



# FURMAN MILITARY ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



## LETTER FROM THE PROF. OF MILITARY SCIENCE

Dear Alumni, Friends, and Family, of the Paladin Battalion,

This Fall begins a new chapter in the Furman ROTC program as we launch our Military Alumni Association to connect, invest and continue to build a supportive environment for our Cadets to thrive in. Celebrating our 70 year anniversary of ROTC here at Furman, we cannot wait to see what the next 70 years will bring. We look forward to partnering with you on ways to engage the Cadets and support both their on-campus and off-campus leadership experiences. We are also staying agile to accommodate all changes and planning that will create a successful program during the COVID-19 pandemic. We completed a full “in-person” training semester with zero COVID-19 outbreaks and completed all necessary tasks. The Cadets continue to impress me each and everyday and I look forward to seeing them commission as Second Lieutenants shortly! Thank you again for your support of the Furman Military Alumni Association.

  
LTC Christopher Manganaro  
Professor of Military Science

## STAYING IN SHAPE DURING THE SUMMER

Over the summer, closed gyms presented a unique challenge to our cadets trying to maintain their fitness. We talked to Cadets Mikat, Scapellato, and Crook about their experiences and the creative ways they found to adapt to the circumstances.

**Question #1: What is your preferred method of staying in shape? What does a normal week of workouts look like for you?**

**Mikat:** I usually run 3-5 miles every other day and lift weights on the days I don't run. I also enjoy boxing, so I get some more cardio during a few days a week as well.

**Scapellato:** I do Crossfit, which is a hybrid of cardio and lifting at the same time. There are a lot of different types of workouts; sometimes we do endurance days that are longer but not as hard, and sometimes we do strength focused stuff with heavier weights, all the way up to one rep max training. I travel to a gym near Greenville, but if I don't have time, I just work out at the ROTC Rig.

**Crook:** I was playing lacrosse in the spring, so we would wake up and do two and a half hours of pretty intense practice every morning. Later in the day we would have a lift, and if we didn't I would go lift by myself. I focused on explosive weight training and the Olympic lifts, and also used a lot of heavy training, band work, and supersets, among other things.

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### The Paladin Battalion Online

This year, the Paladin Battalion is more active than ever on social media! We regularly update our pages with pictures and videos of cadets doing PT, at our weekly labs, and with much more. We have also started a weekly Cadet Life Spotlight where we focus on the things cadets do outside of ROTC that make them well-rounded students, so come to our pages to check it out! We can be found @PaladinBattalion on Facebook or @paladinbattalionfurmanrotc on Instagram, and we encourage our followers to tag us in their ROTC-related posts.



## SENIOR SPOTLIGHT BY CDT ALLEY

Cadet Thomas Doerr of Berlin, Massachusetts is serving as the Cadet Battalion Commander for the school year of 2020-2021. A Psychology Major with a Minor in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, he is involved with Ranger Challenge, Color guard, Admissions Ambassadors, and Heller Service Corps, showing that he is an active member of his campus community and ROTC program. Cadet Doerr is looking to accomplish this

year, “To prepare our Juniors for their upcoming summer at CST and developing our Freshman and Sophomores in their Basic Soldier Skills all while navigating COVID-19 the best that we are able”. “I am looking forward to a great year and am confident that we will far surpass our goals”. Outside of the classroom Cadet Doerr is an avid skier and enjoys supporting all Boston sporting teams.

*“I am looking forward to a great year and am confident that we will far surpass our goals”.*



## HOW OUR BATTALION IS ADAPTING TO COVID

COVID-19 is all anyone has talked about this year, and it has certainly impacted life in the Paladin Battalion. However, one of the most important skills an Army officer must have is the ability to adapt to unexpected circumstances, and our cadre and cadets have shown that this is not in short supply. Our current circumstances bring with them unique challenges, but we are continually finding ways to keep training safe, challenging, and fun.

Our morning PT is among the most affected of our training events. We are expected to adhere to Furman University’s “Paladin Promise,” consisting of requirements like social distancing, the use of masks, and sterilizing workout equipment after each cadet uses it, to keep our cadets and other Furman students safe. To minimize the number of cadets in one place, they are split into three platoons and cycle through three workouts each week; a strength day in the Furman PAC, a HIIT day at the RIG, and a cardio day running or rucking around campus. At each location social distancing is maintained, and the flow of the workout is tightly planned to include breaks for cleaning equipment. During our cardio day, cadets run or ruck spaced out appropriately, and masks are worn at all times. It definitely felt strange at first, but after a few workouts it has been going as smoothly as any other year!

