USC NAVAL ROTC NEWSLETTER

September 2025

Edited by: MIDNs 3/C Hammond & Kundu

Trojan Battalion Participates in 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

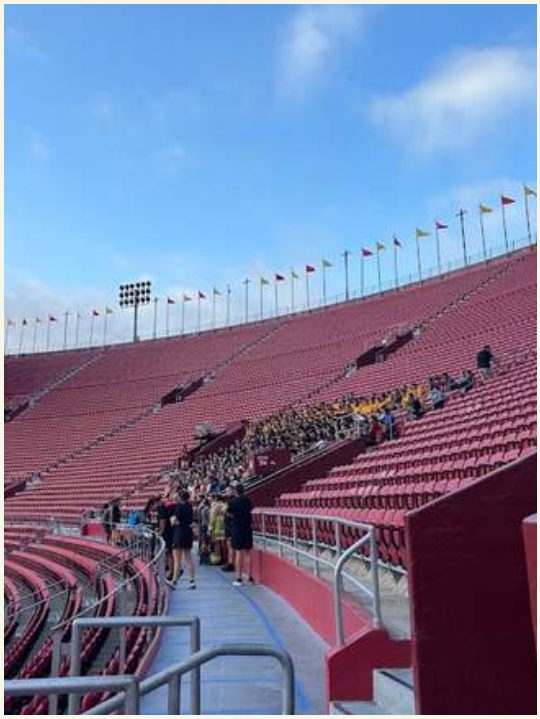
By: MIDN 4/C Lee

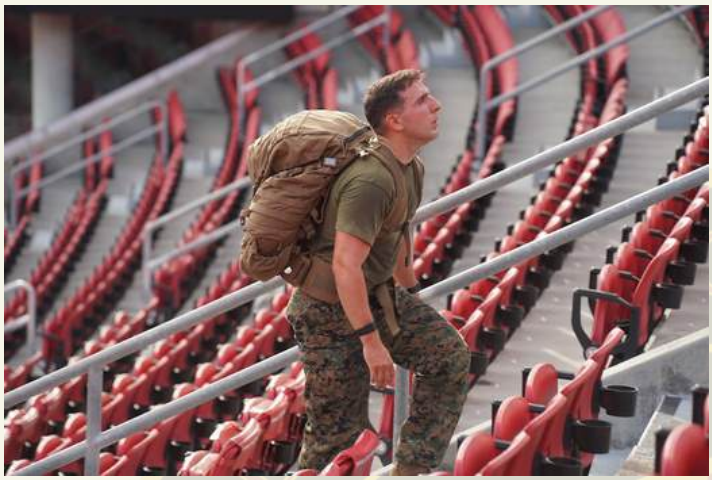
On September 11, the Trojan Battalion stood in solidarity with the USC and greater Los Angeles communities to honor the nearly 3,000 lives lost during the terrorist attacks 24 years ago.

At the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, active-duty service members, midshipmen, cadets, first responders, and civilians came together to participate in the 9/11 Stair Climb, an event symbolizing both remembrance and resilience. Participants climbed 2,997 steps, each one representing a life lost on that tragic day in 2001. The experience served as a moving tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of those who responded to the crisis, as well as a moment of reflection on the enduring impact of that day on our nation.

LAFD joined the Battalion for the event.

MIDN and other participants sit for opening remarks before the climb.





SSgt Letizia making his way up.

MIDN 3/C Burgos keeps it positive.

CDR Ragadio and MIDN 1/C Turner motivate each other with a high-five.

For the Trojan Battalion, this event was more than a symbolic gesture; it was a call to action. The 9/11 Stair Climb reminded all those in uniform of the importance of intention, purpose, and unity in the line of service. It reinforced the values of selflessness and commitment that lie at the heart of military and civic duty.

Beyond honoring the past, the event also fostered a sense of community and hope for the future. By coming together in such a meaningful way, participants demonstrated the power of collective remembrance and the importance of continuing to build strong, supportive ties within the city of Los Angeles.

The Trojan Battalion extends its deepest thanks to the Joint Association of Military Students (JAMS) for organizing and hosting this powerful event. Their leadership and dedication made it possible for so many to come together in reflection and solidarity.

We are proud to be part of a community that not only remembers, but acts. The Trojan Battalion is honored to stand among those who uphold the legacy of courage, sacrifice, and unity that 9/11 represents, and we are grateful to everyone who participated and supported this year's Stair Climb.

Trojan Battalion Takes Flight!

By: MIDN 2/C Wyman

My name is MIDN 2/C Wyman and this summer I had the incredible opportunity to earn the Daedalians Flight Scholarship and train at Riverside Flight Academy. After 25 hours of flight time in the Cessna-172, I completed my first solo flight on September 7th with some of my closest friends there to cheer me on.

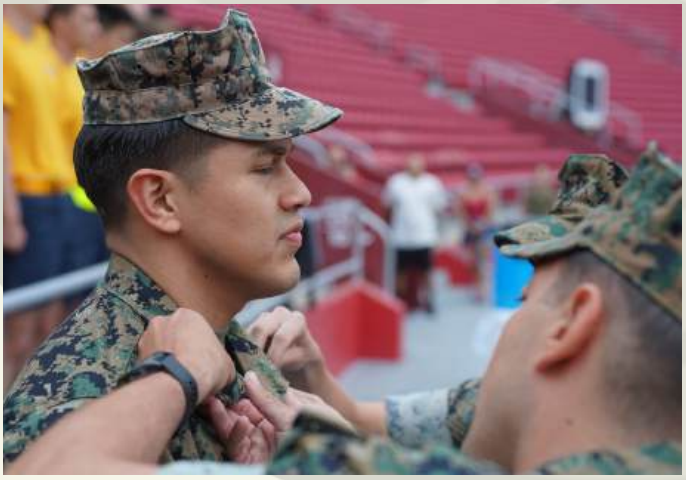
This milestone is the first step toward my dream of becoming a Marine Corps pilot. With my ASTB coming up in October, I'm grateful to the Daedalians, the USC NROTC Unit and our Alumni association for helping me take one step closer to making that dream a reality.

