

SCARLET KNIGHT BATTALION

ISSUE 3 VOLUME 3 DECEMBER 2020

FROM THE RUTGERS UNIVERSITY STAFF

As 2020 draws to a close, the University administration has continued to assess the public health concerns and operational changes brought about the pandemic. While we are optimistic about the future – on that will be shaped in part by the vaccination program – given the current statistics and trends, the university will continue to take a cautious approach to protect the health and safety of all members of the Rutgers community. Please note the following updates:

- The prohibition of indoor and outdoor events, set to expire on January 4, 2021, has been extended through March 31, 2021. This will not impact the ROTC plans for labs and instruction, as briefed in November and December.
- The prohibition of off-campus university-sponsored events, scheduled to expire on January 4, 2021, has been extended through March 31, 2021.
- It is important for every member of the Rutgers community to remain familiar with the current version of [Returning to Rutgers](#) and visit the [Rutgers COVID-19 Website](#) for additional and the most up-to-date information.



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FROM THE PROFESSOR OF MILITARY SCIENCE

By LTC Javier A. Cortez

Greeting Scarlet Knight Family! As we enter the Spring 2021 Term, I'm excited about the upcoming in-person events and changes to our battle rhythm. Rutgers University listened to our request and granted us in-person instruction for our daily physical fitness and weekly LABs. We have revamped our physical fitness (PT) program, we are now doing PT twice per day from 0700 to 0815 and 1500 to 1615. This change will allow cadets that are not living on and/or near campus multiple opportunities to attend PT. We moved the start of PT from 0630 to 0700 in-order to give Cadets the opportunity to use the Rutgers University free bus system (now paying for parking and using your own vehicle are optional; we listened and made the changes), in-addition starting at 0700 allows better visibility/day light (huge safety improvement).

My staff and I are fully aware that we are in uncharted waters and we have all had to take unprecedented steps as our personal and professional lives have been so dramatically affected by the outbreak. I am acutely aware of the important role that family, friends, and loved ones play in keeping our Cadets grounded. You are the reason why these Cadets have volunteered. You are the reason many of our cadets made the decision to join the ranks in defending our great nation against all its enemies at home and abroad. Cadets, you are our future beacons of freedom. One day, you will ensure our freedoms and protect our way of life.

I am so proud of our Cadets, during these unprecedented times. They have shown resiliency, tenacity, and our American GRIT. They have attended all virtual training events and have stayed connected in creative ways, making the bonds of our brotherhood and sisterhood closer now than ever. Our ROTC program, University, and Nation will return to normalcy and we will be more resilient, stronger and appreciative of the freedoms which we, at times, take for granted, and the simple things in life will have a more profound meaning. In times of adversity a person's true character becomes readily evident. Our Cadets have stepped-up and shown that they are men and women of high character, and are ready to lead our nation's sons and daughters against any future threats or challenges. Your compassion for one another speaks volumes about the values we hold so dear and the generosity that defines you as a person and future Army Officer.

Lastly, I want to thank our sponsors for their unwavering support in helping to develop and transform our cadets into the future leaders of our great nation. A special thanks goes out to all those that supported our food drive, we collected over 500lbs of food and donated it to Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen and to the RU student food pantry (where students can go and pick-up food, no questions asked). A special recognition goes out to USAA, AUSA, The Lapidow family and COL Lapidow Scholarship in association with AUSA Northern NJ Chapter, The Cianfrocca Family and the Captain Gerald Cianfrocca Scholarship, Mr. Joseph Berk and for his commitment to reestablish the Captain Colin MacManus Ranger Team Captain Award.

Scarlet Knight – 6.