Another challenge presented by COVID has been to cadets’ classes, especially their military science classes. Furman and its professors have found creative ways to keep students connected even if the class is online, and ROTC class is no different. Since our Battalion is made up of Furman, NGU, and BJU, the conflicting schedules of cadets often require events like ROTC class, training briefs with the cadet leadership and cadre, and communication through the cadet chain of command to be virtual. Cadets use creative ways to stay in touch; Zoom is ubiquitous, phone apps like GroupMe and Messages help facilitate the flow of information, and FaceTime often takes the place of grabbing lunch. For example, it is common for cadre and certain cadets to Zoom in to our training briefs and present their information for the week, and aside from the odd technical difficulty it is no different from any other year. If anything, this change forces us to be even more squared away than usual, because we always have to be prepared to brief someone’s information if their internet goes down during a meeting!

Even with all of these changes, Cadet Command still plans to hold Advance camp – the yearly training for rising MSIVs held at Ft. Knox – as scheduled, so our current MSIIIs are training and planning accordingly. We have an excellent class this year who have done an admirable job working around the restrictions and making the most of their training, so we are excited for the challenge that this will bring. All in all, this has been a strange year, but our Paladin Battalion cadets continue to show us the leadership and adaptability that we expect from future Army officers, and we cannot wait to see what next semester brings.

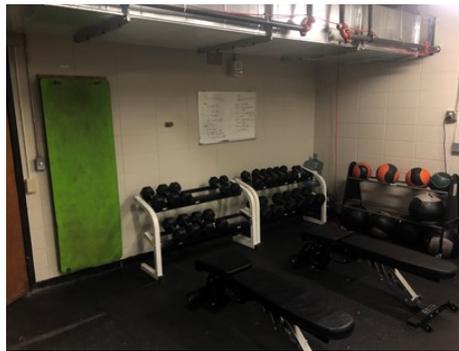




*The outdoor Rig area on the side of the Physical Activities Center next to the Soccer Stadium. It's signage on the side of the building gives the program increased visibility and the nature of the equipment provides flexibility in creating many different workout programs.*

## NEW WORKOUT EQUIPMENT BY CDT ALLEY

Thanks to Alumni donations we were able to purchase and now use the “Rig”, along with our outdoor workout area to ensure Cadets are enabled to accomplish their goals of fitness and train to standard. We have created an AstroTurf area that we can use for a variety of different workouts alongside the weaver that has been built in the past couple years. This area will accommodate new ACFT events as well as afford us access to a wide variety of different workouts. Also, the old supply room that was located under the pool has been transformed into



an ROTC only gym, outfitted with new workout machines and weight sets, allowing Cadets to spread out and work inside if they so wish. This new addition to the Paladin Battalion ensures that we will be able to excel on the Army Combat Fitness Test.

## STAYING IN SHAPE DURING THE SUMMER PT 2

**How did COVID affect your workout routine, and what did you change about your workouts to adapt?**

**MIKAT:** I lift weights and box at the same gym (shoutout to @myfitnessone), but unfortunately they were closed down over the summer. I enjoy lifting and boxing more than running so it took some adjusting to come up with an enjoyable workout routine. I have some kettlebells at home so I did some more Crossfit-type workouts with those, and I also started running much more. I actually ran cross country in high school, so I started doing a lot of those workouts again at a park near my house.

**SCAPELLATO:** Over the summer everything was shut down in Charleston, so I didn't have access to my gym. Instead, I made up my own workouts and did them in my backyard. Most of it was with just bodyweight, but Charleston gets a lot of hurricanes so there are always sandbags around, and I used those to add weight in some of my workouts. It was better than nothing, but the sandbags were all leaky and so I got all sandy during my workouts. Overall my workouts took more of a cardio/AMRAP [as many reps as possible] focus because I didn't have any Crossfit equipment.

**CROOK:** After COVID obviously our season got cancelled, so I wasn't doing lacrosse training. I actually had a Crossfit gym near me that was open, so I would go there for an hour and a half every morning. This training focused more of cardio and running than strictly strength training, but we did a lot of barbell work as well. I also started training for rugby so I was doing technical workouts and running for that. My gym eventually closed down though, and all I had was a weight vest, 5-gallon buckets of sand, and a pullup bar, so I would do a ton of bodyweight stuff with all of that.

## CADETS MIKAT, SCAPELLATO, AND CROOK



## STAYING IN SHAPE DURING THE SUMMER PT3

**What was the worst thing about how covid impacted your fitness? The best thing?**

**Mikat:** The worst part was not having access to my boxing gym. It impacted my motivation to work out at first, but after I got into the groove of my new routine it got much easier. While I enjoy boxing and lifting more than running, I did enjoy getting back to some cross country style workouts; they are how I got into shape in the first place, so reviving the old habits and getting back to my roots was a fun change of routine. I also found some creative ways to add in more physical activity outside of workouts, like hiking and taking a manual labor job at a farm, so again it was fun to change up my routine.

