



GATEWAY BATTALION



Spring 2020 Gateway Gazette



Photo from the 2020 commissioning ceremony

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Letter from the Outgoing Cadet Battalion Commander



Cadets, Alumni, Family, and Friends of the Gateway Battalion,

I hope this spring Gazette finds you all in good health amidst this virus. While our semester was thrown a bit off the rails with the sudden migration of in-person training to completely virtual, your efforts over the past few months to continue your training have not gone unnoticed. I am beyond impressed with you all for seeing those hurdles in front of you and having the courage to meet those challenges head-on. Your commitment to better yourselves in your journey to becoming future Army officers was evident in your motivation to maintain physical fitness, commitment to your studies despite a sudden change in learning platform, and your open-mindedness as we all navigated our first ever virtual FTX.

You all have achieved higher heights than I even expected (and I have high expectations) and for that you all should give you and your battle buddies a pat on the back. However, the work doesn't stop once you take that last final. Bettering yourself is a constant process that requires you to commit daily in order to achieve your goals. With that in mind, make sure you all are staying focused on not just maintaining, but improving your physical fitness. After you work your body, also remember to work your minds. Review the doctrine you learnt this past semester, ask your chain of command questions, practice individual tasks, and do whatever else you need to do to ensure you are prepared for the coming school year. With all this free time locked up in quarantine, I know there is a special book that is dying to be read instead of collecting dust (hint: it's the Ranger Handbook).

Since I did not get a chance to speak to you all in person, I wanted to take a moment here to acknowledge the rising leadership for the coming year. You all are the ones in charge now, don't take that lightly. You have the responsibility and obligation to ensure the success of the cadets under you. Although you all will not have the typical advanced camp training to reflect upon, you still have the tools and the training you have received throughout your 3 years to be able to adequately prepare and teach the Gateway cadets what they need to know to succeed. I have all the confidence in the world that you all will further the accomplishments of this battalion and continue to be leaders of character to which the younger cadets can look up to.

I am going to deeply miss each and every one of you that make up this amazing battalion. It has been a significant highlight of my 4 years of college to be able to develop as a leader amongst such inspirational and hard-working individuals from all levels of the organization. The Army is a small world though, so this is not a "goodbye" but rather an "I'll see you later." I look forward to our paths crossing in the future and wish you all the best of luck in your futures.

Wishing you all good health in the months to come.
To the West!

Madison Schneider, Outgoing Cadet Battalion Commander

Letter from the Incoming Cadet Battalion Commander

Cadets, alumni, family, and supporters of the Gateway Battalion,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones safe, healthy, and staying sane as we continue to live out history. This past semester at Gateway has certainly been one for the books. Not only did we adapt and overcome amidst a global pandemic, but our cadets excelled in rigorous training both in person and online. Our MSI cadets immersed in the world of Army ROTC, discerning the balance of being a student and a cadet and building a sturdy foundation for their next three years. Our MSII cadets took bold steps into leadership roles, serving as mentors for new cadets and preparing themselves mentally, physically, and tactically for the exciting year to come. For the MSIIIs, six semesters of training culminated in a challenging, but critical year of leadership development and evaluation. Our MSIV cadets carefully crafted the legacy that they are leaving behind as they go forth into the United States Army. Each and every cadet, from the brand new MSI to the seasoned MSIV, has grown into a stronger, more competent, and self-aware future leader. For this, we should all be proud.

Undeniably, the COVID-19 situation altered this semester in unforgettable ways. After spring break, cadets did not return to campus. Forest Park was no longer filled with sleepy cadets at 0600 Monday-Wednesday. Proud cadets in uniform were no longer listening intently to in person lectures in university classrooms around St. Louis. Instead, we trained physically and academically on virtual platforms. PT looked like recording runs on Strava and benching bags of bird seed, classes took place on the infamous Zoom platform, and ROTC training shifted to Kahoot and Google Slides. But, importantly, we still trained. As all good Army leaders do, cadre and MSIV leadership at Gateway Battalion adapted and problem-solved to safely and effectively complete the mission. As Major Betson reminded us all, as future Army officers, responding to COVID-19 will not be our last experience of crisis management. The U.S. Army is indeed made up of agile and adaptive leaders, well-versed in reshaping means to meet the mission end. As cadre and MSIVs rapidly shifted to a virtual field training exercise (VFTX), the example was being set at Gateway.