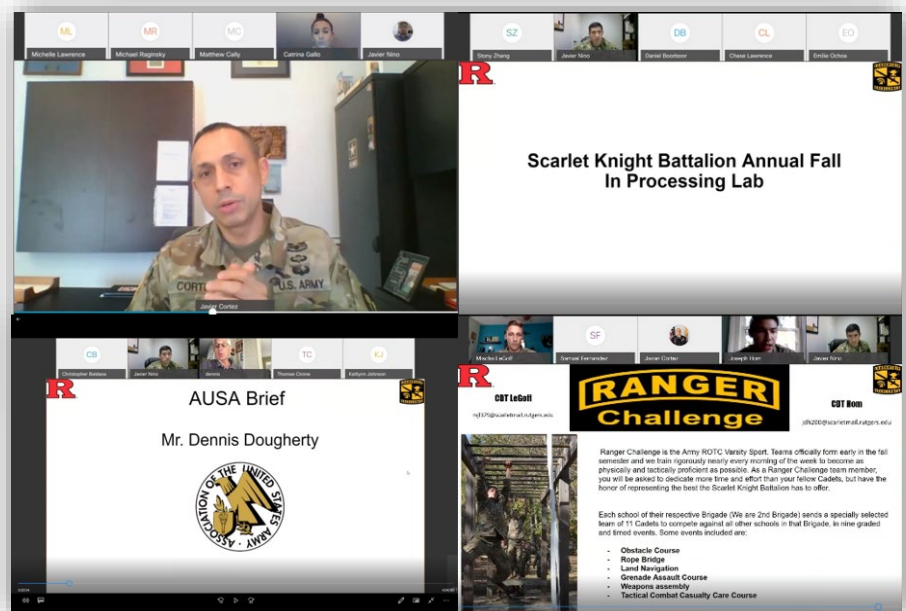


Perseverance and Adaptation: A Semester in Review

By CDT Aaron Tam

When we began to work remotely from the University due to COVID-19, a lot of things changed, and for many people it became a struggle. As a rising MSIV one of the biggest concerns was the completion of Advanced Camp. However, the ability of our Cadets and cadre to adapt during these unprecedented times came as no surprise. Our Cadets and staff in the Scarlet Knight Battalion are the leaders of this campus.

The Battalion has shown great initiative in adapting to our new operating guidelines and have found creative ways to hang tough. As our nation continues to journey into uncharted waters, I know our ROTC program will be able to improvise, adapt, and overcome any hurdle because of our greatest asset: our people.



OPERATION AGILE LEADER

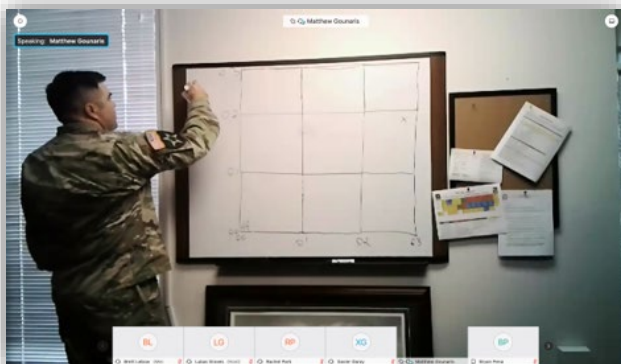
"A Semester in Review", cont.

The first hurdle was the planning and execution of remote Advanced Camps. From August 9th to the 17th, Rutgers Army ROTC coordinated with Princeton and Seton Hall Army ROTC programs, conducted Operation Agile Leader (OAL). The operation was a great success – all training objectives were achieved while maintaining health protocols and guidance.

As a Cadet it was amazing to see such a well-executed training exercise turned around so quickly and to be able to take part and complete OAL while still operating safely under a COVID-19 environment. Just from a cadet's perspective our Rutgers Cadets and cadre were constantly taking charge, helping each other, and Cadets from other programs to increase our shared understanding. Although operating in unusual circumstances, our team continued to show the Scarlet Knight perseverance.



FALL SEMESTER



The deliverable success of Operation Agile Leader (OAL) showed myself and many of my peers that despite this unprecedented environment, we were still going to train and educate as best we could. While a bulk of our training was conducted online via WebEx, our cadre and OIC's had carved three voluntary training events entitled: Super Military Leadership Lab (SMLL). Each SMLL was roughly an overnight, 2-day training event at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JBMDL).

