



# WV NOVA

**2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

# NAVAL



# FRITC

*This Annual Report publicizes to Nova Nation and other interested stakeholders how Villanova University NROTC serves the community while illustrating our continued commitment to responsible stewardship of the most important resource entrusted to the NROTC staff – our country's future naval officers. Underpinned by an elementary financial audit, the report's main purpose is to highlight the diverse achievements of our Midshipmen and the tireless efforts of our active duty and civilian staff to set the conditions for our students to thrive. This feedback will help us align with Villanova's Strategic Plan and the broader officer accessions enterprise that falls under the direction and guidance of Commander, Naval Service Training Command(CNSTC).*

**GREETINGS ALL: OUR SUPPORTERS, ALUMNI, UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP AND COLLEAGUES, AS WELL AS FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE UNIT!**

Proud to say that the state of your Wildcat Battalion is strong as ever and during the past academic year we were again able to execute our training and education schedule as planned. As stated by our Midshipmen leadership, Philadelphia NROTC Consortium activities reinforced our position at both host institutions and across the local area. To be sure, community engagements designed to nurture the civil-military relationship and recruiting efforts aimed at attracting more talent for our program fortified our comprehensive approach to officer development. All the while, our Midshipmen remained exceptionally productive in their continued scholarship and extracurricular achievements throughout this period.

To illustrate this point I could point to a wide variety of student involvement outside of NROTC, ranging from social, service/volunteer-oriented clubs and Greek life to athletics such as swimming, hockey, rugby, track and field, water polo, and crew

or academic clubs, e.g. Blue Key and specialized engineering programs.to athletics such as swimming, hockey, rugby, track and field, water polo and crew, or academic clubs, e.g. Blue Key and specialized engineering programs. This level of on and off campus activity would be commendable at any time, but it is particularly remarkable given the smaller size of our battalion.

The strength of the Wildcat Battalion is and will always be found in the individual Midshipman's diverse and community-oriented talents. We will maximize our collective performance by leveraging those unique attributes and honoring unit traditions in parallel with an emphasis on academic excellence. Your donations, other resourcing efforts and overall moral support was instrumental to our mission success and will set the conditions for increased excellence in the years ahead.

Please enjoy reading about the individual and unit successes spotlighted in this report knowing that we have you to thank for your meaningful and enduring support.

Sincerely,



A. J. CIUCCOLI



## **VILLANOVA NROTC FAMILY,**

The Fall 2022 Semester posed a major challenge to the Villanova NROTC Battalion with the significantly reduced numbers due to the large class of previous 1/C Midshipmen graduating in May. With this significant loss of numbers, every Midshipmen had to step up and accept many difficult leadership positions, most at a younger age. While the uncertainty of this large momentum shift was an arduous task to overcome, the Midshipmen of this battalion showed exemplary resiliency and dedication to preserving the traditions and foundations that make the Villanova NROTC Battalion one of the premier officer training programs in the country. While not without challenges, we are extremely proud of the perseverance and grit that our Midshipmen poured forth in the first half of this school year.

The Spring 2023 Semester prioritized a shift towards unity and cohesion. The Villanova NROTC battalion did more consortium-wide events these past few months than we have in years past. We had the honor of hosting the Midshipmen from UPenn, Drexel, and Temple for the Spring Parade, Military Excellence Competition, and FEX.

This emphasis on consortium collaboration created an environment of diverse leadership styles and university atmospheres. As our units grow smaller in size, the Philadelphia NROTC Consortium continues to work hard and strive towards excellence. The Villanova NROTC unit really is something special, and I am extremely honored to have had the opportunity to lead this sharp group of future leaders.