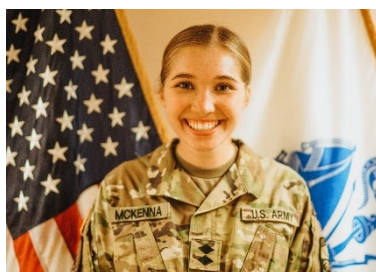
To the outgoing MSIVs, I would like to express my deep gratitude for the impact you have had on Gateway Battalion. You all have showed us what an unrelenting work ethic looks like. You have mentored us in everything from patrol bases to personal tact, and you have served us as dedicated, invested, and personal leaders. I am so beyond thankful for the lessons you have taught each of us and the imprint you have left on our character. I have full confidence that each of you will apply the knowledge and skills acquired as you embark on the next phase of your journey. Continue to positively influence those around you and never forget that you always have a home here at Gateway.

To all Gateway cadets, together we have persevered through a roller coaster of a semester full of surprises, struggles, and success. I am beyond excited to reunite and resume our ROTC journey in the fall semester. Allow yourself the time and space to decompress from the year while envisioning how you will prepare yourself to thrive next semester. Come back fired up and ready to train!

Lastly, a sincere thank you to the alumni, families, and friends of Gateway who continue to support our program. It is your contributions and your care that empower us to continue paving the way from cadet to officer for hundreds of ROTC students. Thank you all for the part you play in developing the future leaders of the United States Army.

