



UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Army Reserve Officer
Training Corps



Alumni Newsletter
Fall 2024

Fall 2024 Events

October 11-13

Army 10-Miler, Washington, D.C.

October 18-20

Ranger Challenge, Fort Dix, NJ

October 26

Super STX, Ethan Allen Firing Range

Spring 2025 Events

March 29

Super PLTX, Camp Ethan Allen Training Site, Jericho, VT

April 4

Staff Ride, Location TBD

April 10-13

Combined Leadership Training Exercise, FT Devens, MA

April 26

Cadet Awards Ceremony, UVM Davis Center

May 17

Commissioning, Trapp Family Lodge, Stowe, VT

We produce world class leaders that are capable of thinking critically and independently in any environment.

ALUMNI PRESIDENT WELCOME



Ladies and Gentlemen,

Vermont in autumn always evokes in me a bittersweet sense of nostalgia as I reflect on my time at the University of Vermont. Watching returning Cadets greet each other with smiles and hugs never fails to make me smile. As does the palpable buzz of nervous-excitement from the incoming first-year Cadets. I'm sure many of you feel the same way as I do, appreciating the start of a new academic year at our alma mater and the tremendous potential our Cadets, new and returning, hold. As President of the UVM ROTC Alumni Association, I endeavor to help ensure our Cadets are taken care of not only during their academic journey but also as part of the Catamount Family for life.

In that regard, I am happy to report that the Cadets have continued to excel. Our Catamounts can be seen achieving academic honors, graduating from Air Assault and Mountain Warfare school, competing in the international Sandhurst Military Skills Competition at West Point, and completing selective internships in the United States and abroad – just to name a few. I can speak on behalf of the entire Alumni Association when I say that we are truly proud and impressed by their outstanding accomplishments.

Every new academic year brings the sweet promise of great possibility, both for our Cadets and members of the Alumni Association. I could not be more excited at the inevitable many and varied accomplishments our Cadets will no doubt continue to achieve over the course of the coming months.

Catamounts Lead the Way!

- Sarah Griffin, Class of 2012
UVM ROTC Alumni Association President

COMMANDER'S UPDATE



Dear Green Mountain Battalion Alumni,

As the GMB wraps up another academic year and moves into the fall of 2024, I'd like to take a moment to inform all of you of the highlights, challenges, and changes our program had experienced last year and discuss a few initiatives going into the future. I hope all of you are doing well, and I appreciate the continued support to our magnificent program.

Last year was one of the most successful for the Green Mountain Battalion since my arrival three years ago. In October 2023, our program came in third place for the prestigious MacArthur Award, which is awarded to the best of the 42 programs in the Northeastern region of the United States. The criterion for winning this award is based on Cadet achievement in academics, Cadet Summer Training, extracurricular activities, demonstrated level of responsibility, and much more. Although we came in third place, the cadets clearly proved that they are among the best in the country. Our Ranger Challenge team also showed how well our Cadets stack up to their peers by earning an invitation to the Sandhurst Military Skills Competition for the first time in our program's history. Competing against the best teams in the world, our Ranger Challenge team placed 38th out of 50+ teams from the U.S., Europe, Asia, and South America. I was amazed at the level of perseverance and grit that our team displayed over the 4-day event at West Point, NY, in April 2024.

As all of you are aware, one of the most consistent aspects of military service is change. The cadre and staff at the GMB is not immune to this. That said, I'd like to provide an update on the personnel changes that've taken place in the last few semesters. Last year, we welcomed MAJ Anthony Thompson, the new Executive Officer; MAJ John Lescure, Vermont National Guard Liaison; LTC (R) Roger Drury, our new Human Resource Assistant; Mr. Joshua Lake, our new Logistics Technician; and Dr. Sarah Griffin, our new contracted instructor (and our alumni president). The addition of these talented individuals will help ensure continued success of our wonderful Cadets.

Before I close, I'd like to give an update on the actions we've taken in the wake of the tragic passing of Cadet Madison Saltsburg. I had the honor of escorting Madie's parents, Michelle and Toby, to the UVM commencement ceremony and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences where Madie's parents received her posthumous degree. I can't thank the university enough for honoring one of the best Cadets this program has ever had. In addition, Madie's memorial fund has done very well. In accordance with Madie's parents' wishes, we've been able to donate a substantial amount of money to the Climbing Resource Access Group (CRAG) VT, a place Madie loved, where a climbing route has been named after her. The proceeds from the fund will also be used to finance an award in Madie's honor that we will add to the annual awards ceremony beginning in the spring of 2025. Lastly, we are working to get Madie a posthumous commission. More to follow on this effort.

Thank you all for your continued support to our talented Cadets.

Catamounts Lead the Way!

