Recently, as I was preparing for a leadership presentation, I re-discovered John Wooden’s “Pyramid of Success”. Coach John Wooden developed his leadership model over numerous years as a player and coach and demonstrated its potency with 10 NCAA men’s basketball championships in a 12-year period from 1964-1975. Coach Wooden’s model is founded on a simple, but profound tenet for success: “Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.” His compelling tenet embodies commitment to excellence and self-actualization, and empowers the member of any team to maximize his/her personal potential to achieve team excellence. Coach Wooden’s pyramid is built on two cornerstones—“industriousness” and “enthusiasm”—and 12 other building blocks (“virtues”) including initiative, poise, condition (mental and moral as well as physical), skill, self-control, team spirit, and loyalty. “Competitive greatness” is the top block of the pyramid and not defined as “success at all costs,” but, as Wooden defined it himself: “Be at your best when your best is needed. Enjoyment of a difficult challenge.” In his definition, Wooden implies that the journey is just as important, if not more important, than the destination. It is a journey of professional and personal development with a commitment to excellence of character, physical excellence, and intellectual excellence. As you thumb through this latest edition of The Ironclad, please note the journey the Class of 2015 has taken in becoming professional naval officers and earning the title of “Ensign” or “Second Lieutenant”. They have demonstrated initiative, poise, condition, industriousness, enthusiasm…and loyalty, but they also understand that that their commission is not the end, but another milestone in their search for professional and personal excellence. It is these character traits with which they strive for competitive greatness as our future leadership and with which they leave an exemplary legacy, e.g., two consecutive years of victory at the Cornell MEC. As the Battalion Commander writes in the “BNCO's Corner,” the Rochester tradition “represents a source of strength.” And it is a source from which we can look for inspiration, but we should not be anchored on practices that need change as we seek continuous improvement. It is a tradition from which the Class of 2015 has left an indelible mark on the junior classes, but especially the Class of 2018 who they trained during orientation. As illustrated in the following articles, the Rochester Battalion fully understands the “Rochester tradition” of excellence as they strive for competitive greatness. We are proud of the Midshipmen as they do not rest on their laurels, but do their best to become the best that they are capable of becoming. The Class of 2015 has rightfully earned a “peace of mind” that they have done their best as they leave NROTC Unit Rochester better than they have found it. I know that the future of our Navy/Marine Corps team is in good hands as the Class of 2015 will be at its best when their best is needed. Godspeed to them as they enter the Fleet/Fleet Marine Force.

N. M. Nobrega
 Tradition is a word that has been used consistently throughout my time here at NROTCU Rochester. It represents a source of strength and an understanding of who we are as a Battalion of Midshipmen. Traditions are important, although they are to be challenged, and potentially eradicated if they are not beneficial or productive to the intended mission. This is our role as future officers, and one of the most difficult to achieve at times, as it takes an immense amount of moral courage to challenge the forces of history.

For this reason I am very proud that this semester, we as a Battalion of Midshipmen were able to challenge some of our own traditions to see if they were the most beneficial or necessary to our development as future leaders. Overall, this semester we provided our Midshipmen with more freedom. First off, we cut our freshman mandated morning drill period from twice a week to once a week. Secondly, we permitted Navy Options who received a score of Excellent or above on our inventory Physical Fitness Test to miss one physical training day a week (Marine Options were given that day for an extra Marine-centric workout). Lastly, we greatly reduced the amount of mandatory extracurricular events and focused on quality professional development during our lab periods to keep our military and leadership training as efficient as possible. That being said, this freedom was not given to our Midshipmen for them to watch Netflix until zero dark thirty. Instead, this was given as a challenge and an opportunity for them. With a less rigorous NROTC schedule, we challenged our Midshipmen to time manage and prioritize so that they could learn to use their spare time in a productive manner. With more freedom, we gave our Midshipmen an opportunity to devote more time towards their personal growth. We encouraged them to spend more time studying and involve themselves in extra-curricular activities such as lectures, sports, clubs, community service, or to read and learn more about topics they are interested in. With this extra free time, we hoped to not only stimulate an increase in academic focus but also to produce well-rounded Ensigns and Second Lieutenants that have truly learned a great deal about the world around them and more importantly about themselves during their college career.

