

TROJAN NROTC BATTALION

NEWSLETTER



JANUARY 2026

LEARNING ABOUT THE PAST TO FORGE THE FUTURE

2026 HAWAII BATTLE STUDY

BY MIDN 1/C WILLIAMS

OVERVIEW

The LA Consortium Senior Battle Study is an annual tradition for our senior Midshipmen, OCs, and MECEPs. Students in their final undergraduate semesters participate in this capstone battle study before they raise their right hands in the spring. Members of the Bruin and Trojan Battalions left behind the sunny shores of Los Angeles for the sunny shores of Honolulu.

In preparation, students researched and prepared presentations on topics ranging from Hawaiian history to WWII. Further education included briefs on current strategic matters and tours of active vessels. These activities transformed the trip to the Aloha State into a dynamic application of the Naval Science curriculum, better preparing the soon-to-be ensigns and second lieutenants.

16 JANUARY

The first full day of the battle study began at Rainbow Bay. Students and staff took to the water in outrigger canoes after learning the basics of the rhythmic team-based paddling style. Afterwards, the two canoe teams raced. Surprisingly, the canoe that consisted primarily of the staff proved to be the faster of the two, much to the chagrin of the primarily student canoe. Sore lats gave participants a newfound appreciation for our nuclear, diesel, and gas turbine propulsion systems.



The group on board the USS Decatur



Students get a workout in paddling outrigger canoes

Following a quick stop to change, the group visited the headquarters of the Pacific Fleet and received a brief on strategic operations in the Pacific. Afterwards, they stopped for lunch and toured the *USS Decatur* (DDG-73). Although none of our commissioning MIDNs were designated as Surface Warfare Officers, they still gained a new appreciation and understanding of the Black Shoe Navy. After saying Aloha to the destroyer, they returned to the Hale Koa Hotel and enjoyed liberty.

HAWAII BATTLE STUDY (CONT.)

17 JANUARY

The second day started at the USS *Missouri* (BB-63), the site of the Japanese surrender that concluded WWII. On the *Missouri*'s weather deck, some Midshipmen gave a presentation on the ship and its role in the war, followed by a self-guided tour of the massive vessel. Still on Ford Island, the group made their way to the resting site of the USS *Utah* (BB-31/AG-16), a training ship that was unintentionally targeted by the Japanese during their attacks on Pearl Harbor. On her unassuming memorial, another group of students gave a brief on the ship's history, allowing reflection on the bravery and sacrifice of her crew during the attacks. The *Utah* is considered a forgotten ship of the Pearl Harbor attacks, where 58 men lost their lives.

During the second leg of the day, the group stopped by Hospital Point, the site where the USS *Nevada* (BB-36) ran herself aground to prevent a disastrous sinking, which would potentially block the entrance to the harbor. A third group of students gave a presentation of the ship's actions during the attacks, including how the ship got underway during the attacks, continued to provide anti-air protection after

running aground, and served in the Pacific for the remainder of WWII.

The second day concluded with a visit to the USS *Arizona* Memorial. While there, the group reflected on the ultimate sacrifice given by 1,177 crew members. They saw the rusted hull, which is the permanent resting place of many of her crew. The calm turquoise waves lapping against the wreck served as a sharp contrast to the tragedies that occurred over eight decades ago. Back on land, a final group of USC students presented on the *Arizona*, providing additional knowledge and time to reflect as they headed back to Waikīkī for another night of liberty.



MIDN brief the group on the history of the USS Missouri



The group stops for a photo on board the Missouri



The group's view of the Pearl Harbor memorial

HAWAII BATTLE STUDY (CONT.)

18 JANUARY

The final day in Hawai'i began at the Koko Head trailhead, where the group gained 1,000+ ft of elevation on their long, hard walk up to the peak. After reaching the peak, they enjoyed the sunrise on top of an old Marine Corps observation post while a UCLA student gave a brief on the locale. After descending, the group took a break for breakfast, then headed to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Punchbowl Crater.

