

USC NAVAL ROTC

NEWSLETTER



November & December 2025

Edited by: MIDNs 3/C Hammond & Kundu

Happy Birthday! Celebrating 250 Years

By: MIDN Tran

The USC and UCLA NROTC Battalion convened at the Ritz-Carlton Marina del Rey on 14 November with an unforgettable night of tradition, pride, and celebration at this year's Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball. Midshipmen, staff, alumni, and friends of the battalion came together to honor 250 years of warfighting legacy.



In accordance with tradition, the iconic cake-cutting ceremony brought both heart and humor to the evening. The first slice went to the battalion's oldest Salt Dog and Devil Dog. The next slice went to the youngest Navy and Marine midshipmen, symbolizing the passing of tradition.



The Guest of Honor CAPT Brian Bungay, proud USC alumnus and the commander of Naval Base San Diego, took the stage. CAPT Bungay delivered an inspiring, dynamic message that resonated with everyone in attendance. He shared lessons from the fleet, reflections on service, and encouragement for today's midshipmen to lead boldly and stay true to their values, with some jabs to our Bruin siblings. His Trojan roots made his presence even more special for the battalion and alumni community.



One of the most emotional highlights of the night came when the battalion honored Ms. Marsha Stoughton for an incredible 25 years of service. After a heartfelt playing of a commemorative video, the audience erupted with applause as she was recognized for her dedication, warmth, and support. She has played a role in the transformation of over 400 MIDN into Naval and Marine Corps Officers. Her impact on the battalion is immeasurable, and celebrating her milestone added a meaningful, personal touch to the evening.



The celebration continued with music, dancing, and the unmistakable camaraderie that defines the Navy and Marine Corps team. From heartfelt speeches to packed dance floors, the night blended tradition with excitement in true Trojan and Bruin fashion.

The 2025 Birthday Ball was more than just a ceremony, it was a reminder of why we serve, who we follow, and who will follow after us. With memories made and spirits high, USC and UCLA NROTC look ahead to another year of growth, leadership, and pride.

Old Breed, New Breed, Near and Far - Happy Birthday wherever you are!



Family Tailgate

The USC NROTC Battalion gathered with families, friends, and alumni for this year's USC Family Tailgate, offering a perfect chance for parents to meet staff, connect with midshipmen, and get a closer look at ROTC life. The event combined Trojan spirit with the camaraderie and pride that defines the battalion.

As OIC, MIDN 3/C Owen Ouchi and his team organized an outstanding tailgate with great food, refreshments, and a welcoming atmosphere for everyone in attendance. Midshipmen and families joined in games of football, frisbee, and cornhole, blending fun and friendly competition with community bonding.

The tailgate also provided an opportunity to celebrate the midshipmen themselves, their hard work, dedication, and growth over the semester. Families saw firsthand the leadership, teamwork, and discipline that NROTC develops, while midshipmen enjoyed sharing their experiences and connecting with the people who support them.

As the afternoon wrapped up and everyone headed toward the Coliseum to cheer on the Trojans, it was clear that USC NROTC is more than a program, it is a family that welcomes the past, present, and the future.



