displayed a strong and committed group of students dedicated to the service of their country.

Looking towards the future, the unit encourages its midshipmen to participate in similar events to garner experiences like the ones earned that day. From experiences in leadership roles, cooperating with NCOs and senior enlisted and numerous opportunities to compete and hold command presence, our midshipmen grow and continue to become better leaders.



MIDN Villena (Top Left) and MIDN Deolalikar and Wyman (Top Right) Conducting and Supervising PT

Semesterly Change of Command

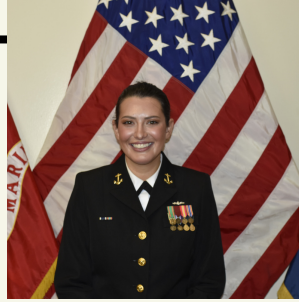
The Trojan Battalion Welcomes In its Spring Semester Chain of Command

By: MIDN Nicholas De Fina

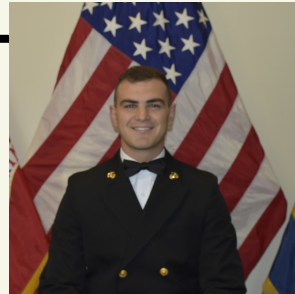
As the Fall Semester came to an end, the Trojan Battalion prepared for the next with its formal change of chain of command ceremony.



**Battalion
Commanding
Officer BNCO -
Midshipman
Merone**



**Battalion Executive
Officer BN XO -
Officer Candidate
Crowe**



**Command Sergeant
Major CSM -
Midshipman
Whidden**

Spring Chain of Command



**Operations Platoon
Commanding
Officer -
Midshipman Larratt**



**Training Platoon
Commanding
Officer -
Midshipman Chan**



**Communications
Platoon Commanding
Officer - Midshipman
Rodriguez**



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