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work closely with the kind of high caliber Midshipmen that our Unit has during my time here in the Battalion. I thank you all, in particular, for the hard work you put in this semester and the patience you had with myself as your Battalion Commander during a time of change. I could not have asked for a more supportive BNXO and OPS, motivated Staff and quality Battalion. In conclusion, I would like to leave you all with a short quote:

"A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and a compassion to listen to the needs of others. He (or she) does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the quality of his/her actions and the integrity of his/her intent. In the end, leaders are much like eagles...they don’t flock. You find them one at a time."

- General Douglas MacArthur

A. J. Dudek
A few of the current Fourth Class share their reflections on their first year of ROTC

MIDN 4/C James Doherty
MIDN 4/C Nicolette Kober
MIDN 4/C Joseph Rutledge

What was the most difficult part about Freshmen year?

"Learning how to manage both school and ROTC life."

"FOMO (fear of missing out) when friends are hanging out on weeknights and we have early mornings the next day."

"Managing life on a lot less sleep."

What has been your favorite memory this year?

"Attending Naval Leadership Weekend at Notre Dame."

"Our victory at the Cornell Drill Competition."

"Midshipman Tyson's toast at Dining-In last semester."

What would you want to go back and tell yourself on the first day?

"Don't be afraid to make mistakes."

"Learn how to spell. I'm still living down the time I spelled 'attitude' wrong at full volume during orientation. And don't take things personally."

"Don't be too hard on yourself when you do make mistakes."

How does your ROTC experience compare to what you expected of it?

"I didn't really know what to expect, I didn't do any summer seminars, but I'm still surprised at the immense amount I've learned and grown throughout just one year."

"I misjudged the amount of time it would demand, I had to get used to the fact that there aren't enough hours in the day. But the intensity is what I was expecting it to be."

"I wasn't expecting the amount of responsibilities and privileges I would have already as a freshman."
What are you most looking forward to about being a Third Class?

"Being able to use what I've learned this year to guide next year's Fourth Class."

"Being familiar with the daily ROTC schedule and more equipped to deal with it."

"Having more responsibilities and leadership positions."

Right now, what do you think you want to do after you commission?

"I'm not sure yet, I'm looking forward to learning about the different communities over summer training at CORTRAMID."

"I think I'd like to be an aviator, maybe a lawyer at some point in life."

"Be an infantry officer in the Marine Corps."

In the future, what is one word or phrase you hope people will use to describe your leadership style?

"Approachable."

"Selfless."

"Level-headed."

What is your favorite part about being in ROTC?

"All of the people you become instantly close with due to the very different lives you have chosen compared to the rest of your college peers."

"The strong bonds you form with the people going through it with you, who all have similar goals and values."

"The opportunity to meet new people through our training opportunities all over the world, people that we will be involved with for the rest of our lives."
This year, NROTC Rochester has implemented a new mentoring program. In previous years, the mentoring program was implemented in order to provide the underclass Midshipmen a designated mentor for their professional expertise. The mentor and mentee were one class apart so the mentee could ask about the professional challenges they were about to face. The 2015 spring semester introduced a new mentoring program that was more conducive to not only professional mentoring, but mentoring in personal life as well. 1/C Midshipmen have been mentoring the 3/C Midshipmen, and the 2/C Midshipmen have been mentoring the 4/C Midshipmen.

With a gap of two years separating the mentoring pair’s members, the mentee would have more of an opportunity to look up to their elder mentor. All Midshipmen were asked for a preference list of who they would like to be their mentor or mentee, making it more comfortable for the mentoring partner pair to relate. Mentees and mentors this semester have discussed hobbies, grades, general life questions and the professional careers they will pursue upon entering the United States Navy and Marine Corps as commissioned officers.

MIDN 3/C Katherine Baum
Morale, Welfare and Recreation Officer

MIDN 3/C Morgante and MIDN 3/C Ely
NROTC Rochester has had another productive semester with volunteering. This semester, our Unit has seen an increase in participation in on-campus fundraising and philanthropic events as well as individual volunteer opportunities. Midshipmen in the Battalion participated in ‘Freeze Off,’ a fundraising event for the American Cancer Society. Participants braved the cold Rochester winter while bystanders donated money to keep them warm or let them shiver. The Battalion is also staying true to its military roots by partnering with a local fraternity on campus to design an obstacle course in order to raise money for the United Service Organization. Our Battalion Commander also found himself in a unique opportunity to give back this semester. Over his spring break, Midshipman 1/C Dudek traveled to El Progresso, Honduras where he helped build a school and assisted local educators teach students English. NROTC Rochester has made efforts to aid those in the local community, on campus, and even abroad. We look forward to continuing our volunteering and philanthropic efforts next semester.

