

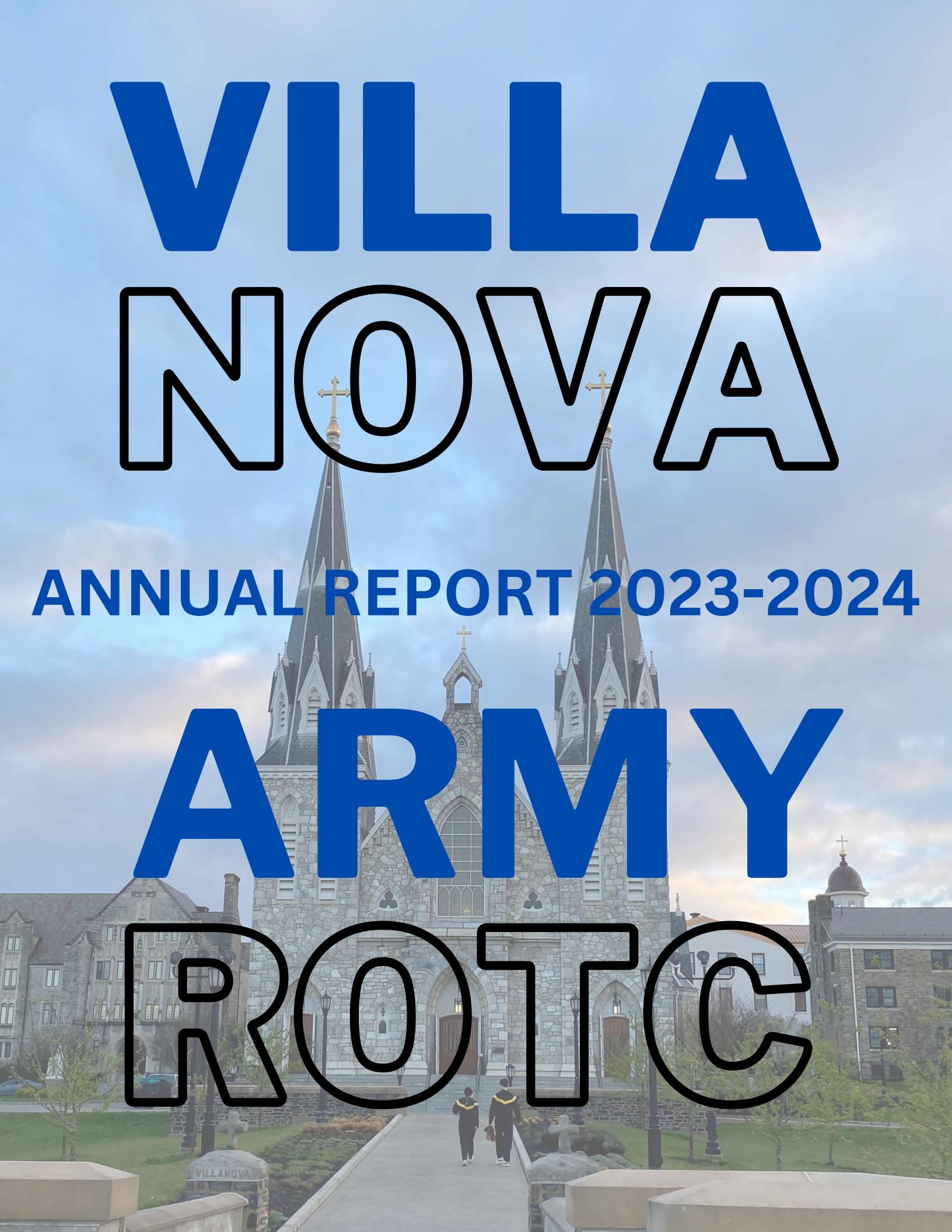
**VILLA**

**NOVA**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

**ARMY**

**ROTC**





## Who are we?

Villanova Army ROTC functions as **Bravo Company** in the **Dauntless Battalion**. Based out of Widener University, formerly Pennsylvania Military College, the Dauntless Battalion has a rich history dating back to before the Civil War. **It is the goal of the Dauntless Battalion to train and produce top level cadets to serve as Army officers.** Our company currently has 32 cadets that not only come from Villanova, but from our cross-town programs at Penn State Abington and Bryn Mawr College.