**Scapellato:** I'm a very routine person, so I enjoy being able to go to the gym every day out of habit. When COVID hit, this was completely disrupted because I couldn't go to the

gym, so motivating myself to workout became pretty difficult. My home workouts weren't as enjoyable as I was used to, but I knew that I had to stay in shape for ROTC so I was able to make myself do it. While it had a negative impact on me for the most part, I learned how to be active and move my body with nothing except myself. It was good to show myself that I could stay in shape for months at a time with no equipment.

**Crook:** Before COVID I put a big emphasis on weight training, so not having that equipment caused me to slim down a bit. On the flipside, I started running distance more. My workouts shifted towards cardio and running more than lifting, and I'm glad I got more into that aspect of fitness because I probably wouldn't have done it otherwise.

## OPERATION AGILE LEADER BY CDT WOODHOUSE



Another of the many challenges presented by COVID is that our current MSIVs did not have a change to go to Advance camp last summer. This is usually a time when cadets go to Ft. Knox to be trained in basic soldiering skills, get experience working with other cadets in a high-stress environment, and to be graded in preparation for branching and commissioning. This is usually a 6-week event so there has been much to make up for with out current MSIV class, and the way Cadet Command decided to do so is with Operation Agile Leader. OAL is a collection of events, classes, and an FTX meant to cover information and qualifications usually done at Advance camp. We have been slowly working through these requirements this semester, and each has been an important training opportunity for our future officers.



Beginning during training week before school started, our cadre gave classes on subjects that cadets would have learned about at Ft. Knox, like CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats) and Artillery capabilities. During the semester, cadets have completed events such as a 9 mile ruck march, the old APFT (Army Physical Fitness Test) as well as the new ACFT (Army Combat Fitness Test), and a 4 day joint field training exercise (FTX) with Clemson and Wofford. The FTX was similar to what cadets would have experienced at camp and gave each cadet a chance to be in various leadership positions while running infantry platoon operations. During this FTX, we were even lucky enough to be able to give some MSIIIs a chance to be the "enemy" for our MSIVs, which provided them with a great early look at what they will be experiencing this summer!

Looking forward, there is not much left to do in Operation Agile Leader. Later this semester our MSIVs will complete a 12-mile ruck march, and in December they will receive their branches, marking the beginning of their transition from cadets to officers. All that is left next semester is to finish training the MSIVs before they go off to their branch's BOLC (basic officer leader course) starting in May; and to continue training the younger cadets, of course. This year is not how any of us hoped it would be, but Cadet Command has done a great job ensuring that cadets still receive the training that they need, and we are excited to see our future leaders through this process and through commissioning in May.

## ALUMNI CHECK-IN BY CDT WOODHOUSE

First Lieutenant Andrew Allen graduated Furman University with a Health Science degree in 2018 and has been an Infantry Officer ever since. While in the Paladin Battalion, he had the opportunity to intern at MIT's Lincoln Laboratory during the summer of his junior year where he studied immigration policy and its effects on drug trafficking into the US. He also was able to travel to Cape Verde in Africa, where he interned at the US embassy alongside Cape Verdean military to accomplish humanitarian missions. Since commissioning, he has attended IBOLC and Airborne school at Fort Benning. He has also been sent to Fort Pickett in Virginia to test the Army's new combination night vision and thermal optics system, and since then he has served as an OC (Observer Coach) at Fort Drum tasked with certifying units for their pre-deployment trainups. He is currently a Platoon Leader at Fort Drum, New York and is in the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division stationed there. We had the opportunity to speak with him about some of his experiences in the Army to date and the impact Furman ROTC has had in his becoming the excellent officer he is today.

CDT Woodhouse: **“How did Furman’s ROTC program prepare you to be an officer?”**

1LT Allen: “The emphasis on attention to detail at Furman was really helpful in getting me ready for the amount of responsibility I have had as an officer. The tasks we focused on in ROTC taught me the importance of detail. Outliers that ROTC may obsess over in my opinion that had little carry over to the real army, carried over in other ways. There is a misconception that ROTC commissions lower quality officers than West Point, but in my experience this really is not true. Especially at a program and school like ours, cadets have the opportunity to study in preparation for a civilian job should they decide to leave the Army after their 4 years. The balance between college life and ROTC is a perk that these other officers who might have commissioned through an Academy or OCS did not get to experience.”

CDT Woodhouse: **“What do you like and not like about being an officer?”**

1LT Allen: “I like having the authority to do things the way I want to, whether it be PT, training, or anything else, and it is very rewarding to see my work directly represented in the development of my soldiers. One of the reasons I decided to join the Army was to have cool experiences that most others won't be able to have, and as an officer I have the power to plan and create those experiences for myself and my soldiers. I also value the life experience that I've gotten from dealing with all of my soldiers and helping them in their own lives. On the other hand, you are always expected to have an answer and everyone looks to you for guidance, and you are sometimes seen as the bad guy when you have to make unpopular calls. There are definitely ups and downs to being a leader, but it's a good position to be in.”