MIDN 3/C Arion Karimi
Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Chief Petty Officer

MIDN 1/C Dudek
Congratulations to NROTCU Rochester for placing 3rd overall at the annual Villanova Drill & MEC Competition!
Preparing for the Platoon Basic competition involved assembling once every week for practice, and every morning for the two weeks preceding the event itself. By the time we arrived to compete, it was like any other run-through of our routine, albeit with a much more important audience. While learning and executing the movements was the main focus through most of the year, the real challenge was maintaining the evasive ‘intensity’ that the upper class was so fond of reminding us about. As is tradition, the platoon consists primarily of the 4th Class. We did not always know what to look for, especially since we could not see our performances from the same perspective as our instructors. But, when we really nailed it, there was no ‘sight’ needed: you could simply feel the energy. We felt it more and more as we practiced and knew as we walked off that drill deck, all of our hard work paid off.

This year at the 2015 VUIDM, the Trick Exhibition Drill Team competed against many teams that proved to be tough competitors, including the Naval Academy and Penn State. We had the Spring semester to practice and tighten-up our movements, but we ran into many obstacles along the way. In the beginning we did not meet the requirements to compete due to a lack of personnel. Also, we had a decrease in our practice days, not to mention the multiple Spring breaks from the University of Rochester and RIT. Even so, we persevered and used our time effectively. We made sure to ‘bring the heat’ and leave it all on the drill deck. Even though we did not place in the top three, we still enjoyed the journey. As one of the co-trick commanders with MIDN 1/C Smith, I was honored to lead my team one last time.
Two man trick is a very difficult event to place in. While creating their own routine for the two man portion of the competition, Midshipmen must also practice for the Platoon/Squad routine. This takes away from valuable practice time. The two man routine must be 5 minutes long and can use any number of spins and movements to use up the time. Usually more complicated spins are done since only two members need to learn them instead of 8 or more. This event allows schools to highlight their best members of their overall trick teams. Rochester has now placed third at both Cornell and Villanova using two different teams, this semester’s team being MIDN 2/C Lloyd and myself, MIDN 1/C Smith.

NROTC Rochester’s Squad Basic team this year consisted of MIDN 1/C Nysenbaum, 2/C Romesser, 1/C Dudek, 1/C Wieber, 1/C Tanner and they were led onto the drill deck by myself, MIDN 2/C Strom. With a very limited practice window of one week before the competition, our Squad Basic team was able to not only learn the drill card, but also master the movements. We stressed teamwork, timing, and discipline in our practices, and our efforts were reflected when we stepped out onto the drill deck. While competing against comparatively much larger schools including Penn State and the US Naval Academy, NROTC Rochester placed third out of ten in the Squad Basic drill event. At the end of the day, we were able to collect some hardware to bring home with us. More importantly, we earned some points that would help NROTC Rochester finish at the overall third place position in the competition. It is humbling to remember that each individual team’s efforts help push us closer to victory. We are all part of the bigger team that is NROTC Rochester.
The swimming portion was comprised of three atypical swimming events: the 4x100 Free Relay, the 4x100 IM Relay, and the Crescendo. In the 400 Free Relay the team of MIDN 1/C Nysenbaum, 2/C Romesser, 4/C Burke, and 4/C Gonta each swam four lengths of the pool. Next was a fun event where each relay member swam one length of each stroke: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle. This powerful team consisted of MIDN Burke, Nysenbaum, Gonta and myself, MIDN 2/C Clark. The final event of the day was the Crescendo, which was comprised of MIDN Bodwell, Burke, Gonta, and Clark. MIDN 2/C Bodwell, not anticipating to swim, had not trained for the event and stepped up to the challenge to help provide more swimmers to choose from in making the relay teams. Each Rochester swimmer proved to be a valuable asset of the team. All in all, the University of Rochester did their best and had a great experience.