Our cadets are active on Villanova's campus in intramural, club, and Varsity sports, Special Olympics, NOVA Dance, Greek life, Nurses Without Borders, Orientation, Blue Key, Outdoors Club and so much more. Color Guard, Ranger Challenge, recruiting, community service, and volunteer firefighting are just a few of the opportunities that further involve our cadets not just in ROTC, but in the

surrounding community as well.

The AROTC curriculum features physical training three times a week, military science class once a week, and a weekly hands-on, tactical military science lab. These military science classes, along with cadets' other courses and community involvements, are what contribute to their development as Army officers.

Our cadets are hardworking and disciplined in their academics, physical fitness, and community involvement driving them to be motivated, well-rounded leaders of their peers. Graduates of AROTC have continued on to be successful Army officers in a wide variety of branches including, but not limited to, Infantry, Military Intelligence, Cyber, Nursing, Finance, Field Artillery, Signal, Engineering, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD).

# OUR CADRE



**Major Bridgette Taquero**  
Signal Corps



**Captain Taylor Schultz**  
Explosive Ordnance  
Disposal (EOD)



**Master Sergeant Tsepo  
Molemohi**  
Engineer Corps

“The Fall 2023 semester brought marked change for Villanova Army ROTC. We welcomed two new cadre members, Master Sergeant Tsepo Molemohi and Captain Taylor Schultz, as well as twelve new cadets to our program. Additionally, we recorded one of the largest junior classes in our history. Through these increased numbers, we were able to expand mentorship opportunities and foster growth within our company. This fall semester was also focused on strengthening our university connections, cementing Army ROTC’s place in the Villanova community. I am extremely proud to have led this hardworking group of future officers during the fall semester and have no doubt in their leadership abilities moving forward in the program and their careers.”

**- c/CPT Sam Wolter  
(Fall Company Commander)**

“Villanova Army ROTC continued its strong year into the spring ‘24 semester. Tactical and field craft skills were on full display as cadets started off the new year with two field training exercises with fellow Dauntless Battalion peers. The program established a continued presence at both Villanova men’s and women’s basketball teams through color guard details and army recruiting tables. On Villanova’s campus, the program was able to participate in both the school’s Junior Preview Day as well as Admitted Students Day, further cementing its presence in the Villanova community. Upperclassmen in the program conducted a four day joint field training exercise with several other ROTC programs in the state where their leadership and talents were on full display. Cadets capped off this jam-



packed semester by executing a 12 mile road march at the Valley Forge National Park.

Reflecting on these numerous events, I can confidently say that I am beyond proud of how well our cadets performed this year. Their rugged nature and overcoming fortitude were on full display as they pushed themselves past their boundaries and reached new heights. I wish my fellow seniors commissioning as officers into their respective branches the best of luck wherever the Army may take them and know that they will continue to stand out among many as some of the best. I could not have gotten through these past four years without you all and I know that you all will succeed no matter where you end up. For all other cadets returning to the program next year, it has been an honor serving you as your commander this spring. I have seen substantial growth in you and you inspire me to become a better leader and person. I look forward to hearing about your continued progress and hope that our paths will cross again soon.”

**- c/CPT Colin Roche  
(Spring Company Commander)**

# CADET



# SUMMER



Cadet Summer Training (CST) is a 35 day summer training experience for rising senior cadets at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. CDTs Chandler, Nachurski, Perez, Roche, Sanchez, and Zagdanski all attended and graduated CST this past summer. They trained in land navigation, basic rifle marksmanship, hand grenades, field medical care, an 8 and 12 mile ruck, as well as other tactical skills. They spent 12 days in the field where they were given opportunities to be squad leaders, platoon sergeants, and platoon leaders during tactical missions.

# TRAINING



# SUMMER TRAINING OPPORTUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

## Air Assault School



Cadets Brantley, Chandler, Sullivan, and Zisk attended, and passed, the Army's Air Assault School. They spent 10 mentally and physically tough days training in Air Assault, sling load, and rappelling operations. Deemed the "10 toughest days in the Army," the school requires students to pass an obstacle course, written tests, hand-ons practicals, and 6 and 12 mile rucks to earn the coveted Air Assault wings.