Sincerely,



MIDN 1/C Maria Lynch  
Battalion Commanding Officer, Spring 2023



MIDN 1/C Matthew Blanco  
Battalion Commanding Officer, Fall 2022



## FLYOVER WEEKEND

In Mid-November, Villanova had two primetime matchups on the gridiron. On 18 November, Villanova Army ROTC and Naval ROTC faced off in a flag football game. Navy got the first score with a safety, followed by a touchdown by run-in by Army QB CDT Fisher. When all seemed lost, MIDN Lynch caught an interception, resulting in a touchdown thrown by MIDN Grinnell to MIDN Sams. CDT Barton caught a long ball on 3rd down to take the lead with little time to spare. Navy played an all-senior lineup for the final drive and made significant progress, but fell short because of time, resulting in an Army victory. After the game, both units enjoyed a BBQ. The following morning, CDR Barton brought all interested MIDN to see his E/A-18 before he flew over to the Villanova vs. Delaware football game. MIDN Sams remarked, "It was a fantastic opportunity



to meet CDR Barton and get an up close look at an E/A-18. This is an opportunity very few people are able to have, and I loved being apart of it. I hope to select Aviation when I commission, and this experience helped solidify my thoughts. I also got some great pictures with the jet that I got to show off to my friends back home." Later in the day, CDR Barton flew over the coin toss of the Villanova vs. Delaware football game. The Unit was called onto the field during the game to be recognized.

MIDN 4/C Sams, USNR



# SOMEONE I CAN ALWAYS LOOK UP TO



## MIDN CHAN HONORED NATIONALLY

This fall, Midshipman 1/C Christopher Chan was presented with the Navy Federal ROTC All-American Scholarship, which honors the best and brightest ROTC seniors across the nation. These students are described as the next generation of military leaders. This award is presented to only three ROTC students across the country: one representing Army, one representing Air Force, and one representing Navy. Among hundreds of midshipman and dozens of schools, Midshipman Chan was chosen for his leadership, military excellence, and service. He was accompanied by the entire

battalion and active duty staff when receiving the award. Midshipman 3/C Cunningham had the opportunity to thank midshipman Chan for his mentorship, and described him as “someone [he] can always look up to in our battalion”.

MIDN Chan returned to school this year after completing USMC OCS and earning the title of US Marine. Following graduation, he will head to The Basic School to earn his qualification as a Marine Corps officer. In addition to receiving the award, MIDN 1/C Chris Chan was honored at the Military Bowl in Annapolis, MD for receiving the Navy Federal All-American ROTC Scholarship. He was given the award on the field at the game and got to attend the Medal of Honor Dinner. We look forward to seeing how Midshipman Chan applies what he has learned at Villanova NROTC to become a standout leader in the fleet.





14 NOV 22. VADM CHEESEMAN, CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL,  
SPEAKS TO THE PHILADELPHIA CONSORTIUM



23 SEP 22. ADM FALLON (VILLANOVA '67) SERVES AS  
REVIEWING OFFICER

# GALA

## 21 OCTOBER 2022

The annual gala is one of the defining moments in the earlier part of the year for our 1/C midshipmen, an event that they have waited years to enjoy. Every year our underclass Midshipmen work hard to plan, prepare, and execute this event; a sign of respect and gratitude towards the soon to be Ensigns and Second Lieutenants. In the years before, those same officer selects paid it forward by working the event in the hope of one day enjoying it themselves.

This year our graduating class enjoyed the event surrounded by family, friends, and the staff that has worked years to develop them into the strong leaders they are today. A fine dinner made the night memorable as they shared a meal together as a class and a night with all those who gave so much to get them to this point.

The speech delivered by the guest of honor CAPT Shaughnessy-Granger was spoken highly of by the midshipmen in attendance, who all stated it was a sign that their hard work had paid off and that they were proud to call themselves Villanova Midshipmen. With several other speakers and silent auctions, the night was one of excitement and gratification.

This event would not have been possible without Midshipmen 2/C Girard who worked diligently to pull it all together and make a memorable experience.