- Lieutenant Colonel Travis McCracken
Professor of Military Science



We are so thankful for the support of our ROTC alumni who give each year. If you'd like to join them in supporting our Cadets, you can go online to go.uvm.edu/giverotc. **A gift of any size makes a difference for our Cadets.**

AWARDS CEREMONY

On May 4th approximately 150 Cadets, families, and friends of the Green Mountain Battalion gathered in the Grand Maple Ballroom at the Davis Center on the UVM campus to celebrate Cadet achievements at the Annual Cadet Awards Ceremony. Congratulations to the following recipients:

The George C. Marshall Award: **Cadet Emily Lieb**

The Pallas Athene Award: **Nominated Cadet Margaret Haley**

The Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association Award: **Cadet Caden Beamis**

The American Legion Military Excellence Award: **Cadets Emily Lieb and Jack Haley**

The American Legion Military Scholastic Award: **Cadets Finn McGillivray and Dominic Monachino**

The Association of the United States Army Award: posthumously awarded to: **Cadet Madison Saltsburg**

The Daughters of the American Revolution Award: **Cadet Shanon Boston**

The Military Order of the Purple Heart Leadership Award: **Cadet Natalie Achilles**

The Society of the War of 1812 Award: **Cadet Judd Gourley**

The Sons of the American Revolution Award: **Cadet Michael Carvajal**

Veterans of Foreign Wars Award: **Cadets Elyse Lightfoot, Christopher Meehan, Roy Urbina, and Michael Cammarata**

The United States Army Association Spirit Award: **Cadet Joseph Ganc**

The Battalion Commander's Award for Community Service: **Cadet Connor Lidofsky**

The Sergeant York Award: **Cadet Amelia Rodee**

The Department of the Army Superior Cadet Decoration Cadet Command Award: **Cadets Abby Gratz, Judd Gourley, Caden Beamis, and Aidan Williams**

The Zabriskie Cup: **Cadet Molly Ramirez**

Distinguished Military Graduate: **Cadets Ryan Dowling, Margaret Haley, Emily Lieb, Finn McGillivray, Molly Ramirez, and Aidan Williams**

The Cadet of the Year Award: **Cadet Margaret Haley**

ALUMNI UPDATES

CPT Stephen Bissainthe ('18) recently became Commander of Bravo battery 2-11 Field artillery in the 25th infantry division in sunny Hawaii.

LTC (ret.) Roger Drury ('91) retired from the full-time Army workforce and the Vermont National Guard in 2021. He currently works for UVM ROTC as the Human Resource Assistant. He enjoys spending time with his wife and three children and is an avid beekeeper.

MAJ Sarah (Hahn) Griffin, Ph.D. ('12), Alumni Board President, is a Contractor/APMS at UVM ROTC. Dr. Griffin will be teaching the MS I class and is the Leadership Minor Advisor.

MAJs Erickson Krogh ('14) and **Julie (Silverberg) Krogh ('16)** were promoted to Major on 8JUN24.

MAJ John Lescure ('09), is the C Co 3-126 Air Ambulance Commander in the Vermont Army National Guard and is an APMS/OPSO at UVM ROTC.

MAJ David Johnston ('08) recently relinquished command of C Co 3-126 Air Ambulance after a successful 4-year command and Middle East deployment conducting MEDEVAC Operations across six countries. He now serves as the Operations Officer for the Garrison Support Command in the Vermont Army National Guard.

Please send your achievements, updates, and photos to Valerie.Pallotta@uvm.edu

We are trying to reach as many alumni as possible. If you know an alum who is not receiving this newsletter, please have them contact Valerie at Valerie.Pallotta@uvm.edu.

COMMISSIONING

On May 18th, 11 Cadets were commissioned as Second Lieutenants at the beautiful Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe. It was an honor to have Brigadier General Sarah Albrycht as the distinguished guest speaker. BG Albrycht is the Commandant, United States Army, Military Police School; and Chief, United States Army Military Police Regiment. She is a native Vermonter hailing from Bennington, and was a Distinguished Military Graduate from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. BG Albrycht shared three lessons she learned throughout her career: 1.) Care about your Soldiers. 2.) Don't try to go it alone, and 3.) Do what's right, no matter the situation. Hold yourself to the same standard you hold your Soldiers to. Lastly, she advised the class to "make your own story one that you are proud of...Take the foundation of your time as a Cadet and continue to build upon it. Our profession is one dedicated to constant improvement and being all you can be."



BG Albrycht

The class of 2024 Wadsworth Ramsey Smith award was presented to 2LT Molly Ramirez. This Award is presented to the Second Lieutenant in the program who has displayed the highest level of military leadership, knowledge, and commitment to the program throughout the course of his or her enrollment. The recipient is determined by a vote conducted by the senior class. Of note, this class underwent three rounds of voting in order to break ties for the nominee. This fact illustrates the quality of character and leadership shared among this cohort of new Lieutenants.

Congratulations to the Green Mountain Battalion Class of 2024 Commissionees!