The cemetery serves as the final resting place of service members who gave their lives for their country in WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Following a short talk from a UCLA midshipman, the group reflected on the true human cost of these conflicts. An overlook at the Punchbowl crater allowed them to observe the Nu'uana Valley, the site of the historic battle where King Kamehameha I conducted an amphibious landing and fought the O'ahu forces. At the overlook, they received another brief from UCLA



MIDN 1/C Walsh, Fessler, McKernan, and Park atop Koko Head

about the landings and the battle. After some more time at the cemetery, the group headed to the Pali Lookout, where King Kamehameha defeated O'ahu's forces, leading to the unification of the Hawaiian Islands under Kamehameha and the establishment of the Kingdom of Hawai'i. The Pali Lookout was the last stop for the day, and the group returned to the Hale Koa for a final night of liberty before flying back to LAX the next day.

A TRIP BACK IN TIME CLASS OF 1979 ALUMNI VISIT

On 16 January, the Trojan Battalion had the privilege of welcoming back members of the Class of 1979. Alumni Mark Smith, Bob Smith, Steve Van Horn, and Mark Busch all completed their undergraduate education together as a part of NROTC here at USC. Their visit was filled with laughter and fond memories as they reflected on their time as midshipmen. While much has changed over the years, many of the unit traditions still remain strong.

Current midshipmen led the alumni in tours around the campus and unit facilities. During the tour, the alumni made their way through the wardroom, searching for names and markings from years past, reminding them of their time as Trojan midshipmen.



Steve Van Horn, Darrell Usrey, Mark Smith, Mark Busch



Mark Smith, Bob Smith, Steve Van Horn, Mark Busch

BECOMING BETTER BATTLE BUDDIES

COMBAT FIRST AID MODULES

On 22 January, the Trojan Battalion had the special opportunity to complete a module in basic Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) during PROLAB. Navy Corpsmen HM3 Carreon and HM3 Tombo came up from Camp Pendleton to instruct the course. They walked midshipmen through the steps of a TCCC Assessment, explaining each stage in depth, complete with demonstrations.

Midshipmen learned how to provide Care Under Fire (CUF), a set of procedures utilized when a comrade is injured in an environment that is currently taking fire. CUF consists of situation assessment, extremely acute care, and moving the injured patient to a safe area where more comprehensive care can be safely administered. Midshipmen also were taught Tactical Field Care (TFC) procedures, learning how to assess and treat massive hemorrhage, airway obstructions, respiratory issues, circulatory deficiencies, head injuries, and hypothermia caused by shock.

Midshipmen then conducted practical applications of their newly acquired skills, practicing tourniquet application, wound packing, applying a pressure dressing, and field assessment tactics.

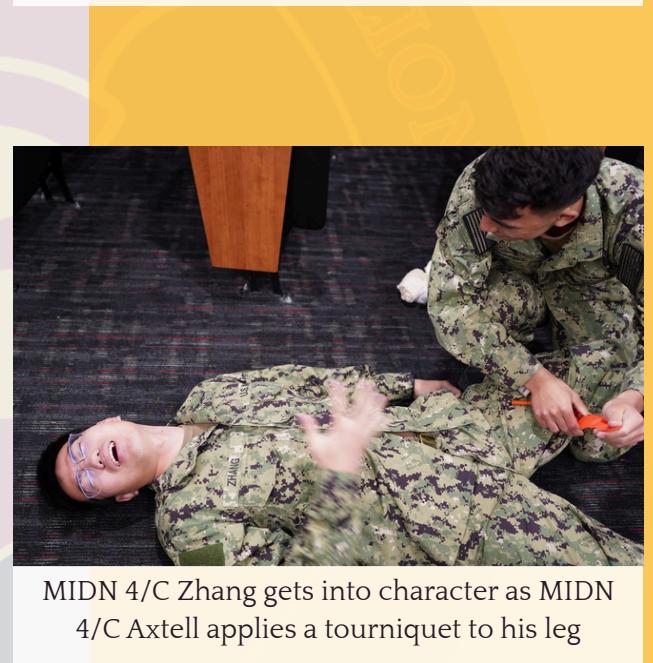
These skills are invaluable to midshipmen as future Naval and Marine Corps officers, as they could very well one day be the reason one or multiple lives are saved in combat.