MIDN 2/C Will Clarkin, USNR





# 4 NOVEMBER 2022 FALL BALL

Villanova NROTC held their annual Fall Ball to celebrate the anniversary of both the United States Navy and the United States Marine Corps. The ball was held on November 4, 2022 at the Inn at Villanova University. The event began with a cocktail hour, where midshipmen had the opportunity to speak with each other, active duty officers, as well as the guest of honor. The guest of honor for this year's fall ball was Ret. Colonel Michael Roach, USMC. Following the cocktail hour, midshipmen, staff



and guests began the birthday traditions by watching the US Navy and USMC birthday messages, as well as a reading of Commandant John A. Lejeune's historic birthday message. This was followed by the entrance and cutting of the ceremonial cake. The ceremony wrapped up with a speech by Ret. Colonel Roach to the midshipmen. Following dinner, the midshipman took to the dance floor, and after GySgt. Reyes did the Soulja Boy, it was time to call it a night. Upon departing, each midshipman was presented with a Villanova NROTC professional journal for their personal development. Overall, Villanova NROTC planned a very eventful and successful night.



# MILITARY COMPETITION

## **MEC RETURNS AFTER 6 YEARS**

Villanova hosted their Military Excellence Competitions (MEC) on Sunday, the 23rd of April, 2023. Six NROTC units that participated in the event, including the consortium from Rutgers University (including Princeton University, the Hampton Road Consortium out of Old Dominion University) the other half of the Philadelphia Consortium (University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, and Drexel University) and the units at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), Cornell University, and the College of Holy Cross.

The day of competition consisted of 3 forms of drill: Platoon, Squad, and Color Guard; along with 13 physical events, two of which were in the pool. A few events worth highlighting due to their required grit and effort were the MURPH, CFT, and Corpsman Challenge. These events encouraged midshipmen to find their breaking points. They tested how hard and for how long competitors were willing to push themselves both in endurance and strength and were certainly some of the most entertaining competitions to watch.

To start the day, Villanova's Whiskey and Whiskey Freshmen Squads got second and third in the Squad Drill Competition. Later, MIDN 4/C Nawn, 1/C Hayes, and 2/C Wall impressively swept the top three, respectively, in the One Mile Competition. Additionally, a group of six midshipmen from the Philadelphia Consortium, four of which are from Villanova, won the Corpsman Challenge. In the pool, Villanova's MIDN 2/C Higgins and MIDN 3/C Wood won the Two Team Guy challenge, and the freshman squad of MIDN 4/C's Johnson, Rodriguez, Sams, and Smith won the 200 IM.





# EXCELLENCE RETURNS



Overall, Villanova did very well, winning the Athletics Competition while the Hampton Roads Consortium won the Drill Competition. However, despite all the activities, the most important event happened in a classroom with guest speaker Ret. Commander John Schofield. He spoke about the importance of failure and how his own failures led him to be the man he is today. Although physical capabilities were the main things showcased in the competitions, the importance of mental strength and health were not forgotten.



The whole weekend was organized and led by Villanova's MEC Officer MIDN 2/C Cohen with the assistance of the Assistant MEC Officer MIDN 3/C Dailey. And of course, the active-duty staff from the Philadelphia Consortium attended and aided in the safe execution of the day. It was a great day to be a midshipman, full of excellent displays of leadership and commitment to not just one's unit but to the whole Navy. Go Navy!



## MIDN BURNETT COMMISSIONS EARLY

On December 16th, 2022, Midshipman 1/C Calvin Burnett commissioned into the United States Navy. Ensign Burnett was able to graduate early in seven semesters and therefore was able to commission after the 2022 fall semester was finished. Since his sophomore year, Ensign Burnett has made it a goal to graduate in three and a half years and commission early, taking senior classes as a junior and holding significant billets as a junior. Ensign Burnett will be heading to the USS Michael Murphy (DDG-112) out of Pearl Harbor, HI, a place that he visited several times as a child and is now excited to return to. When speaking about his upcoming assignment Ensign Burnett said, “it felt right when I got back to Pearl Harbor.”

Ensign Burnett has long desired to serve his country. Both of his grandfathers served, and Ensign Burnett felt called to service to do something greater than himself. He is incredibly excited to have achieved his goal of becoming a Naval Officer. One of his most memorable experiences as part of the NROTC Battalion was planning the trip to the Independence Seaport Museum and the USS Olympia.