The Recon Challenge is the most physically intensive event at the Villanova MEC. The event consists of teams of two, with four stations performed back to back. The first is the completion of five rope climbs by each team member. Following this station, the team heads to a 3/4 mile loop where they must complete seven laps. Laps one and seven are done with a 45-pound pack, laps two through five are completed with a load-bearing vest and pipes (to simulate rifles), and lap six is completed without any gear. The third station consists of a 100 meter fireman-carry for each member and two 100 meter ammo-can sprints. The final station is a 500 yard swim in full combat utilities. The winner is determined by the fastest time for each event. Rochester had two teams, the team of MIDN 4/C Martinez and 4/C Doherty, and the team of MIDN 1/C Nysenbaum and 3/C Tucker. The latter team finished in second place, but everybody was equally exhausted.
The team for the 4x400 was selected after a number of time trials were held. The Midshipmen with the best times were chosen to be on the team. MIDN 2/C Kline, 2/C Withiam, 1/C Gage and myself, 4/C Rutledge were all selected to compete in the event. The team took 2nd place for the event losing only to the Pennsylvania State NROTC team. All Midshipmen put forth a strong effort to boost our overall MEC score.

Over the course of the semester, the 5K team (MIDN 2/C Kline, 4/C Rutledge and myself, 3/C Boullianne) has put in the hard work and dedication required during many arduous PT sessions. This training has culminated in their skills being tested at this year's Villanova Drill Competition. Rochester was proud to bring home first, second, and sixth place by Boullianne, Kline and Rutledge, respectively. "It was great seeing us place so well after all we've done to prepare!" said MIDN Kline.
Until Next Year!

MIDN 2/C Withiam, 4/C Rutledge, 1/C Gage, 4/C Gonta and 1/C Campbell pose after competing in MEC events

MIDN 1/C Gage runs the 4x400

Thumbs up from MIDN 3/C Loder and 3/C Boullianne

MIDN 3/C Tucker and 2/C Bono watching the drill events

MIDN 1/C Muller, 1/C Tucker, 2/C Stalzer, 3/C Murphy, 2/C Cooper, 2/C Withiam and 2/C Kline enjoying sun

Back: MIDN 4/C Burke gets some air during the Basketball Competition
NROTCU Rochester takes this opportunity to recognize the newly commissioned Class of 2015

Jamal Campbell
Callsign: Superman
B.A. in Criminal Justice from Rochester Institute of Technology

What is one thing you'll miss about Rochester?
"I've lived in Rochester all my life forming many relationships. I'll truly miss the fun shared with my friends and family."

What are you looking forward to after college?
"I'm looking forward to seeing all the other LT's I've befriended from past experiences."

Jamal will be reporting to The Basic School in Quantico, Virginia.

Alexander Dudek
Callsign: Popeye
B.A. in International Relations from the University of Rochester

What would do differently if you went back to Freshman year?
"I would not have put my cover on indoors during Orientation."

What would you be doing after graduation if you were not in ROTC?
"I would travel the world and then start my own program to combine language and culture study with humanitarian assistance focused on impoverished and misrepresented areas of the world."

Alexander will be reporting to Flight School in Pensacola, Florida.

Mackenzie Gage
Callsign: Big Boy
B.A. in International Relations from the University of Rochester

What is one thing you will miss about Rochester?
"Chilling on the quad."

If you could go back to Freshman year and tell yourself anything, what would it be?
"Why on earth did you think it was a good idea to shave your head?"

Mackenzie will be reporting to The Basic School in Quantico, Virginia.
Reid Muller  
Callsign: Regal  
B.S. in Electrical Engineering Technology from Rochester Institute of Technology

What is one thing you'll miss about Rochester?  
"Everything being 10 minutes away."

What are you looking forward to about the base where you will be stationed?  
"The fact that there is less snow and not as cold as Rochester."

Reid will be reporting to The Basic School in Quantico, Virginia.

Manuel Navarro  
Callsign: Guide-on  
B.A. in Computer Science from the University of Rochester

What is one thing you'll miss about Rochester?  
"I will miss the family I was able to make during my time here."

What are you most looking forward to about the base you will be stationed?  
"I'm looking forward to tasting my first In-N-Out burger."

Manuel will be reporting to the USS COMSTOCK in San Diego, California.