2LT Shanon Kathleen Boston, B.A., Global Studies, UVM — Active Duty — Transportation; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Gregg-Adams, VA

2LT Michael Paul Cammarata Jr., B.S., Business Administration, Saint Michael's College — Maine National Guard — Military Intelligence; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Huachuca, AZ

2LT Aidan Jean Chretien, B.A., Mathematics and Statistics, UVM — Massachusetts National Guard — Military Intelligence; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Huachuca, AZ

2LT Ryan Henry Dowling, B.S., Business Administration, UVM — *Distinguished Military Graduate* — Active Duty — Infantry; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Moore, GA

2LT Margaret Conway Haley, B.S., Biochemistry, UVM — *Distinguished Military Graduate* — Active Duty — Medical Services; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Sam Houston, TX

2LT Emily Christine Lieb, B.S. Biology, B.A. Political Science, Middlebury College — *Distinguished Military Graduate* — Active Duty — Field Artillery; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Sill, OK

2LT Daniel J. Matyszczyk, B.S. Biology, UVM — Vermont National Guard — Military Intelligence; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Huachuca, AZ

2LT Finn James Keating McGillivray, B.A. Political Science, Saint Michael's College — *Distinguished Military Graduate* — Active Duty — Judge Advocate General Corps; Education Delay; University of Virginia Law School

2LT Duncan Andrew McGrade, B.A. Political Science, UVM — Vermont National Guard — Infantry; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Moore, GA

2LT Landen Wayne Nipper, B.A. Health and Society, UVM — Vermont National Guard — Armor; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Moore, GA

2LT Molly Brita Ramirez, B.S. Electrical Engineering, UVM — *Distinguished Military Graduate* — Active Duty — Aviation; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Novosel, AL

2LT Lee Justin Tang, B.S. Professional Nursing, UVM — Active Duty — Nurse Corps; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Sam Houston, TX

2LT Aidan John Williams, B.S. Mechanical Engineering, UVM — *Distinguished Military Graduate* — Active Duty — Corps of Engineers; Attending Basic Officer Leader Course, Fort Leonard Wood, MO

Select photos on back page. For full Commissioning photo album, please visit go.uvm.edu/rotcphotos

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

In 2023, UVM Alumni MAJ David Johnston '08, CPT Kyle Elliott '17, and CPT Samantha Lucas '16 deployed together to Iraq for nine months returning earlier this year. MAJ Johnston and CPT Elliott are members of the Vermont National Guard where they fly HH-60 MEDEVAC helicopters while CPT Lucas is in the Maryland National Guard and flies CH-47 Chinook Heavy Lift helicopters. Each Soldier shared some information and memories below from the deployment.

Pictured l to r: MAJ Johnston, CPT Lucas, CPT Elliott



MAJ Johnston

Scope of job: Served as the MEDEVAC Commander overseeing 107 MEDEVAC Soldiers at six different locations throughout Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Kuwait.

Favorite mission: All MEDEVAC missions are important; however, the most rewarding missions were flying Soldiers who were injured during one-way UAS attacks on forward outposts.

Favorite memory: The fondest long duration 'memory' I have of deployment, is the strong bond that I built with all the Soldiers I deployed with.

Funny story: The funniest thing that happened on deployment was when the firefighting foam system went off in the 80-year-old Fort Sill hangar and buried multiple aircraft in feet of white foam, events like that require you to have a good sense of humor. Bonus: GMB ROTC helped me learn how to effectively work with people from all different backgrounds and viewpoints. I was ahead of my 2LT peer group moving onto active duty because my UVM experience prepared me to effectively work with everyone, not just individuals who thought exactly the way I did.

CPT Lucas

Scope of job: I served as the Chinook Company Commander overseeing 65 Soldiers across three locations.

Favorite mission: My favorite mission was getting to work with partners beyond conventional Army units. One mission that stands out was getting to participate in a repatriation mission of a child. This mission had one of the biggest impacts and was not one I was anticipating getting to participate in.

Favorite memory: While it would have been nice to not have to go in to bunkers as frequently as we did, a favorite memory was doing sing-a-longs in the bunkers at Al Asad with my Soldiers. It kept folks' minds off of what was going on and made for a lot of laughs. Feel free to check out the Spotify Playlist "BUNKER BEATZ".

Funny story: My first interaction with MAJ Johnston for this mobilization was immediately following a command and staff sync the first night we arrived at Fort Cavazos for our mobilization training. Being in the National Guard, I had a digicam flight vest from my unit and they no longer field it with the new issue. Upon seeing me in mix matched camo, MAJ Johnston looked me right in

the eye and said, "You look like a Trash Panda". The name stuck for much of the deployment, and we had a good time laughing about it around our Active Duty counterparts who didn't think it was as funny.

Bonus: The Army is a small place and while often times it separates you from good friends, sometimes it brings you back together and you get to make awesome connections. Having a crew of GMB folks on the deployment was a lot of fun!

CPT Elliott

Scope of job: Served as a Platoon Leader and the Unit Movement Officer for a MEDEVAC Company stationed at Al Asad, Iraq, and Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

Favorite mission: Oversaw 42 MEDEVAC missions carrying 34 patients and hundreds of pounds of medical supplies.

Favorite memory: Aside from helping those on their worst days, training with NATO partners was a top highlight.

Favorite meal: Chicken tender nights were always the best!

Bonus: I am currently serving as the aviation maintenance officer for the VT ARNG. If you need a job, reach out ASAP!

PHOTO GALLERY

Awards Ceremony



Commissioning