Attention to Orders: SSgt to GySgt

By: MIDN 3/C Kundu

Just before the stair climb began on 11SEP, Staff Sergeant Omar Lopez, a second-year MECEP at the battalion, received recognition before the memorial stair climb for being promoted to the rank of Gunnery Sergeant.

"Being promoted to Gunnery Sergeant on Sept 11th is an incredible honor and milestone in my Marine Corps career. I am committed to continuing to grow into a better leader while working alongside the midshipmen at USC. As a MECEP Marine, I see this promotion not only as recognition of past dedication but also as a reminder of the higher standard I'm expected to uphold as I prepare to become a commissioned officer."
-GySgt Lopez



Class of 2026 Service Assignments

By: MIDN 3/C Kundu

On Wednesday, September 24th, our commissioning 1/C class received their service assignments in the Wardroom.

1370 - Student Naval Flight Officer

MIDN 1/C Choi
MIDN 1/C Villena

1180 - Special Warfare Officer

MIDN 1/C McKernan

1170 - Submarine Warfare Officer

MIDN 1/C Hof
MIDN 1/C Turner
(1220 - NR Engineer)

1390 - Student Naval Aviator

MIDN 1/C Park
MIDN 1/C Walsh
MIDN 1/C Fessler
MIDN 1/C Williams

Distinguished Alumni: Shooting for the Stars

MIDN Briand and Alumni League members pose for a photo outside Pres. Reagan's Air Force One.

The tour, led by knowledgeable docents, guided the group through highlights of President Reagan's life and presidency, including exhibits on the Cold War, the Strategic Defense Initiative, and artifacts from his years as governor of California. They entered the Air Force One Pavilion to view and climb aboard SAM 27000, the modified Boeing 707 that served as Air Force One for seven U.S. presidents, and the accompanying motorcade vehicles, including the presidential limousine and Secret Service Suburban. They also visited a former Marine One helicopter (a Sikorsky VH-3A) and paused at the beautiful hilltop memorial site where President and First Lady Reagan are laid to rest. After the tour, the group gathered for lunch at the Gipper's Bistro adjacent to the museum, enjoying good food, camaraderie, and the chance to hear alumni share stories of their time in the Navy and Marine Corps.

Pres. Reagan's presidential limousine.

MIDN Aragon stands behind the presidential podium.

Fall Awards Ceremony

By: MIDN 3/C Kundu

On the last lab of September, our USC MIDN were recognized for their efforts over the previous semester during the Fall Awards Ceremony.

Intramural Ribbon:

1/C: Aragon, Williams, I., McKernan, Choi, Walsh
2/C: Breen, Tran, Deolalikar, McKelvey, Tam, Baylon, Ganguly
3/C: Aguirre, Zendejas, Chen, West, Donahoe, Williams, S., Romero, Huang, Sommerfield, Hansen, Ouchi, Jothiprakasam, Abreu, Guerrero, Gilliatt, Kundu, Banks, Hammond, Lockwood, Madrigal

Color Guard Ribbon:

2/C: Tran, Heitman
3/C: Arteaga, Zendejas, Sommerfield, Madrigal

Drill Team Ribbon:

1/C: Williams, I.
2/C: Tran, Deolalikar, Wyman
3/C: Arteaga, Zendejas, Sommerfield, Madrigal, Moynihan, Abreu, Donahoe

Rifle Team Ribbon:

2/C: Tran, Morris
3/C: Arteaga, Abreu, Baret, Sommerfield, Madrigal, Williams, S.

Sailing Ribbon:

1/C Briand

Physical Fitness Ribbon:

1/C: Walsh, McKernan, Aragon
2/C: Scott, K., Scott, C., McKelvey, Ganguly, Breen, Xie
3/C: Williams, S., Romero, Lockwood, Huang, Gilliatt, Arteaga, Banks
MECEPs: GySgt Lopez

Community Service Ribbon:

1/C: Williams, I., McKernan
2/C: Tran, Deolalikar
3/C: Torres, West, Huang, Ouchi, Jothiprakasam, Guerrero, Tam, Southworth, Hammond
MECEP: SSgt Corraccio

Academic Achievement Ribbon:

1/C: Choi, Hof, Villena, Walsh, Williams, I.
2/C: Morris, Heitman, Wyman
3/C: Banks, Baret, Aguirre, Huang, Jothiprakasam, Kundu, Magill, Moynihan, Samortin, Southworth, Tak, West, Williams, S., West

SSgt. Letizia receives the Leadership Award Ribbon from LT Peri.

Academic Excellence Ribbon:

1/C: Briand
2/C: Xie, De Fina
3/C: Zendejas, Magill, Moynihan, Samortin, Tak
MECEPs: SSgt Coraccio

Recruiting Award Ribbon:

3/C Gilliatt

Cruise Award Ribbon:

2/C Tran

Leadership Award Ribbon:

1/C: Walsh
2/C: Tran, Xie
3/C: Baret, Jothiprakasam, Romero, Magill
MECEP: SSgt Letizia

Commendation Award Ribbon:

2/C Tran

Professor of Naval Science Ribbon:

2/C Xie

MIDN 2/C Xie receives the PNS Ribbon from Col. Perry.

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