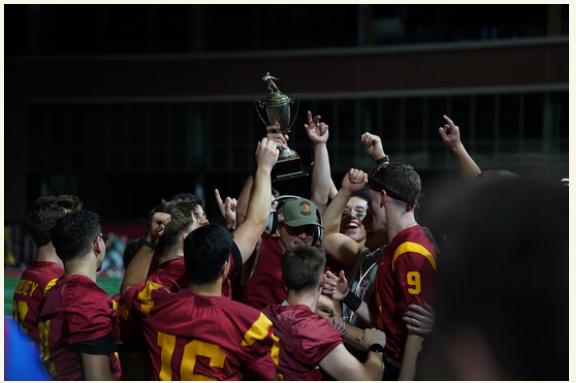
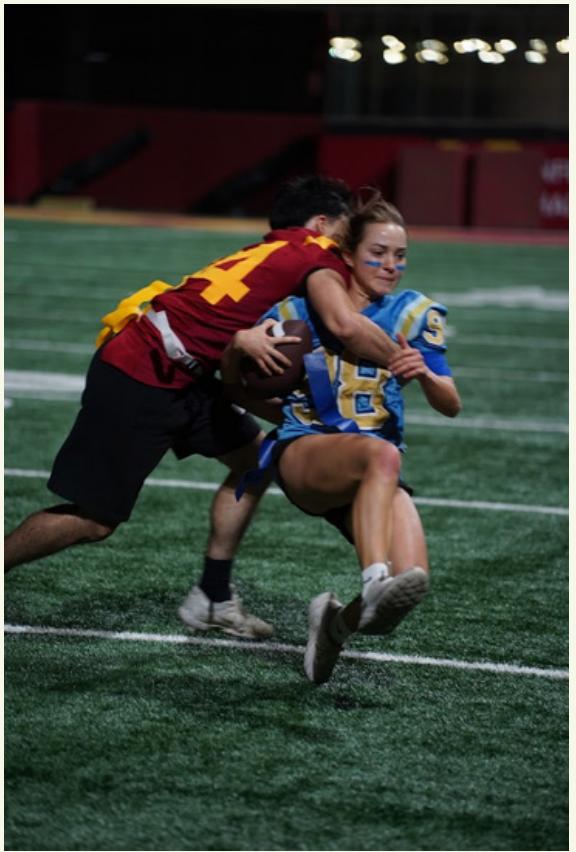
Decisive Victory: Blood Bowl

On 21 NOV, the UCLA NROTC Battalion made the trek across town to USC's brand-new football practice field for a long-standing tradition: the annual Blood Bowl football game against the Trojan Battalion.

Blood Bowl is more than just a football game, it's an opportunity for midshipmen from both battalions to come together, strengthen camaraderie, and foster a sense of friendly rivalry that lasts well beyond the final whistle. From the first kickoff, the game was charged with intensity, strategy, and determination, as each team fought not only for victory but also for the pride of their battalion.

The USC Trojans quickly gained momentum, pulling ahead with a 15-point lead early in the match. Despite a spirited effort from the Bruins, USC ultimately claimed the win with a final score of 38-23. While the scoreboard favored the Trojans, the real victory was the chance for midshipmen to connect, compete, and celebrate their shared dedication to service, leadership, and teamwork.

Maybe next year Bruins - or not. FIGHT ON!



Inspiring the Future: JROTC Symposium

On November 22, the USC Battalion proudly hosted its annual Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) Symposium, welcoming high school students from across California. The event's mission was to engage with the next generation of leaders and provide valuable insight into the ROTC program, its opportunities, and the path to becoming a commissioned officer.

The symposium featured a series of informative workshops designed to give attendees a closer look at life as a midshipman. Students explored the expectations, responsibilities, and training opportunities that come with joining the ROTC, while also receiving guidance on the application process and scholarship eligibility.

Through hands-on sessions and interactive discussions, high school participants gained a practical understanding of the ROTC experience, helping them make informed decisions about pursuing a future in military leadership. The event not only educated students about the program but also strengthened connections between the USC Battalion and aspiring young leaders across the state.



Drill Comp & Golden Canteen

As the fall semester came to a close, the Trojan Battalion wrapped up its final NROTC ProLab of the season with some competition and the change of command ceremony.

The morning kicked off with the semesterly drill competition, pitting Training, Communications, and Operations Platoons against one another. This competition was the final event contributing points toward the coveted Golden Canteen, awarded to the platoon with the highest cumulative performance across PRT scores, GPAs, the Battalion Fitness Leaderboard, and drill results.

For the second consecutive semester, Communications Platoon claimed the trophy, thanks to the outstanding leadership of PCO 1/C Nolan Walsh and MPO 2/C Shrinivas Deolalikar. Congratulations to COMMO for their continued excellence!



