

Naval Newcomers

Cadet provides inside view of program

by staff reporter **Alyssa Ochoa**

A bright eyed, soon-to-be freshman walks through the big halls of high school, looking for a course to join. He walks past the art course, glances at the tech courses and avoids the dance courses. Close to giving up, he sees high school students in cadet uniforms, the colorful, earned pins and black hats. Seeing a look of confidence on their faces, with each step he takes towards those kids he feels more sure, The Navy Juniors Reserve Officers Training Corps is this the course for him.

"The course, overall, pretty much helps create a better citizen," senior lieutenant Scott White said. "We don't train future officers or future military leaders. What you really are gaining is the citizenship."

NJROTC provides education about the military field, mostly the Navy. It promotes patriotism, respect for authority and helps students develop a high degree of self-reliance and discipline. Sixty percent of graduating NJROTC cadets

who are seniors continue to higher education. Although it may not be for everyone, Chief, junior Eduardo Suchomlinow, of Platoon 4, says he tries to recruit worthy students.

"I tell them all of the benefits of ROTC," Suchomlinow said. "It can give a student scholarships and job opportunities, as well as a career choice. It also teaches a student self discipline, leadership and respect."

To some students, NJROTC is just a course that will look good on a resume, but to others it's a course that builds a better person with leadership and better relationships.

For Suchomlinow and White, NJROTC started out as a need for an academy and a desire to go into the military, but because of the relationships formed, the course also ended up leading to a lifetime dedicated to citizenship and leadership.

"Everyone will accept you from the start and treat you like family," Suchomlinow said. "[In ROTC,] at the end of the day, no one's a stranger."



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photos by Maddie Elliot and Krystian Martinez



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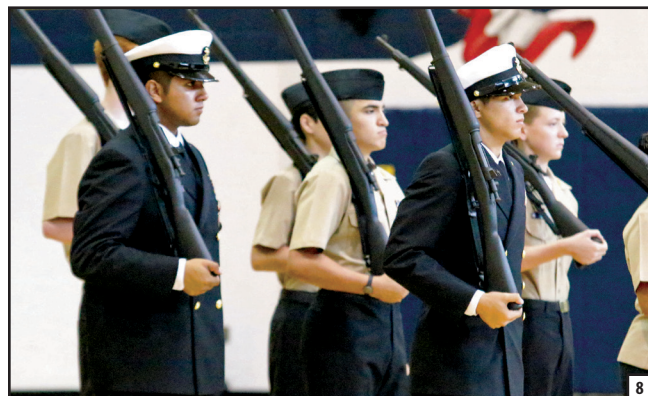
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1. Junior Kodi Johnson and peers play a game of football during physical training time.

2. Along with his fellow officers, junior Damian Guerrero carries his load during an ROTC trip.

3. During physical training time, sophomore Manuel Bacolor does jumping jacks.

4. Under the command of their leader, ROTC members line up and march for drill practice.

5. At an assembly, seniors Ashley Mckee

and Matthew Scott White hold the flag and rifle during the pledge.

6. Junior officers participate in the Annual Military Inspection.

7. During a drill, Lt. Commander Sanders and Commander Mike Hail direct the junior officers.

8. Participating in an armed drill, juniors Damian Guerrero, Edison Sotelo, and Dominic Lucas hold their guns in position.

9. In line, senior Alexander Presley marches during an assembly set up for the Annual Military Inspection.