## Cadet Leader Training (CTLT)

Cadets are able to spend 3-4 weeks shadowing officers of various units to gain insight into what being an officer looks like in different branches. CDT Nachurski traveled to Grafenwöhr, Germany where he primarily worked with a Signal officer, CDT Roche spent time with an Engineer officer in Ft. Cavazos, and CDT Zagdanski shadowed an officer at a Military Police Unit at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM).



## Nurse Summer Training Program (NSTP)



CDT Wolter spent 28 days at Madigan Army Medical Center at JBLM, Washington. She had the opportunity to work alongside an Army Nurse and gain hands-on experience in the OR, pediatrics unit, medical-surgical unit, NICU, cardiac catheter lab, and so much more. This experience allows nurses to spend time in an Army hospital while further developing their nursing skills.

# SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

## US Army Corps of Engineers



“This past summer I got the opportunity to intern with the US Army Corps of Engineers at their San Diego field office. Through the internship I gained experience working on job sites, communicating with civilian contractors and inspectors, and understanding how government construction sites are funded and operated. I also got the opportunity on the weekends to experience all the entertainment and historical sites that the San Diego area offers. This internship provided a good balance of a civilian internship at an engineering office and a military internship within the Corps of Engineers, and I would recommend this to anyone interested in engineering or the Army Corps of Engineers.”

- CDT Gigantino (MS3)



“I interned at MIT Lincoln Laboratory in Lexington, MA for four weeks last summer. I did data analytics on commercial airline statistics using MATLAB. I worked directly under a retired Navy helicopter pilot and discussed my findings with other electrical and aerospace engineers. The close collision data we looked at will help improve radar systems in commercial planes and better the safety of commercial flying.”

- CDT Pataky (MS3)

## US Army Test and Evaluation Center



“This internship was with the Army Test and Evaluation Command at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. During this three-week internship, I was able to work with the Defense in a civilian style internship and attempt to restructure and design a new way for ATEC to pay their employees. During the internship, I worked directly under a retired Sergeant Major and a Colonel who were very helpful in their discussions with us. At the end of the internship, we presented our research about new ways of paying their employees to a board.



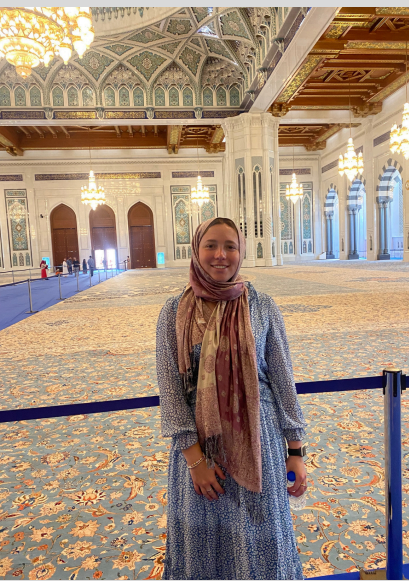
During the internship, I was able to see some amazing sights such as missile tests, the New Mexico landscape, explore El Paso, and all the surrounding towns of the missile range. It was amazing to live in an almost entirely new culture and experience the New-Mexican culture. Everyone I met, whether a civilian or with the Army, were amazing and extremely helpful in our discussions about my future. One of my dreams is to work in a civilian role for the defense, and it was an honor to have that experience this summer. This was such a rewarding experience and contributed to my future goals like what I want to do with my career after the Army. I highly suggest that if anyone can obtain one of these internships that they do not hesitate to take it. I would undoubtedly do this internship or another if I was given the opportunity.” - CDT Zisk (MS3)



## Project Global Officer (GO)



“Project Global Officer is a summer intensive language program that exposes ROTC cadets to critical languages in their native setting. In summer 2023, I had the honor of traveling to Morocco to study Modern Standard Arabic and Moroccan Darija. This experience enriched me academically, positively impacted my worldview, and bestowed me with memories that I will cherish forever.” - CDT Scotto (MS3)



“Last summer I had the opportunity to study in Nizwa, Oman through Project GO. In Oman, I took language classes, travelled, and built relationships with other ROTC cadets and Omani students.”  
- CDT Sameth (MS3)

Along with these highlighted training opportunities, cadets have the ability to attend **Airborne School, Mountain Warfare School, Dive School, Sapper Leader Course**, and more. We strive to give our cadets every opportunity to excel and enhance their military knowledge and skills.

