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Welcome Back Blazers!

It has been a truly remarkable summer, for what has become the premier ROTC Battalion in the Southeast! While MSG Scott and I are humbled to lead you every day, it is truly because of your tremendous support and dedication that this battalion, as well as its long and honored legacy, continue to strive. A quick look back over the past three months alone confirms these opening words, for no other Battalion has done so much in such a short period of time. Currently, 67% of the Blazer ROTC students are on scholarship or financial aid from the Department of the Army, with 7 National scholarships committed for the 2019 year group. Additionally, we sent seven students overseas this summer to Romania, Barbados, El Salvador, Thailand, Albania, and Lithuania for the Cultural Understanding and Language Program. An amazing 60% of the Battalions MSIVs received an Outstanding or Excellence rating at Cadet Summer Training in Fort Knox, Kentucky. This statistic, coupled with 26 new graduates from Air Assault School, Rappel Master School, Airborne School, and the Special Forces Combat Diver School, make the University of Alabama at Birmingham’s ROTC Department insurmountable. We have also excelled with internships and academics. Currently, 77% of the Battalion is either on the Presidential Honors or Deans list with a cumulative GPA of 3.44 for contracted cadets. Finally, the Battalion sent six more students to summer internships at Fort Bragg, Fort Knox, Fort Hood, and Fort Bliss for CTLT and DCLT!

Cadets, we have the most skilled, ethical, and combat hardened Army in our Nation's history, and your cadre reflect that. No matter where we are around the world, America's Soldiers are displaying courage, commitment and character. The US Army is demonstrating unparalleled competence and agility. And no matter the challenge, no matter how complex the environment, or how dangerous the situation, our Soldiers fight and win. This year I would like the Battalion to focus on three specific priorities, which are reflected in our Battalions vision and Campaign Plan.

Firstly, we will focus on training on the fundamentals. UAB ROTC cadets will learn and understand the basics and be grounded in the fundamentals of their future careers. Through a sound mentorship program we will ensure we remain academically proficient, conduct rigorous PT to stay physically fit, conduct in depth training to become tactically competent while remaining athlete scholars to sustain our doctrinally and culturally acute sensitivities.

Secondly, we will strive to remain engaged with both the school and community we serve through an active and aggressive stewardship campaign. UAB ROTC students are zealous to both their community, profession, and country. We remain focused on stewardship and engaged with the community and the City of Birmingham through social outreach programs that are focused and planned to link Soldiers and their families to the community as well as supportive of the University of Alabama – Birmingham. In regards to our commitments to local JROTCs and High Schools, we will strive to become proficient role models for the JROTC cadets throughout the greater Birmingham region while simultaneously focusing on enhancing the legacy of this great battalion and its history.

Lastly, I would ask each of you to diligently work toward simply having some fun! Teamwork and comradery have been what have made this unit as great as it is! Our Blazer family has never been better, and that is because of the relationships and teams that we have built here amongst ourselves and the other organizations around us. Our ability to continue to grow as you work toward your individual degrees is what ensures a robust Officer Corps indebted to the civil population we serve. Embrace ROTC, as well as the rest of your college life!

Again, to all, it’s going to be a GREAT YEAR! Let’s tackle it together! MSG Scott and I wish you our best.

LTC Arieyeh J. Austin & MSG Gregory T. Scott
The MSIII's of UAB Blazer Battalion spent Summer 2015 abroad at various Cadet Summer Training events, varying from Cadet Leader Course to Cultural Understanding Language Proficiency, Air Assault, Rappel Master, and Cadet Troop Leader Training. From non-stop dedication and motivation during the semester to continuous achievements throughout the summer, the Cadets of UAB Blazer Battalion show their unyielding fervor for excellence and self-development.

The UAB Blazer Battalion is committed to community outreach as well as inter-campus relations. Blazer Battalion hosts community events and offers mentorship programs in order to acclimate incoming students to the program. UAB Blazer Battalion is not only focused on developing proficient Army Officers, but also on promoting growth and development of the individual into a contributing member of society, by promoting leadership, discipline, and teamwork.
UAB Blazer Battalion is made up of a diverse group of students, ranging from Business Majors to Pre-Health students. The UAB ROTC program is committed to helping our students succeed in their career choices and find the best fit for their future. The cadets, both new and old, come together for the Zero Day BBQ.

UAB Blazer Battalion puts strong emphasis on peer-to-peer mentorship; by pairing students with older Cadets in the same programs and classes, we ensure that each Cadet has an accountability partner, and motivation to succeed. Here, Lieutenant Colonel Austin and CDT Brian Nykanen pose with UAB's mascot, Blaze the Dragon.

UAB ROTC has a 95% graduation rate, largely due to the strong bonds Cadets make with one another. A large portion of the Cadets' spare time is spent with fellow ROTC Cadets participating in events, which contributes to strengthening our ROTC family. CDT Murati speaks with incoming freshman about ROTC.
From left to right:
2LT Harmon, 2LT Grant, 2LT Nguyen, 2LT Bennett, and 2LT Jeter ceremoniously cut the cake, commemorating their commissioning as Second Lieutenants in the United States Army.
UAB Color Guard demonstrates the level of precision, dedication, and excellence that the UAB ROTC Blazer Battalion always expects to achieve. The Color Guard presents the Colors at the Opening Ceremony for the AMVETS in Birmingham, AL. UAB Color Guard is made up of the Battalion’s best Cadets, who work hard to build relationship with the community, recruit and retain quality persons to serve and to promote the program. Participation in the UAB Color Guard team is a prestigious honor that these Cadets proudly uphold with every event they attend.
NEWLY CONTRACTED CADETS

From left to right: LTC Austin, CDT Perely (MSII), CDT Freeman (MSI), CDT Commerford (MSI), CDT Cunningham (MSII)

On August 27th, four Cadets pictured above took the oath to one day become an Officer in the United States Army. This is a tremendous responsibility to uphold. On top of maintaining a full-time class load, these Cadets have sworn to uphold the integrity of being a US Army Cadet, which entails rigorous physical training, strenuous mental activity, and pushing one's Self to achieve always more than just the standard. These young men have sworn not only to uphold the Army Values, but to live by them every day, in and out of uniform, for the duration of their military careers. We could not be more proud of these Cadets and future leaders, and extend our gratitude to their families for all the support you have shown them to get them thus far. We expect to see great things from these new Cadets!
UAB
BLAZER
BATTALION

501 Building
501 12th Street South
Birmingham, AL 35294
(205) 934-7215