CDT Woodhouse: **“What does an average week look like for you?”**

1LT Allen: “Fitness is a huge part of it. I lead workouts every morning with the guys, and we do lots of crossfit type workouts, some pool workouts, and cardio workouts like rucks on Thursday and runs on Mondays. I also like to add in a physical element to our training, whether it be rucking to the land nav course or the range or adding in some runs during battle drills. We do training like that in the afternoons, and other than that I am usually in the office 9-5 doing administrative tasks and paperwork; there is a lot of paperwork. We have meetings throughout the week, and I like to check in with my XO and my supply shop to make sure the administrative tasks are getting done. That portion is actually very similar to the battle rhythm in ROTC. Outside of that, I am on call 24-7 to help guys out with personal issues, which happens more often than you would think. We usually get weekends and holidays off though, which is really nice.”

CDT Woodhouse: **“Is the Army like what you expected? How similar is it to ROTC?”**

1LT Allen: “In some ways being in the Army is more similar to a corporate job than I expected, and I am not always challenged as much as I thought I would be. I guess you have to take the good with the bad. Some of the experiences I had in ROTC are very similar to those I've had in the real Army, and others I've had are much different. I'm sure it depends on your branch as well. Overall ROTC gave me a good look into what life in the Army is like on a foundational level, but most of it will come at you with time. You really just find out when you get there. ROTC in my opinion made the Army a bigger deal than it had to be; it's just a job. Figure out what needs to be accomplished and get it done.”

CDT Woodhouse: **“What advice would you give to a future officer?”**

1LT Allen: “I know this is kind of a cliché, but the more physically fit you are, the more you stand out. You will never be the fittest guy out there, but it's important to stand out in some way, and being in great shape elevates you in your soldiers' eyes. Personally I'm a good runner, so I like to lead my guys on runs; you just have to find something to excel in. Appearance, both in your dress and in your physical fitness, matters. You can't control a lot of things, but one thing you can always control is how you look walking in the door. If you show up in front of your soldiers and look out of shape, they will immediately lose respect for you. Also, never bring a problem to the table without already having come up with a possible solution. You are the leader, so you should always be ready with a solution to problems. You don't know everything, but there is a lot you can do to find the answer. You can work with your NCOs to refine a solution, but ultimately it is your job to come up with the answers. In the absence of guidance, make a plan (always have a plan), have a solution to a problem (doesn't have to be the right one), be a bro in every aspect of the word. At the end of the day, guys just want to go home and spend time with their family, don't be the reason their time is wasted.”



1LT Andrew Allen

*“The emphasis on attention to detail at Furman was really helpful in getting me ready for the amount of responsibility I have had as an officer”*

## COLOR GUARD BY CDT WOODHOUSE

Each semester, cadets are afforded the opportunity to participate in color guards for various sporting events in order to gain OML points that raise their ranking relative to cadets across the country. Since there weren't many opportunities for color guards this semester, this was replaced with competing color guard teams which the cadets could join. Each of the three platoons in our battalion formed a team that met once a week for five weeks, and at the end of the semester the teams faced off to see who was the best! The teams were evaluated on what they would have done at a normal football game, and each group performed impressively. We can't wait to show off our color guards when games start back!



Earlier in the semester, a few cadets did have the chance to be the color guard for an event on 9/11 in downtown Greenville. Participants came to Fluor Field to do

stadium runs (some with weighted vests, many with full firefighter gear) in memory of our fearless firefighters and other first responders that climbed the twin towers to save others. It was a memorable event, and we are glad we had the opportunity to provide a color guard.



### ALUMNI STORE

We are happy to announce that our alumni merch store is up and running! We are currently selling Military Alumni t-shirts in short sleeve for \$20, as well as male (gray) and female (black) Polos for \$30. If you are interested in purchasing, payment can be made via PayPal:

[lynn.mccauley@furman.edu](mailto:lynn.mccauley@furman.edu)

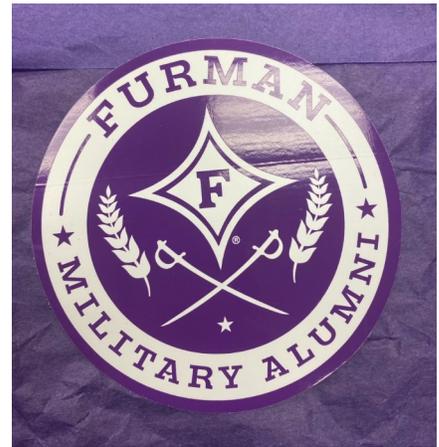
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Please let us know what item you would like, what size, and your mailing address. Each purchase comes with a sticker and a pin with the Military Alumni Logo!



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