

# Panther Press

A PUBLICATION OF THE PANTHER BATTALION // SPRING 2023

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**ARMY ROTC**

## Semester in Review

submitted by MSIV Cadets

Looking back on the semester, the Panther Battalion was anything but slow-moving.

Within the span of 16 weeks, we executed the 2023 Military Ball, Northern Warfare Challenge, Branch Day, combined FTX with the Iowa ROTC programs, the Bataan Death March, Ranger Buddy, our Senior Staff Ride, super lab CST preparations, and the commissioning ceremony.

We've also had a busy schedule of classes, tactical labs, preparing our MSIIIs for CST 2023 and countless chances to promote the program at volunteer and color guard events this semester. Despite this, we all managed to get through the demanding semester and keep expanding our knowledge and involvement in the program.

Aside from organizing and overseeing all ROTC events, the Panther Battalion staff grew academically in our careers being taught by LTC Dean Ray. Throughout our MSIV course, we concentrated on briefings, FMSWeb, IPPS-A, G-ARMY, PERSTAT. Along with covering important Army systems, we were introduced to DA Form 4856, 31, 4187, 2166, and 2062. All of which will assist us in being successful as future Army officers.

In all, looking back on how the Panther Battalion was and how far we have come as a two-school, one-mission dynamic; we have grown exponentially. Every cadet in our program has been greatly impacted because of how we develop our subordinates through our staff sections and delegation abilities. As staff, we have had to tackle each task together while also learning each other's strengths and weaknesses. Although it was never a walk in the park, it was surely memorable.



*Cadet Trinton L. Robinson presented with the Governor's Cup*



*2023 Military Ball*

# From LTC Dean Ray



## **Panthers,**

Summer is upon us. That means Basic Camp, Advance Camp, Air Assault School and many other cadet professional enhancing Army training.

Spring semester started with the annual Panther Battalion Military Ball and Hall of Fame induction. We had the pleasure to honor COL (RET) Carolyn Olson as the program alumni member and BG (RET) Curley Albrecht as the program key contributor. It was an honor to have them both attend and share their experiences with members of the program. As we continued through spring semester the cadets were in full training mode to participate in the Northern Warfare competition and Buddy Ranger Challenge. Add in the combined FTX at Camp Dodge with all of the programs across the state of Iowa and Creighton University, senior staff ride to the Dwight D. Eisenhower Museum, Ft. Riley and Ft Leavenworth, and super lab as the last major training event for our Advance Camp cadets, the spring semester has been busy. Nevertheless, the cadets, cadre and staff have been able to navigate the busy semester while continuing to grow

in knowledge and presence of the program.

Moving into the fall we will execute zero week prior to the start of classes allowing us to get a head start on integration, administration and training before the semester begins. Fall will bring Ranger Challenge, color guard, push-up crew and this year we will be sending a team to compete at the Army Ten Miler in Washington DC. As always a full slate of activities to foster leadership, professionalism and exposure throughout the University and the community.

I always have to highlight my cadre and staff who are the backbone behind the program and make what we do very easy with their guidance and mentorship to the cadets. As the Army goes we are always losing and gaining one or two new cadre each year. MAJ Maria Lawson who was the IANG AGR APMS has departed to bigger responsibilities within the IANG. Maria made a huge impact on cadets, cadre and staff during her tenure. With the departure of Maria, we did gain MAJ Andrew Smith who is an IANG AGR officer. Andrew brings a wealth of tactical and administrative experience which will help everyone across the program. All other cadre and staff are preparing to run split base operations between Ft. Knox, KY and Iowa throughout the course of the summer.

For the alumni and friends of the program, the Paw Print Campaign kicked off this spring by the alumni association and supported by

many was a huge success. The target goal was met and exceeded expectations across the board. The cadets and the program truly thank you and the ability to utilize the support for professional development experiences for these future leaders is fantastic. Now with some big news, we will be hosting an alumni-only event in October in conjunction with homecoming weekend. The event will be on Friday, 20 October 2023, from 6-9 p.m. This is not a formal event, we will provide food and some drinks with a little update as part of the program and a whole lot of reconnection time among the alumni. I want this to be your time to catch up with fellow alumni and do it while enjoying our new facilities with a lot of the history that you created over all these years. Please come and join us and your fellow alumni for this event. As always the door is open and our home is your home. You paved the way for where we are today.

Have a safe and happy summer.