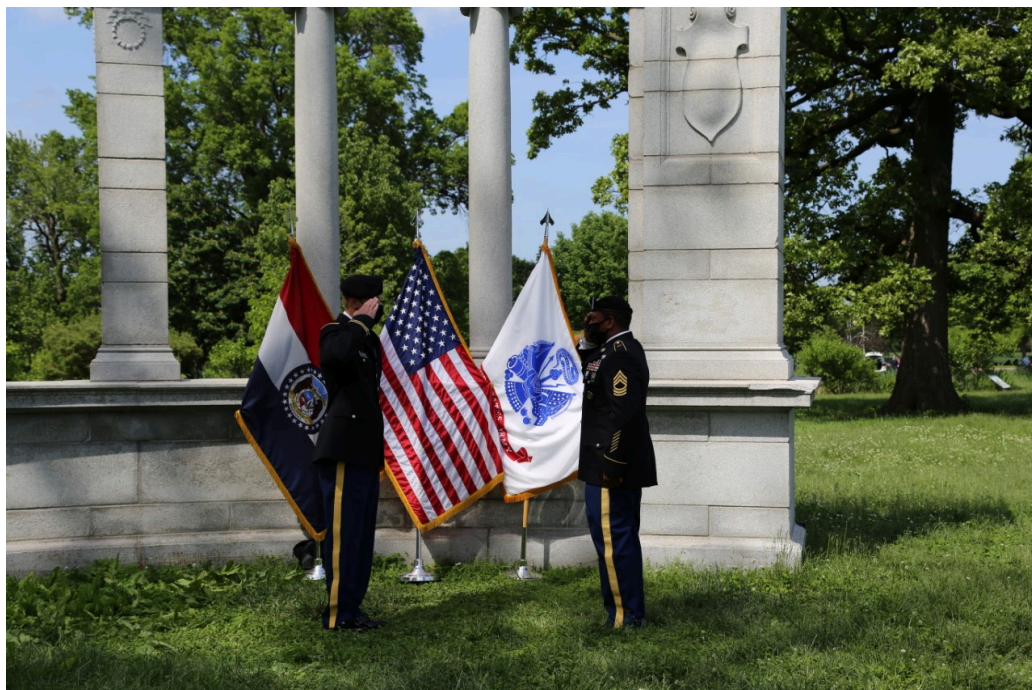
Gateway – To the West!
Take care,

Summer McKenna, Cadet Battalion Commander



The 102st Class of Gateway Commissioning Officers

2LT Tristan Boomer - Cyber
2LT Nica Burch - Ordnance
2LT Michaela Cohen - Medical Services
2LT James Crosby - Signal
2LT Darius Davenport - Cyber
2LT Justin DiCarlo - Adjutant General
2LT Ariana Fischer - Signal
2LT Marshall Green - Infantry
2LT Canaan Hancock - Medical Services
2LT Cienna Jordan - Adjutant General
2LT Patrick Kristin - Military Intelligence branch detail Infantry
2LT Trent McPherson - Medical Specialist Corps
2LT Adam Messer - Cyber
2LT Sean Rogers - Engineer branch detail Infantry
2LT Trevor Scaringello - Quartermaster
2LT Madison Schneider - Engineer
2LT Caroline Sit - Medical Services
2LT Elijah Smith - Transportation
2LT Demontrell Ursery - Chemical Corps
2LT Graham Webb - Cyber
2LT Nathaniel Yando - Transportation



SPRING AT THE BATTALION

From Ireland to Gateway

CDT Shane Gavin *rising MSII*



A benefit to spending a year studying abroad is the opportunity to discover yourself while being immersed in a different culture. Leaving behind the western Irish seaboard with its rugged mountain ranges, posing as majestic sentinels over my home village to the banks of the mighty Mississippi river; I embarked on a journey of self-discovery. Joining ROTC at UMSL meant that this year would prove to be an anomaly compared to the typical experiences of my European peers studying abroad.

I joined and was welcomed into the Gateway Battalion and the US Army with the same enthusiasm as how other Irishmen did in preceding centuries with goals of seeking thrill and adventure. Experiencing the regimented lifestyle that ROTC demands has both shaped my character and raised my potential. Many college students do not have standards for work, relationships, and academics. That is why I believe that it is necessary to surround yourself with people who compel you to have higher standards. I was fortunate to be surrounded by cadre and cadets who embody the values professed in the Gateway watch words A.R.C.H. The self-discipline required to serve as a cadet lends itself to a healthy academic and social balance. The challenges that presented itself towards the latter half of the semester was met with ingenuity from cadre and cadets of all levels. As demonstrated by the success of our virtual Spring FTX, cadets are fostered to improvise, adapt, and overcome the hurdles presented before us. Adversity is required to build character in leaders. The greatest resource of the US Army are its soldiers and I was grateful to be counted amongst them. I now return to Ireland having discovered a heightened awareness of my possibilities while having met the ultimate group of motivated people that I now call my close friends.

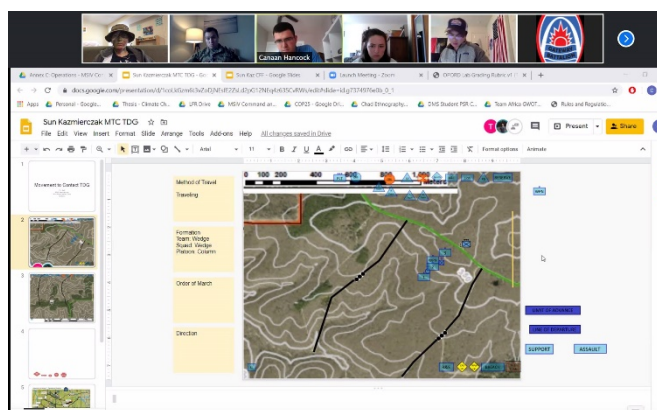
Life as an MSII

CDT Kathryn Porter *rising MSIII*

This semester began like any other with 0515 wake ups on the first day of class, post-PT Platoon breakfast, and battle drills in the mud and rain. As an MSII, this semester pushed me to delve deeper into what it means to be an Army Officer by analyzing different types of leadership, understanding the principles of effective communication, and receiving a more thorough introduction to basic military operations and battle tactics.