Change of Command

Following the drill competition, the Battalion held its Change of Command Ceremony, marking a new chapter in Trojan Battalion leadership. MIDN 1/C Gretchen Hof officially relinquished her duties as Battalion Commander to MECEP SSgt Antonio Letizia. The Battalion extends its sincere gratitude to MIDN 1/C Hof for her dedication and strong leadership throughout the fall semester and looks forward to the spring under SSgt Letizia's guidance.

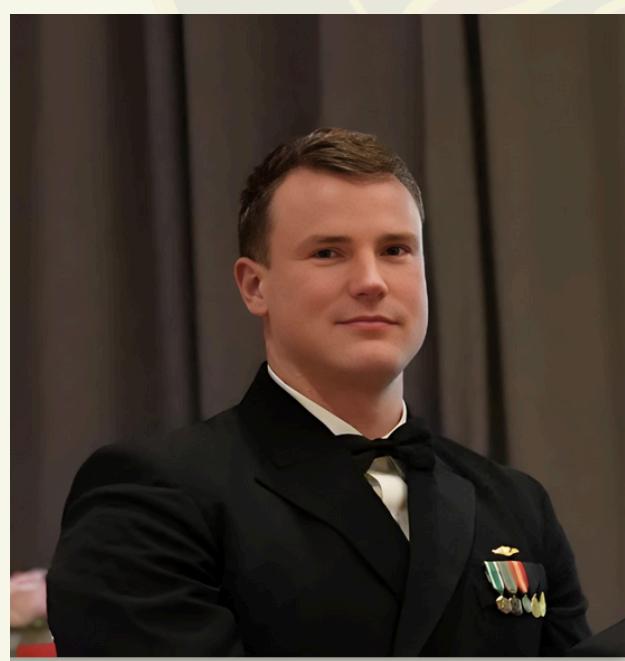


Surfacing Into New Adventures

The Trojan Battalion bid a heartfelt farewell to LT Krishna Peri, submarine officer and Assistant Professor of Naval Science. During his time at USC, he mentored countless midshipmen interested in nuclear careers, guiding many toward success as future nuclear power officers, all while completing his master's degree in financial engineering.

As battalion advisor, LT Peri was the driving force behind the scenes, handling bookings, conferences, and meetings, supporting every OIC, and helping plan the battalion's battlefield study to France. Whether in Naval Ship Systems, engineering, or career guidance, he ensured battalion members were prepared not just as students, but as future officers.

We thank LT Peri for his dedication, mentorship, and guidance. Fair winds and following seas as he returns to the fleet in January to attend Department Head School in Groton, Connecticut.



Welcome Aboard

LT Rory Cronogue hails from Montclair, New Jersey, and earned a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Rowan University. He was commissioned through the NUPOC program and attended Nuclear Power School and Prototype training in Charleston, South Carolina from 2021–2022.

In Fall 2022, he reported to USS Kentucky, where he served as Damage Control Assistant, Quality Assurance Officer, Assistant Engineer, Diving Officer, and AOPs. During his tour, USS Kentucky completed the first forward-deployed exchange of command of a nuclear asset in Guam and earned both the Battle "E" and the Omaha Trophy. He completed his tour in 2025 and reported to USC in October.

Welcome to the Battalion, Sir!

Semesterly Change of Command

The Trojan Battalion Welcomes In Its Spring Semester Chain of Command



Battalion
Commanding
Officer (BNCO) -
SSgt Antonio Letizia



Battalion Executive
Officer (BNXO) -
OC Davorise Allen



Command Master
Chief (CMC) - MIDN
2/C Kameron Scott

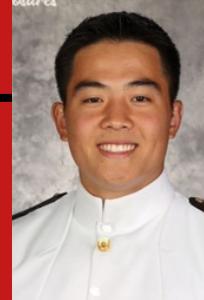
Spring Chain of Command



Training Platoon
Commanding Officer -
MIDN 2/C Brendan Miller



Communications Platoon
Commanding Officer -
MIDN 2/C Nicholas DeFina



Operations Platoon
Commanding Officer -
MIDN 1/C Jared Park



Planning Officer -
MIDN 1/C Phoebe Turner