**LTC Ray**



**SFC Edward J Pavelec** enlisted in 2006 into the Iowa National Guard. He was first assigned to Det 1 Co A 1/376 AVN REGT. Made SGT in the 2/211th Medivac and was reassigned to B CO RSP as a Cadre Instructor. He was accepted into the AGR Program in 2011 and moved to the Survey Operations Section of the 71 CST on the 132nd Fighter Wing in Des Moines. He later moved back up to Waterloo to be a Recruiting and Retention NCO. He then took the Readiness NCO Position for Det 1 Co A 1/376 AVN REGT in 2019 and was deployed to the South West Border in 2021. Returning in December 2022 He was assigned as the Senior RRNCO for the IAJ Northwest Iowa Recruiting Team. He has been Married happily for 15 Years with 5 children, is an Elder at RiverWood Church in Waverly Iowa and has lived in Denver Iowa since 2015.



**Major Andrew Smith** joined the team as the Assistant Professor of Military Science in May 2023. He joined the Army reserves in 2002 as a 92F, Petroleum Supply Specialist. After a tour in Iraq from 2003-2005, he joined the ROTC program at the University of Iowa where he graduated in 2009 with a Business degree and Entrepreneurship certificate. He was commissioned as a 19A, Armor officer, into the IA Army National Guard. He was a Platoon Leader in Afghanistan with B TRP, 1-113 CAV followed by the XO position. He commanded A TRP, 1-113 CAV before moving to the 1-133d IN as a plans officer and becoming AGR in 2016. His last two assignments were as the S3/OIC for the 1-133d IN and Operations and Training Officer (and F CO RSP CO CDR) with the Recruiting and Retention Battalion.



**MAJ Maria Lawson** was the Assistant Professor of Military Science from May 2021- May 2023. She is a current Active Guard Reserve Officer for the Iowa Army National Guard and has moved back to the 334th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) as their full time Officer in Charge and Executive Officer. MAJ Lawson has held various positions throughout her career to include military intelligence platoon leader, intelligence officer at 2/34 Infantry Brigade Combat Team Headquarters, S2 Intelligence Officer at the 1034 Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, S3 Operations Officer at the 334th BSB and Company Commander for Alpha Company, 334th BSB. She is an ROTC graduate from the University of Cincinnati ('13) and holds a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. MAJ Lawson taught our MS1 and MS2 students.

## Pawprint Campaign

The Department of Military Science held a successful PAWprint crowdfunding campaign in spring 2023. A total of \$13,200 was raised, exceeding our \$10,000 goal, with funds going toward professional development opportunities for ROTC cadets.

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## Panther Pantry Award

UNI ROTC was awarded a Panther Pantry Award at the 2023 leadership award in recognition of the inaugural, “Panther Pantry Ruck for Hunger,” on Tuesday, 13 Dec. 2022. Cadets worked with volunteers across the University of Northern Iowa to collect donated non-perishable items for the Northeast Iowa Food Bank and then rucked donations to Maucker Union to prepare the delivery to the food pantry.



## Military Ball

The 2023 Military Ball was held on 18 February at the Edgewood Event Center in Edgewood, Iowa.

**Colonel (Retired) Carolyn K. Olson** was inducted into the UNI-UD ROTC Hall of Fame. She was commissioned a Second Lieutenant from the University of Northern Iowa in 1990 and received her Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree in Mass Communications and Journalism.



*Colonel (Retired) Carolyn K. Olson*

Also inducted into the Hall of Fame for his service and contributions as an Army Officer was **Brevet BG (Retired) Ronald (Curly) Albrecht**. He enlisted in the United States Navy in 1971-1978 and graduated from the University of Northern Iowa with a Bachelor of Arts in Art Education and History. He commissioned in June 1984 as an Infantry Officer in the Iowa Army National Guard and served as the Executive Officer for the Panther Battalion for several years. BG Albrecht retired in January of 2023.



*Brevet BG (Retired) Ronald (Curly) Albrecht*

## Congratulations to our new 2nd Lieutenants

**2LT Whitley Juanita Galbraith** was raised in Hudson, Iowa. She is the daughter of Stefanie and Adam Galbraith. 2LT Galbraith received a 4-year National Nursing Scholarship and joined ROTC her freshman year. 2LT Galbraith commissioned as a Nurse Corps Officer in the U.S. Army's active duty component, with a bachelor's degree in nursing from Allen College.

**2LT Payton Marie Hart** was raised in Kalona, Iowa. She is the daughter of Colleen and Larry Hart. 2LT Hart joined ROTC her freshman year before deciding to enlist into the Iowa National Guard in November 2019 as a 09R, Cadet 2LT Hart commissioned as a Chemical Corps Officer into the Colorado National Guard with bachelor's degrees in anthropology and biology and a minor in advanced leadership techniques.

**2LT Trinton Lamar Robinson** was raised in Birmingham, Alabama. He is the son of LaTrina Hicks and Charles Robinson. 2LT Robinson joined ROTC as a Green-to-Gold active duty option cadet in August of 2021. 2LT Robinson commissioned as a Medical Service Corps Officer into the U.S. Army's active duty component, with a bachelor's degree in exercise science and a master's degree in kinesiology. He received the 2023 Governor's Cup Award.