Ensign Burnett will surely miss Villanova. More than anything, he will miss the people. As he reflects on his time at Villanova, he especially remembers meeting a diversity of a great people in different aspects of his involvement in clubs and activities on campus. As he looks forward to his service on the USS Michael Murphy however, Ensign Burnett leaves us with his thoughts and advice for junior Midshipmen. He says, “if you can dream it, you can make it, you can do it.” Furthermore, he offers the advice that the Navy loves new ideas and even though some will not play out, there is always room to reform those ideas until they work. Congratulations, Ensign Burnett, fair winds and following seas!

MIDN 4/C Gavin Dorfler, USNR





# USNA DEI CONFERENCE

## 5-6 OCTOBER 2022

From October 5-6, 2022, select Midshipmen and active duty staff from the Villanova NROTC Unit responded to the invitation to join the U.S. Naval Academy, other NROTC units, and select service academies for the 3rd Annual USNA Diversity and Inclusion Conference: Challenging the Status Quo. For two days, the Villanova NROTC delegation attended lectures, luncheons, breakout sessions, and panels with keynote speakers from the Navy, Marine Corps, and civilian sector. The discussions were led by well-known and respected individuals such as Lieutenant Commander Jonny Kim, Lieutenant Brianne Coger, Captain Gervy Alota (USN), Captain Jackie Barnum (USMC), Rear Admiral (ret.) Lawrence Chambers, Major General (ret.) Charles Bolden, and Dr. Valerie Alexander, Ph.D.

Upon returning from the conference these discussions were conveyed to the Villanova NROTC Unit in its entirety. Together the unit discussed and reflected upon how the principles of the conference can be applied specifically within its own command. Notably, the unit did not regard these lessons and considerations as something to remain within philosophical restrictions. Rather, through introspective reflections as a unit and on the individual scale, the unit is pragmatically working to create a more complete culture that is congruent to that being developed in the fleet. As a unit dedicated to the development of the most competent Navy and Marine Corps officers, the development of culture consistent with that of the fleet is paramount to future success of our Midshipmen upon commissioning. MIDN 4/C Matthew Nawn, USNR



# SPRING SOFTBALL

## 24 APRIL 2023

On Tuesday, April 26, 2023, our battalion had an intense softball game, with one team being led by the consortium's CO, Colonel Ciuccoli, and the other led by Vince, the campus barber. The game was extremely fun for both participants and spectators. Some of the highlights of the game for Vince's team include a high-flying triple by MIDN 4/C Duffy and a booming home run by MIDN 3/C Sweeney. Arguably the game's most impressive play was an all-out diving catch by LT Chesire on a hard-hit ball by MIDN 4/C Duffy. As the game wound down, the Colonel's

team was down by one run with two outs in the bottom of the last inning when MIDN 2/C Weisgerber hit a game-tying double to left field. Later in extra innings, pitcher Gunnery Sergeant Reyes and the defense behind him were able to limit the scoring of Vince's team, which set up MIDN 3/C Alcalay to hit the game-winning walk-off single. While both sides were extremely competitive, in the end, everyone enjoyed the experience and now hopes to have more softball games in the future!