Joshua Nysenbaum  
Callsign: Hands  
B.A. in Criminal Justice from Rochester Institute of Technology

What would you do differently if you went back to Freshman year?  
"I would take the opportunity to double major in business or history."

What would you be doing after graduation if you were not in ROTC?  
"I would be going to graduate school and pursuing a career in teaching."

Joshua will be reporting to The Basic School in Quantico, Virginia.
What is one thing you'll miss about Rochester?
"I'll miss how good summer feels after a long winter. And the chow."

What are you looking forward to about the base you will be stationed at?
"I'm looking forward to Southern living down in Charleston, and being able to ride my motorcycle year round. And the southern chow."

Steven Smith
Callsign: Squidward
B.S. in Electrical & Computer Engineering from the University of Rochester

What is one thing you'll miss about Rochester?
"Garbage plates."

What would you do differently if you went back to Freshman year?
"Knowing who I'm friends with now, I would have gone back and met them all earlier in my college career."

Steven will be reporting to Flight School in Pensacola, Florida.

Ari Shaps
Callsign: Atlas
B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Rochester

What is one thing you'll miss about Rochester?
"The windy, freezing walks to drill at 5 in the morning."

What would you do differently if you went back to Freshman year?
"I would have played field hockey."

Ari will be reporting to Nuclear Power School in Charleston, South Carolina.

Colby Tanner
Callsign: Tanner Tot
B.S. in Brain & Cognitive Science from the University of Rochester

What is one thing you'll miss about Rochester?
"The windy, freezing walks to drill at 5 in the morning."

Colby will be reporting to the USS ESSEX in San Diego, California.

Colby will be reporting to Flight School in Pensacola, Florida.
What is one thing you'll miss about Rochester?
"Garbage plates. Seriously."

What are you looking forward to about the base you will be stationed at?
"The fact that it's basically the exact opposite of Rochester (sun, beaches, etc)."

What is one thing you're looking forward to about the base you will be stationed at?
"Getting to know the city of Charleston and all it has to offer, and having warm weather for a change."

What would you do differently if you went back to Freshman year?
"Worry less."

Daniel Tucker
Callsign: Dobby
B.S. in Mathematics from the University of Rochester

Daniel will be reporting to Nuclear Power School in Charleston, South Carolina.

Joseph Thibodeau
Callsign: Tippy Toes
B.A. in Engineering Science from the University of Rochester

Joseph will be reporting to Flight School in Pensacola, Florida.
On 25 April 2015, the Rochester Battalion gathered at the Rochester Riverside Radisson to honor the commissioning seniors and commemorate the end of another successful school year. At the ball, guest speaker Captain John Carter (NROTC Rochester, '88) of the USS BATAAN (LHD 5) inspired the seniors with words of leadership, camaraderie, and continued success as they take the next step in their respective careers. Following the ceremony and dinner, the Battalion of Midshipmen blew off some steam by hitting the dance floor to show off their dance moves.
On 16 May 2015, eleven outstanding individuals from NROTCU Rochester were commissioned as United States Naval and Marine Corps officers. For nearly twenty years, the commissioning ceremony has been held at the George Eastman House, where family, friends, and fellow Midshipmen gather to celebrate this special milestone in the lives of the First Class. These individuals are commended and congratulated for their many accomplishments, both academic achievements as well as leadership development throughout their four years in the NROTC program.

This year Rochester was honored to receive an inspirational address by the guest of honor, Rear Admiral Richard Williams, an NROTC Rochester graduate who shared his many years of leadership experience and parted wisdom to the graduating class. As is tradition, each Midshipman individually recited the Officer’s Oath and received his or her commissioning certificate. Family and friends had the privilege of pinning on the new rank of 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps or Ensign in the U.S. Navy. Having been sworn into office, these individuals received their first salutes. They will no longer be referred to as Midshipmen, as they begin their new careers as officers in the United States military services. Congratulations to all of the new officers, and best of luck in the fleet!
We've enjoyed another great semester with NROTC Rochester! Meliora weekend is on the horizon. Please mark your calendars and contact the Unit with any questions regarding the upcoming events (including dates and times). Thank you!

MIDN Lindsey Curtis, USNR
Communications Officer, Naval ROTC Rochester

Please visit our website for more information about Rochester Naval ROTC and fundraising opportunities through the University's Sea and Anchor Detail.

www.nav.rochester.edu

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