At every SMLL, each Cadet was screened for COVID-19, required to practice social distancing, and wear personal protective equipment. Some of the tasks we were able to accomplish included the Army Physical Fitness Test, Call for Fire simulator, Squad STX, Engagement Skills Trainer, land navigation, and varied mileage ruck marches. Although the training had to be adapted to the operating environment, it allowed our newer Cadets to become familiar with the upperclassmen and, most importantly, our cadre.

PERSEVERANCE AND ADAPTATION

"A Semester in Review", cont.

There's no denying that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has affected our Cadets. As an MSIV, it's hard to see my peers not receiving the same quintessential and formative experiences as we had in semesters past. Having to train while donning masks, low-contact training in Webex, the absence of Turkey Bowl, dining-in, and virtual contracting ceremonies were definitely an adjustment to become used to. However, even for our newer Cadets I think these unfavorable circumstances are unconsciously educating everyone about the Battalion ethic of resiliency and grit. Our cadre have explicitly stated that our objective is to continue training to stay on track with student academic success and military science training, with safety as a priority. "Adaptation" is consistent theme of education in a COVID environment and I can't imagine a bigger testament for our future leaders than the situation we have now. Our Cadets have access to a plethora of resources from our cadre and university and we know that we are not alone, and will continue to complete our objective.

- CDT Aaron Tam

CADET ACTIVITIES

The Cadets in the Scarlet Knight Battalion have proved their resilience and ingenuity this semester by finding ways to safely participate in education and outreach events.

During the month of September, the Scarlet Knight Battalion partook in the Brigade-wide SHARP Virtual Walk/Run. The event's motto was "You Don't Walk Alone" and was focused on supporting the victims of sexual harassment and assault across the Department of Defense. The Battalion walked and ran a cumulative 2,423 miles throughout the month and contributed to the Brigade's total of 42,043 miles.



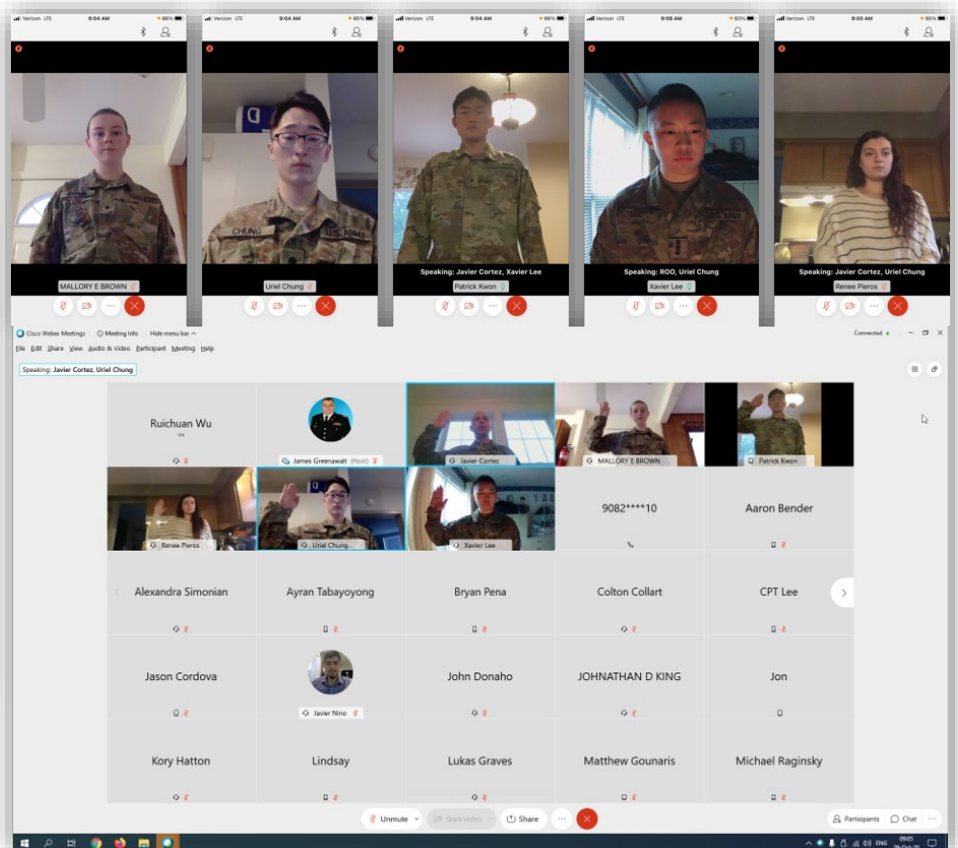
Between 19 – 25 November, the Scarlet Knight Battalion collected donations for the Scarlet Knight Battalion Food Drive. The Cadets demonstrated selfless service and sacrifice for others during the Thanksgiving season by collecting several buckets worth of food for the Rutgers Student Food Pantry and Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen.