As Spring Break came to a close, so did the normalcy of class and ROTC due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Very quickly, my bedroom back in Madison, WI became the comfiest Patrol Base I've ever been in, the MREs tasted a lot more like home cooking, and the new OCPs were slippers, pajama bottoms, and a collared shirt. Adapting ROTC to meet the needs of the current global pandemic was clearly not an easy feat; however, I felt as though this program did not skip a beat. Through virtual labs and the VFTX, not only did I expand my knowledge of what it meant to be a situationally adaptive Team Leader, but I got unique insight into life as a Squad Leader, Platoon Sergeant, and Platoon Leader that I never would have gotten as an MSII during an in-person training exercise.

Above all, this semester and its adaptations to coronavirus truly highlighted my favorite part about this ROTC program: the community. Even in times of extreme uncertainty, this group of cadets and cadre learned how to rely on the strengths of one another and put others' needs in front of their own. I have never witnessed a better example of a cohesive, efficient, and passionate team. I am thrilled to have gotten the opportunity to be a part of Gateway during this crazy but successful semester, and I'm excited to continue its amazing legacy as a MSIII in the fall.



An Unprecedented MS3 Year

CDT Leighanna Johnston *rising MSIV*

You don't know what you have until it's gone. Even the things that you consciously appreciate become even more coveted when they are taken away. I was completely unaware the last time that I saw the sun rise over the Gateway Arch during PT last semester. As the COVID-19 pandemic has taken hold, our health, comradery, and freedom have all been shaken, but not broken. I miss my freely chosen, weekly obligation, to get up and do physical training at 0600 with my fellow cadets. Although the circumstances of our training have changed, we continue to accomplish our goals, and remain guided by Gateway Battalion's trusty watch words. To us, A.R.C.H. is more than just an iconic part of the cityscape. The words Academics, Respect, Character, and Honor guide our mission, and are most important to remember in difficult times like these.

Distance doesn't negate the fact that academic performance is top priority. We all have school to juggle, but nailing down opords and missions is still important. As MS3s we need to be secure in our skills, regardless of the current environment, because the time to teach others is right around the corner.

As plans and means of communication are altered, it's important to respect all the effort put into making the best of a bad situation. Respect for peers and cadre doesn't stop when there is a screen between us.

We all know that character is truly developed and tested when no one is around. What a better way to put our character to the test than a little quarantine and social distancing. How you spend your time preparing for the day when we all come together again speaks heavily to your discipline and resilience.

These circumstances require all of us to set aside our stress and fear, and still act with integrity. We are living through history, and we owe it to those who have gone before us to continue to uphold honor and rise to the occasion



VFTX Exemplifies Innovation in Adversity

CDT Sean Hartke *rising MSIV*

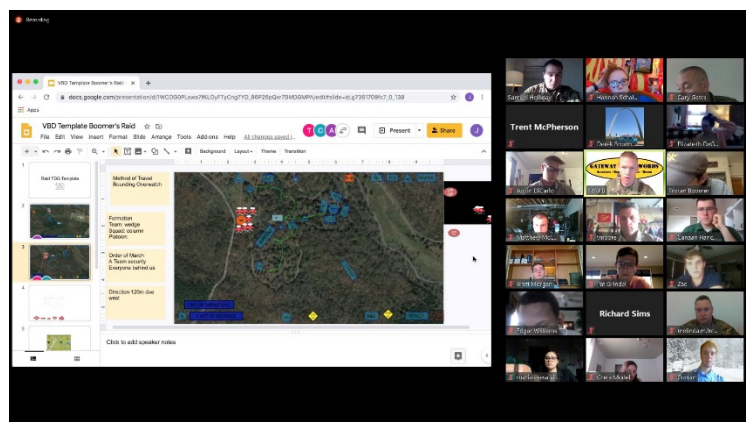
After you've been doing the same training and the same routine for awhile, you probably realize it's best to buckle-down, get comfortable, and get after it. Most people do. But when you've been at the grindstone, and you feel confident, and you're *still* at the grindstone, and you get to start asking dangerous questions such as: 'Why?' or 'When do I get to use any of this stuff?,' maybe you hope for something to go wrong, so you can *do your job*. And I imagine there are precious few other professions whose workforce wants, so badly, to throw itself headlong into adversity.