MIDN 4/C Thomas Duffy, USNR  
MIDN 4/C Daniel Debartolomeo, USNR



**ENS COLIN MULLER**  
SUBMARINE WARFARE

**ENS MIA LYNCH**  
NURSE CORPS



**ENS JOHN LANE**  
SUBMARINE WARFARE



**ENS RYAN PLICKYS**  
NAVAL AVIATOR

**ENS JOHN BUSHNER**  
SUBMARINE WARFARE



**ENS JOE ZAWISLAK**  
INFORMATION WARFARE

**ENS JAMES VIZZA**  
NAVAL FLIGHT OFFICER



**JACK WITHSTANDLEY**



# **FAIR WINDS & FOLLOWING SEAS**



**ENS MATTHEW BLANCO**  
USS CHAFEE (DDG 90)  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

**ENS CLAIRE RICHARDSON**  
USS ANCHORAGE (LPD 23)  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

**ENS AIDAN TODOROV**  
USS HOWARD (DDG 83)  
YOKOSUKA, JAPAN

**2NDLT CHRIS CHAN**  
USMC GROUND

**2NDLT JAKE O'DONNELL**  
USMC AIR



**2NDLT MICHAEL HAYES**  
USMC AIR

# CLASS OF '23

GySgt Reinholdson

# WELCOME

**Gunnery Sergeant Yonas Reinholdson**, in his time here in the Villanova NROTC Battalion, has already contributed tremendously to the development of future Marine Corps and Navy Officers through his leadership, approachability, and years of experience. Arriving at Villanova in 2022, Staff Sergeant Reinholdson immediately contributed to the battalion by providing an example for the freshman class to follow. Answering questions about his service and the Navy/Marine Corps structure, his experience was invaluable to 4/C MIDN who knew little about the military.

A specific attribute of GySgt Reinholdson that stands out is his approachability. Whether it is on the PT field or in the classroom, GySgt can simplify any complex topic and deliver it in a calm and professional manner. As a MECEP, GySgt Reinholdson has distinguished himself in working hard to attain a college degree while simultaneously being promoted to Gunnery Sergeant in the past year. These accomplishments, along with his contributions to the battalion, display how valuable GySgt Reinholdson is to Villanova NROTC.

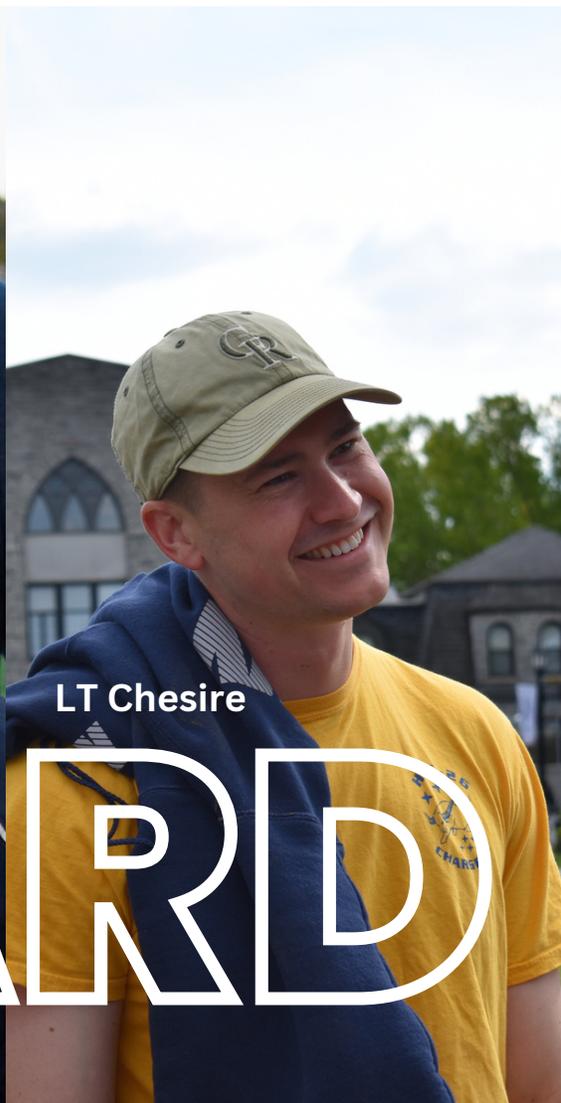
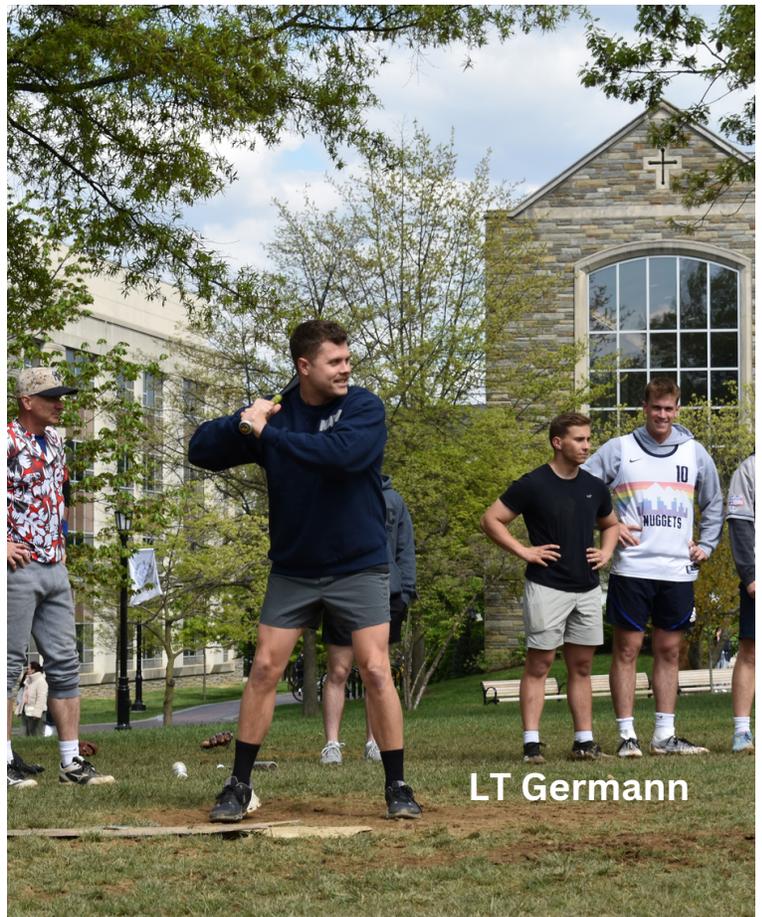
MIDN 4/C Thomas Nolan, USMCR