## HONORING THOSE WHO FELL ON 9/11

On September 11th, our cadets conducted a 3-mile memorial run honoring all those who lost their life during 9/11. Stopping at landmarks across campus, cadets shared biographies of Villanova alumni who died during the 2001 attacks.



# FALL FTX



Our Cadets started off the semester strong with our annual Fall Field Training Exercise (FTX) at Fort Indiantown Gap. In this two night, three day event, cadets train in land navigation, tactical lanes, and Engagement Skills Trainer (EST). Our MS1s and MS2s even got to participate in some paintball missions on the last day!



“FTX was a very rewarding experience and offered realistic practice to the things I’ll need to know for advanced camp.”  
- CDT Dougherty (MS2)

# HELICOPTER

# FLIGHT





During our Fall Field Training Exercise (FTX), our contracted MS1s and MS2s had the opportunity to ride in UH-60 Black Hawks over Fort Indiantown Gap.

“While our annual field training event was super fun, the highlight was without a doubt being able to ride in a Black Hawk. The experience was something that I’ll never forget, and myself and the other cadets who rode in it have not been able to stop talking about it since. It’s safe to say we have all been wanting to branch aviation since then!” - CDT Barton (MS2)

“The helicopter flight was one of the highlights of my freshman year in ROTC. It opened my eyes to the branch of aviation and other opportunities within the Army. Flying in a Black Hawk for the first time was truly an unforgettable experience.” - CDT Coombs (MS1)



# RANGER



**Ranger Challenge** is a three-day competition between Battalions from schools along the east coast from PA up to ME. The competition events include land navigation, an obstacle course, one-rope bridge, TCCC (Tactical Combat Casualty Care), a grenade course, weapons assembly, and a timed 6-mile ruck. Our B. Co CDTs participated on this team and helped to bring home the **1st place weapons streamer** for the Fall 2023 competition.





# VETERANS DAY



Our Cadets participated in a Veterans Day brunch, flag planting ceremony, and Mass hosted by Villanova's Student Veteran Association. Cadets had the unique opportunity to talk with veterans who were both Villanova alum and current Villanova students.





# GO ARMY, BEAT NAVY



On 17 November 2023, our cadets competed against the Navy ROTC Midshipmen in our annual Army vs. Navy flag football game. This long-standing tradition brings the two ROTC programs together in a friendly competition. This suspenseful game had everyone at the edge of their seats. In a play in the final minutes of the game, the Army ROTC cadets came out on top beating NROTC 14-12 for the second year in a row. Go Army!



“The Army Navy football game is a fun time to have friendly competition between the two

programs. We don't get to interact too often so it's a fun way to go off into Thanksgiving break. I had a lot of fun competing with my friends in AROTC, two motivated groups going head to head that are competitive is always fun, even if it gets a little chippy. I loved being coached by MIDN Lopez as well. I think it's important because once we graduate we will be working so closely and towards and for the cause it's a good way to see the other side and bond with future colleagues.” MIDN 3/C Patrick Sams

# 2 December 2023

## Dining Out

On 2 December 2023, AROTC hosted our annual **Dining Out** at the Sheraton in Wilmington, DE. This event is an opportunity for socialization amongst the cadets of the whole Battalion as well as a time to honor the seniors who have received their components and branches for Commissioning as Second Lieutenants!

Before the evening began, cadets had the opportunity to talk with one another, guests, cadre, and our guest of honor, Sergeant Major Brian M. Disque, U.S. Army. With the traditional Grog ceremony kicking off the night, our seniors offered a series of toasts. This was followed by an Italian-style dinner before hearing from the Battalion Commander, Professor of Military Science, and guest speaker.



We continued by honoring the MS4s, presenting pins of their branch insignia. The evening concluded with cadets taking to the dance floor and CPT Frisch dancing to Beyonce's "Single Ladies." Upon leaving, each cadet was given a glass bearing the Dauntless Battalion crest. Overall, this was a successful night and all the cadets are looking forward to next year's!



# ON CAMPUS...

## RECRUITING EVENTS



## COLOR GUARD



## INTRAMURALS



# ...& IN THE COMMUNITY



**St. Thomas of Villanova Day of Service:** Cadets volunteered at the Medal of Honor Grove at Valley Forge. Here they broke down old benches and built new benches for the Grove.