The ARMY may not be the world's most *proactive* institution, but, by God, do we specialize in damage control. So I was thrilled to hear our battalion would be using the VBD (virtual battle drill) for our Spring training, and now, that other companies in the Brigade have taken interest.

The base-game, combined with the dissemination of company-level OPORDs, created an environment where the drills weren't just drills, but every operation was part of a narrative. As opposed to our initial trials of the wargame, not only did these games measure performance on individual tactics, but it was clear in the course of operations that each had a specific purpose—elevated far above the platoon level to a *grand strategy*. And the end-result of our collaboration was engaging, sophisticated, and challenging. No, the VBD may not count for accessions points, but I look forward to Summer training.

Meanwhile, we have a unique opportunity to *take advantage* of this adversity I mentioned, and exercise virtue. COVID-19 may limit our ability to train or to see family and friends, but no plague or person can prevent you from innovating, and especially not from conforming each word and deed to the benefit of your fellow human-beings because that's our job.

Marcus Aurelius, on 'Nature' (*Meditations*, Bk. 4, Par. 1):
Hindrances to its progress are merely converted into matter for its own use. It is like a bonfire mastering a heap of rubbish, which would have quenched a feeble glow; but its fiery blaze quickly assimilates the load, consumes it, and flames the higher for it.



Spring in Photos



Receiving the Macarthur Award



Field lab at Forest Park



Maps ready for the VFTX



Virtual TCCC training

Support Information

Donations in support of the Gateway Battalion which are made through Washington University are fully tax deductible:

You can make checks payable to:

“Washington University -
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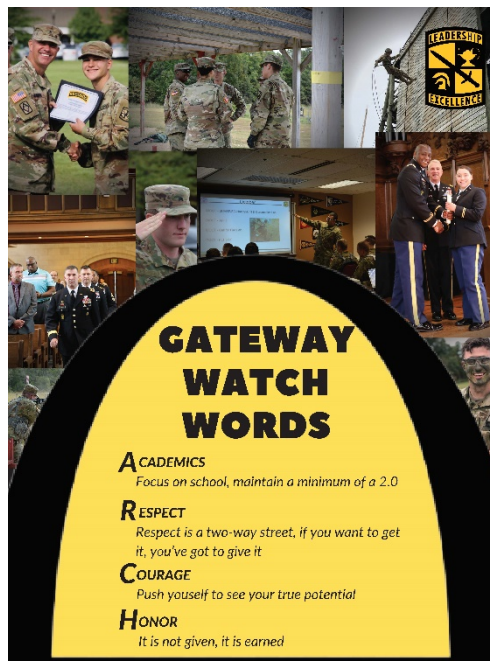
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Editor's Notes

This past semester was another incredible one from the Gateway Battalion. We were faced with unforeseen challenges but acted creatively and adapted to a new training environment. Cadets pushed themselves and took another step forward to becoming 2LTs. The newly commissioned officers from this battalion set the bar extremely high, my class will strive to not only meet the precedent they set but push it even further. During these stressed times I hope everyone can read this gazette and taken in the stories and statements as a source of inspirational leadership this battalion develops.

CDT Kristian Nilsen, Incoming Cadet S5