LT Chesire, LT Karnick, and LT Germann are the newest additions of active-duty staff to the unit. **LT Chesire** is from Colorado Springs, CO, and graduated from CU Boulder in 2018 with a Mechanical Engineering degree. He got pinned as a Naval Aviator in October 2018 and flew the MH-60 Sierra with HSC 26 out of Norfolk, VA. LT Chesire flew with an expeditionary unit and flew missions in Bahrain to support logistics within the 5th fleet. **LT Karnick** is closer to home in Scranton, PA and was commissioned as a Submarine Officer from RPI NROTC in

2016. LT Karnick then went to SSBN 737, the USS Kentucky, out of Bangor, WA. He joined the submarine community because he wanted to meet the best and brightest. Both remarked on the value in having John Barry Hall as a central part of campus and the vast alumni network enjoyed by Villanova NROTC. **LT Germann** is from Kansas City and is a 2016 Naval Academy graduate. He is a part of the SWO Nuke community and served on the USS Princeton and the USS Dwight D Eisenhower CVN 69, which played a role in leaving Afghanistan. LT Germann loves how close the unit feels and said, "It truly feels like it is one team, one fight in Villanova NROTC." His favorite memories were the Chiefs beating the Eagles in the Super Bowl and taking the sophomore class to Dollar Dog Night at the Philadelphia Phillies game.

MIDN 4/C Patrick Sams, USNR



# A B O A R D



# 21 APRIL 2023 SPRING REVIEW



On April 21, 2023, the Philadelphia Consortium, consisting of UPenn and Villanova units, marched together for the first time in 10 years across Mendel Field for their annual Spring Review. Two-time National Champion, Six-time Big East Champion, 2021 inductee to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, Former Villanova Basketball Head Coach Jay Wright was the Guest of Honor. Before the parade, Jay Wright spoke to the graduating seniors about many leadership tactics he has taken from the military such as “Once a Marine, always a Marine” and its inspiration for “Once a Wildcat, always a Wildcat.” Jay Wright gave a motivational speech at the parade for the future US Navy and US Marine Corps Officers and families to hear. Coach Jay Wright was given a plaque representing both units in the consortium and a handcrafted paddle from the seniors from Villanova. Many seniors received swords and awards for their hard work and dedication to the unit over the past four years.

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