

# Freshman Year Experience

Written By: MIDN 4/C Jack Schoonover

I came to campus 4 days after graduating NSI, and the very last thing I wanted to do was go back to the military lifestyle. Yet there I was, a crisp Saturday morning at 0500 sharp, getting yelled at again. That embodies how freshman year goes. It's a whole lot of learning to do stuff you don't want to do and learning to enjoy it. Maybe, in the moment, it sucks, but looking back you'll always be glad you did it. No one wants to wake up and go to PT at 0530, but when you take your final PFT and realize how far you've come, those workouts are so worth it. 4/C year was a lot of that learning and a lot of putting in work. From getting an OIC position in your first division to your first naval science lectures to getting through a year of knowledge checkouts, freshman year certainly brings a lot to learn and sometimes it even seems like too much.

## Issue 1

Released in March: LT Silberstein Spotlight, Color Guard, Notre Dame Leadership Conference

## Issue 2

Freshman Experience (p. 1-3), Commanders' Cup (p.3), Dining In (p.3), UW Northwest Navy (p. 4-5)



**Edited By: MIDN 2/C Emily Richardson**

# THE LOOKOUT

Issue 2 Spring 2026



(L-R) MIDN 2/C Richardson, 4/C Huelskamp, 4/C Macias, 2/C Chamness and 2/C Joyce pose with Buzz after presenting the Colors.

## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT: MIDN REPRESENT FOR GT BASEBALL MILITARY APPRECIATION WEEKEND

## Freshman Year Experience (cont.)

Yet, looking back, I am incredibly impressed when I think about just how much we have learned as a class. In CDR McNeil's Intro to Naval Science class, we got our first glimpse at what the fleet was like and what exactly we all signed up for, not to mention the priceless wisdom he was able to share with us about ethics, leadership, and all the qualities we are expected to start developing as future naval officers. Here also was our biggest chance as a class to start coming together.



MIDN 4/C Toledo reciting knowledge from the MIDN training Manual at NSO

It is amazing just how quickly you can bond with people who you share such unique experiences with. Starting with whispers to each other in the hallways of NSO to grumbings in the early grueling mornings of new student PT to the liveliness of the classroom before and after class, it is clear to me that one of the greatest things I have developed out of my freshman year is my connection to the other 4/C Midshipmen.

The second semester was when all came together. Starting off strong with the continuation of new student PT, the complaints we used to share with each other quickly turned to laughter and jokes as we got to know each other better and became comfortable with encouraging each other and pushing each other to be their very best every morning, no matter how bad the workout was. Now that everyone was more comfortable with the unit, transitions to new divisions and new roles were smooth and only brought us as a class closer to the rest of the unit that had been there that much longer than us. In LT Silberstein's naval history, we quickly learned to work together and communicate as a class to maximize our success on her daily quizzes and became comfortable speaking for extended periods of time in front of audiences. As a 4/C class we proudly crushed every other class in the singing of the service hymn, earning the utmost respect out of LT Guild and proving our motivation by passing almost every midshipman through a new and more strenuous knowledge checkout system.



All MIDN 4/C proudly recite the Navy Hymn in front of the Battalion at Drill

## Freshman Year Experience (cont.)

Overall, I look back and can only appreciate the structure NROTC has put into my life, surrounding me with other driven individuals and setting me up to be the best version of myself. I am glad I have the opportunity to go through with this group of midshipmen, as we are all ready to move to our 3/C year.

## Commanders' Cup

Written By: MIDN 4/C Blaze Williams

This month, our Battalion brought together all branches of Georgia Tech ROTC to compete in a tournament of physical events to see which branch would get to proudly display the joint trophy in their Wardroom all year. I competed in the 100 meter sprint and the 4x100 relay and won both events, and we also had a basketball game toward the end that was very competitive with all the teams staying close throughout. During volleyball, I helped play the music with MIDN Schoonover, which added to the atmosphere and made it feel like everyone was really enjoying the moment while still competing. Although it got intense at times, it remained respectful throughout, and it was rewarding to represent the Navy alongside other future officers. The cookout afterward was a highlight, as it gave me the chance to connect with members of other branches and learn more about their experiences.

## Dining In

Written By: MIDN 4/C Sebastian Macias

As a new 4/C, I did expect to have fun events in the unit but the Dining-In was much better than I could have ever imagined. Drinking from 'The Grog', laughing with friends, and making memories that I will never forget. Charging my own Master Chief to drink from the Grog was one of my favorite moments from the event in addition to getting a free bottle of sparkling grape juice that was leftover. I will be looking forward to more events like this in the future as a Midshipman at the Georgia Tech Battalion!



MIDN 4/C pose in their summer whites before Dining In



MIDN 1/C Khazatsky shows photo evidence of LT Guild's failure to use a regulation umbrella during his time as a Midshipman at Georgia Tech

# UW Northwest Navy Competition

Written By: MIDN 2/C Emily Richardson

This month, myself and six other Midshipmen had the privilege of attending the University of Washington NROTC's Northwest Navy Competition! For almost fifty years, NROTC units in the Pacific Northwest, the University of Washington, Oregon State University, and the University of Idaho, have been hosting an annual competition in various team sports and academics. As one of the original NROTC Units, the University of Washington invited the other five original units to join the competition to celebrate the Centennial of our programs. In addition to the usual universities, Midshipmen from Georgia Tech, Yale, UC Berkeley, and the University of Southern California attended.



(L-R) MIDN 1/C Kareem, 2/C Richardson, 1/C Congro, 1/C Nguyen, 2/C Frady, 3/C James, and 2/C Yack pose on the University of Washington campus

The competition consisted of eight cutthroat events: PRT/PFT, soccer, flag football, volleyball, basketball, ultimate frisbee, academics, and speech. The event is typically set up for each school bringing a dedicated team for each event, so most events required at least four to seven midshipmen to play and overlapped with other events. With only 7 total participants, we competed in volleyball, basketball, ultimate frisbee, and academics. While other schools had between three to ten times the number of participants, Georgia Tech still placed fifth overall.

MIDN 2/C Frady led the academics team to a first place finish, dominating in topics like visual recognition of aircraft, ships, and Marine Corps weapons systems. Georgia Tech also placed third in the volleyball competition. Although we did not win any games, our outstanding teamwork led us to be within five points of winning every set: getting the closest than any other school to the two teams that dominated the competition.



## UW Northwest Navy Competition (cont.)

The team also had a valiant run in the ultimate frisbee competition. We managed to beat the well practiced team from the University of Idaho in a sudden death overtime period. After the grueling first thirty-minute match, we went straight into another match against the University of Washington. While every member of our team played the entirety of both matches, UW substituted in a new team at every score. While we lost by two points, our team definitely had the most fun working together for those challenging matches.



**MIDN 3/C James and 1/C Nguyen (wearing the pink jerseys) working together to score another point in Ultimate Frisbee**

Overall, the competition was a wonderful experience for MIDN to work together, make new friends, and even explore Seattle!