

ROTC UPDATE

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 6

ROTC Reboots After Year of Virtual Learning

By Pricille Burdy

Our cadets are back in their boots! After a long year of quarantine and virtual learning, Halsey's ROTC program is up and running. But, it hasn't been easy. There was a lot of catching up to do, including finding new recruits in the freshman class, ordering new uniforms, and getting everyone up to speed and back into shape. We talked to Marine Instructor Colonel Robert Golden, who heads up the ROTC program at Halsey, about these challenges and what lies ahead for the program.

What happened over the summer? We had the Reboot Boot Camp. It was very good. It generated a lot of interest from freshmen and sophomores that were interested last year but couldn't get in. So that was really beneficial.

What were some of the challenges you faced getting ROTC back to speed after the pandemic? The biggest issue we had was getting all the new recruits into platoons and getting them situated. It felt like we were starting from scratch. We also had to order new uniforms for the freshman recruits. We had a lot of interest from freshmen about joining up. The toughest thing was getting these freshmen to give up certain things. For girls, it was the long Cardi B nails. For guys, it was getting a haircut.

Now that ROTC is back up and running, what are some of the activities you have planned for this coming year? We have a full year of competitions set up. We're going to start having the rifle team, the PT team and drill team competing.

Has anything changed with the rifle team? It is a brand new team. Out of sixteen team members of the rifle team, twelve of them are females. This is the first time I have ever seen so many females make the team. We also have a lot of freshmen and only one returning team member. My goal is to get them into as many competitions as possible.



Marine Instructor Colonel Robert Golden



Quarantine is finally over which means the preparations for competitions are in full force. Colonel Golden and the ROTC Halsey Rifle Team are preparing themselves for upcoming competitions. There is no room for errors. Even though this team has a lot of new recruits you can feel the confidence of the cadets as they take aim at their targets. This will be an exciting season for our rifle team. Good luck, cadets!

ROTC UPDATE

NEWS FOR THE HALSEY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY

PAGE 7

Halsey ROTC Rifle and PT Teams Win Competitions



They aimed for a win and they got it. Halsey's ROTC Rifle Team won first place at the Keystone Classic Marksmanship competition in Reading, PA on December 11th. Nine teams from Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware competed. Kaiden Valentin was the High Shooter among the Rookie class of 28 participants, with a score of 217 out of a possible 300. "I must admit, I was a bit surprised that this fledgling team took first place at their first ever competition," said Colonel Golden. "Not only did they have to overcome some nerves, but they had to beat five veteran teams that had two or three years of experience coming into the match. I am so proud of this young team. We will only improve going forward."



Cadet Sergeant Maria Garcia Cabana placed third in the individual new shooter category and was excited by their achievement. "It was really rewarding to see our hard work pay off. We really pulled through as a rookie team going against veteran teams."

Cadet Second Lieutenant Sebastian Mateo is the team captain of the rifle team. He placed second in the individual new shooter category. Mateo helped the cadets stay focused during the competition. "I'm really proud of our 'gunslingers.' They've really come a long way in a short time," he said.

Cadets on the PT team also had a strong showing in the Reading competition. They placed second overall and the females placed first in their category.



Honoring Those Who Served

On Thursday, November 11, 2021, 180 cadets of the Halsey ROTC program went down to city hall to honor all of our soldiers and veterans who have fought for this country and continue to do so. They formed a battalion in front of city hall for this special day. The mayor, the police department, and the fire department were there for this special event. Veterans from Elizabeth were also present to commemorate their fellow patriots. They put a wreath on the war memorial in downtown Elizabeth to honor the veterans who have died fighting for our country.