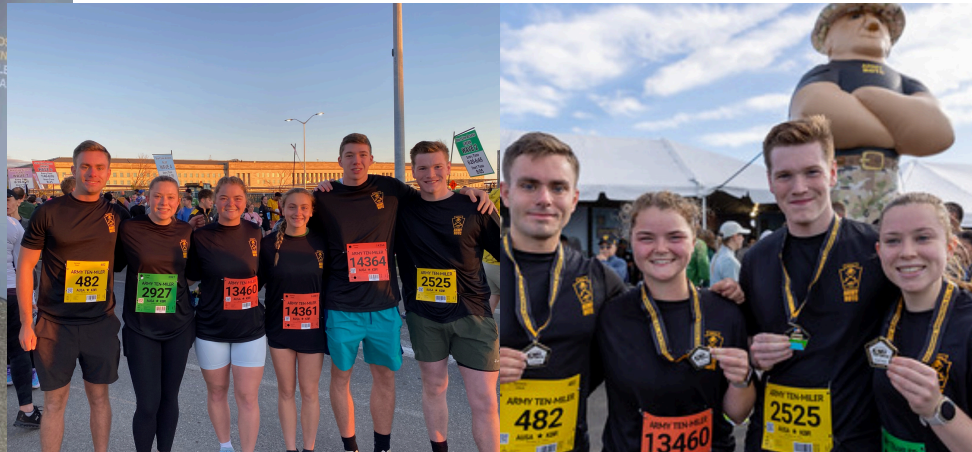


**March on Hunger:** Cadets filled their rucks with hundreds of canned goods and rucked to a nearby food pantry in this March on Hunger. Cans were collected by local high school basketball teams.

# CADETS ON THE RUN



On 8 October 2023, cadets from Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie company represented the Dauntless Battalion as the team ran in the annual Army Ten-Miler in Washington D.C.



On 19 November 2023, CDT Chandler ran the Philadelphia Marathon



On 29 March, 2024, some of our cadets ran the Philadelphia Love Run Half Marathon!

# MILITARY SCIENCE LABS



The Army ROTC curriculum features weekly labs at West Chester University. Cadets are taught tactics, land navigation, weapons assembly, and field craft skills. Cadets are separated into platoons and given weekly leadership rotations of Platoon Leader, Platoon Sergeant, and Squad Leaders. In addition to regular labs, there are two spring Super Labs where cadets stay overnight and spend 1-2 days executing tactical missions.



# CONGRATULATIONS SENIORS!



**Connor Nachurski**

Active Duty

Cyber Corps

BOLC: Ft. Eisenhower, GA



**Jorssy Perez**

U.S. Army Reserves

Military Police

BOLC: Ft. Leonard Wood, MO



**Colin Roche**

Active Duty

Engineer Corps

BOLC: Ft. Leonard Wood, MO



## Samantha Wolter

Active Duty

Nurse Corps

BOLC: Ft. Sam Houston, TX



## Charlie Zagdanski

Active Duty

Military Intelligence branch detail

Field Artillery

BOLC: Ft. Sill, OK

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

1LTs **Dorothy Polk** (EN) and **Trooper Thornton** (IN), both from the **class of 2022**, are gearing up for the combined arms live-fire exercise at Saber Strike 24 on Bemowo Piskie Training Ground, Poland. Saber Strike 24 demonstrates NATO's ability to effectively deploy forces through Europe. Polk and Thornton are both assigned to 2nd Cavalry Regiment forward stationed at Grafenwohr Training Area! 1LT Polk is a Sapper Platoon Leader for 3PLT, Beast TRP, RES, preparing her squads to conduct explosive breaching during the CALFEX. 1LT Thornton is the CUOPS Officer for 3rd SQDN serving as Battle Captain during the exercise.





<https://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/find-your-path/army-officers/rotc.html>



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CAN  
BE**

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@dauntlessbn\_rotc



For more information about Villanova ROTC or the Dauntless Battalion contact Keith Karbel 610-490-7035 [krkarbel@widener.edu](mailto:krkarbel@widener.edu)

<https://www1.villanova.edu/university/liberal-arts-sciences/programs/rotc.html>