**2LT Eliana Maliah Berry** was raised in Durant, Iowa. She is the daughter of Lori Munoz and Antonio Berry. 2LT Berry joined ROTC as a 4-year scholarship cadet in August of 2019. 2LT Berry commissions today as an Adjunct General Officer into the U.S. Army's active duty component, with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and philosophy and ethics. She received the 2023 George C. Marshall Award.

**2LT Olivia Marie Vergamini** was raised in Princeton, Illinois. She is the daughter of Anthony and Carla Vergamini. 2LT Vergamini joined ROTC in August of 2019 and earned a 3 year scholarship. She commissioned April 2023 as an Ordnance Officer into the U.S. Army's active duty component with a bachelor's degree in human health science.



## ROTC Senior Staff Ride

submitted by MSIV Cadets

The ROTC Senior Staff Ride is one of every cadet's culminating event requirements before commissioning. A staff ride is a historical study of a particular battle or campaign in U.S. history. Senior cadets travel to a historical site of their choosing with the hopes of developing more as professional leaders. The sites the 2023 commissioning class chose were Ft. Riley, Kansas, the Eisenhower Museum and Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. The campaign of discussion for this year's staff ride was World War II.

During the visit to the Eisenhower Museum, each cadet was responsible for briefing individual topics regarding GEN Eisenhower's life, military service (regarding the impact of WWII) and his Presidency.

Visits to both Ft. Riley, Kansas and Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas provided cadets the opportunity to interact with current company and field grade officers. Two of the present officers attending were both former Panther Battalion alumni, CPT(P) Daniel Jensen (UNI Class of 2012) and MAJ Lucas Chase (UD Class of 2011).

These Q&A sessions helped the soon-to-commission cadets the chance to gain perspective as to what is expected from the incoming Second Lieutenant. The staff ride concluded with drive-by tours of both installations, which allowed cadets to get a feel for what everyday Army life looks like. This year's staff ride provided many educational and learning opportunities, as well as much-needed comradery and bonding time for senior cadets.



# Cadet Q&A

featuring Brady Shook

## When do you leave for Cadet Summer Training at Fort Knox?

I leave 8th regiment so July 5th

## What part of advanced camp are you most excited for?

I'm most excited for the learning experience I can gain from this and also seeing how other schools around the country do certain things.

## What part are you dreading?

Honestly I'm not really dreading anything my instructors and cadre have prepared and taught me so much that I can go in confidently.

## How do you feel you've grown in your leadership abilities in your MS3 year?

My MS3 year has taught me how to be patient in certain situations and also to always be there for your soldiers for anything.

## Favorite workout you've done in the program?

The best workout we've had is our Wednesday weight lifting workouts. I feel like that where I am most comfortable and feel like I get my best work in.

## What have you been doing outside the program to get ready for CST?

I have been studying the ranger handbook as much as possible and also doing research online to be able to be the best I can be in any mission thrown my way.

## What ACFT event is your favorite?

My favorite event would have to be the ball throw. Mainly because it's my best event but also because I just enjoy throwing a ball as far as I can.

## Which ACFT event do you dread?

I probably dread the run the most. I've never been a great runner and I'm slowing getting better but it's just not something I enjoy doing

## What is some advice you would give to the freshman and sophomores in ROTC as they approach their MS3 year?

Be a sponge and ask when you need help. Absorb as much knowledge as you can in class and also during missions. You will never know everything so it's okay to ask questions when you are stuck.

## What score do you think you'll get on Rifle Qualification?

I believe I've worked on my marksmanship a lot so I would say anywhere between 35-40.

## ALUMNI BANQUET

Nielsen Field House Gym  
Friday, 20 October 2023  
6-9 p.m.

## MILITARY APPRECIATION FOOTBALL GAME

Saturday, 4 November 2023  
1 p.m.

## MILITARY BALL AND HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

Saturday, 24 February 2024

*Please send your nomination requests for the Hall of Fame to: uni-rotc@uni.edu*

## Give Back

Many alumni support our program on an annual basis through gifts to the **Department of Military Science Fund for Excellence**. Gifts make a huge impact on our cadets and provide opportunities to participate in the time-honored events such as the Military Ball and Senior Cadet Staff Ride, memorable esprit corps events such as Bataan Death March and Army 10 Miler/ AUSA Conference and visit famous battlefields.

[foundation.uni.edu/fund-military-science](https://foundation.uni.edu/fund-military-science)

save the date



**ARMY ROTC**

## Contact

**Office Hours:** Monday through Friday  
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Be sure to check out our website at:  
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