Battalion members watch as HM3 Tombo demonstrates proper field assessment and treatment on BNCO Letizia



MIDN 2/C Yi applies a tourniquet to MIDN 3/C Hansen's arm



MIDN 4/C Zhang gets into character as MIDN 4/C Axtell applies a tourniquet to his leg



GySgt Gazarian and Sgt Coonrod practice bandaging techniques on Sgt Glenn

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

RECOGNIZING MIDSHIPMAN ACCOMPLISHMENT

On 22 January, the Trojan Battalion recognized several midshipmen for outstanding accomplishments during the Fall 2025 semester. LA Consortium Executive Officer CDR Joshua Ragadio called up exemplary students and presented them with unit patches to commemorate their achievements.

The categories of recognition were Academic Excellence for Battalion members who received a Fall Semester GPA of 4.0, Most Improved PRT for Navy Option MIDN, Most Improved PFT/CFT for Marine Option MIDN, and MECEPS/Marine Option MIDN who achieved a score of 300 on the CFT. Those who were recognized are pictured to the right in their respective categories.

Congratulations to all honorees who exemplify the Trojan Battalion's strive for exceeding the standard.



Academic Excellence: MIDN 3/C MaGill and Moynihan, MIDN 1/C Turner, and SSgt Coraccio



Most Improved PRT: MIDN 3/C West, MIDN 2/C K. Scott, and MIDN 3/C Chen



Most Improved PFT/CFT: MIDN 4/C Nocker and MIDN 3/C Zendejas



300 CFT: MIDN 4/C Nocker, MIDN 3/C Baret, MIDN 2/C Xie, GySgt Lopez, SSgt Anuakpado, SSgt Letizia

THE WINNING TEAM

NAVAL ACADEMY CONFERENCE

From 25 JAN to 28 JAN, MIDN 3/C Benjamin Huang and MIDN 3/C Blaise Moynihan traveled to the United States Naval Academy to attend the 42nd Naval Academy Leadership Conference. The conference, themed “The Elements of Winning Teams,” brought together leaders from law enforcement, the military, and the business community to share insights on effective leadership and team dynamics.

Notable speakers included CDR Bill Driscoll, USN (Ret.), Joe De Sena, founder of SPARTAN Races, the Commandant of Midshipmen CAPT Jackson, USN, and James Kerr, author of *Legacy*. Each speaker offered unique perspectives on building resilient teams and leading with purpose across diverse professional environments.

In addition to the conference sessions, MIDN Huang and MIDN Moynihan had the opportunity to network with midshipmen from the Naval Academy, other NROTC units, and international military counterparts. MIDN Huang described the experience as “incredibly insightful,” noting that the conference broadened his professional knowledge while inspiring his personal leadership approach.

Both midshipmen expressed enthusiasm for their future service and look forward to joining the fleet alongside officers commissioned through a wide range of sources.



MIDN 3/C Moynihan and MIDN 3/C Huang in front of the chapel anchor



MIDN 3/C Moynihan and MIDN 3/C Huang with other cadets

LOOKING AHEAD...

A SNEAK PEEK AT FEBRUARY

Next month, we look forward to sharing about:

- The two newest additions to our Trojan Battalion Active Duty Staff
- Exciting new PROLAB workshops and training evolutions
- The all-new Trojan Battalion Intel Operations Section
- And much more!



LET'S STAY CONNECTED

STAY IN THE LOOP WITH TROJAN BATTALION AFFAIRS



Instagram
@uscnavalrotc



Facebook
@uscnavyrotc



Email
NROTC@usc.edu



Phone
213-740-2663

SIGNING OFF

Thank you for reading the January 2026 issue of the NROTC Trojan Battalion Newsletter. We look forward to seeing you again next month!