On December 4th, the Scarlet Knight Battalion was honored to host the Distinguished Guests Panel over Webex. The speakers included BG McLaughlin, Medal of Honor Recipient COL (Ret.) Jack Jacobs, and Mr. Scott Taylor. All three guests are Rutgers Alumni and shared their experiences in the Army and lessons they learned along the way. The Distinguished Guests Panel afforded the Cadets an opportunity to interact with and learn from esteemed leaders in a virtual environment.

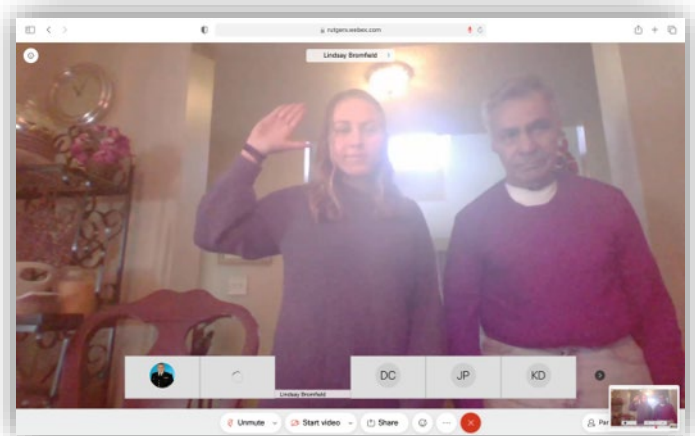
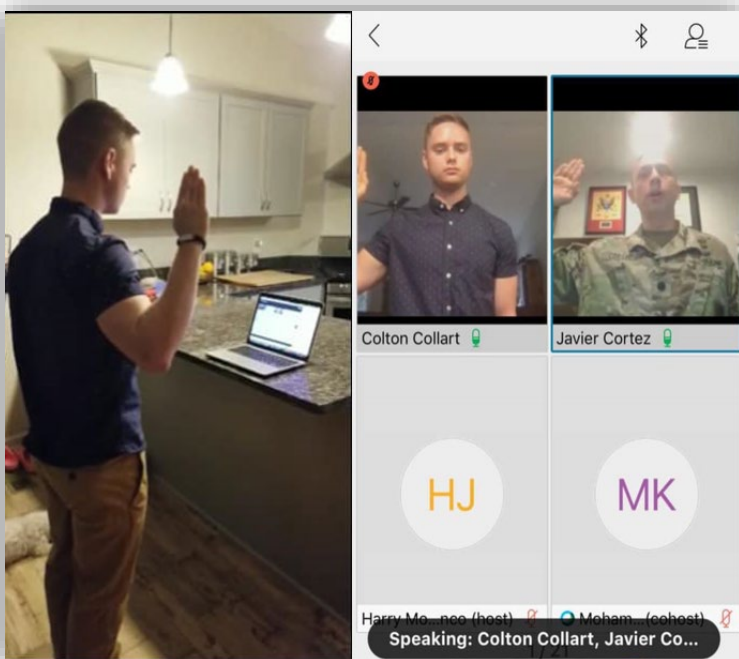
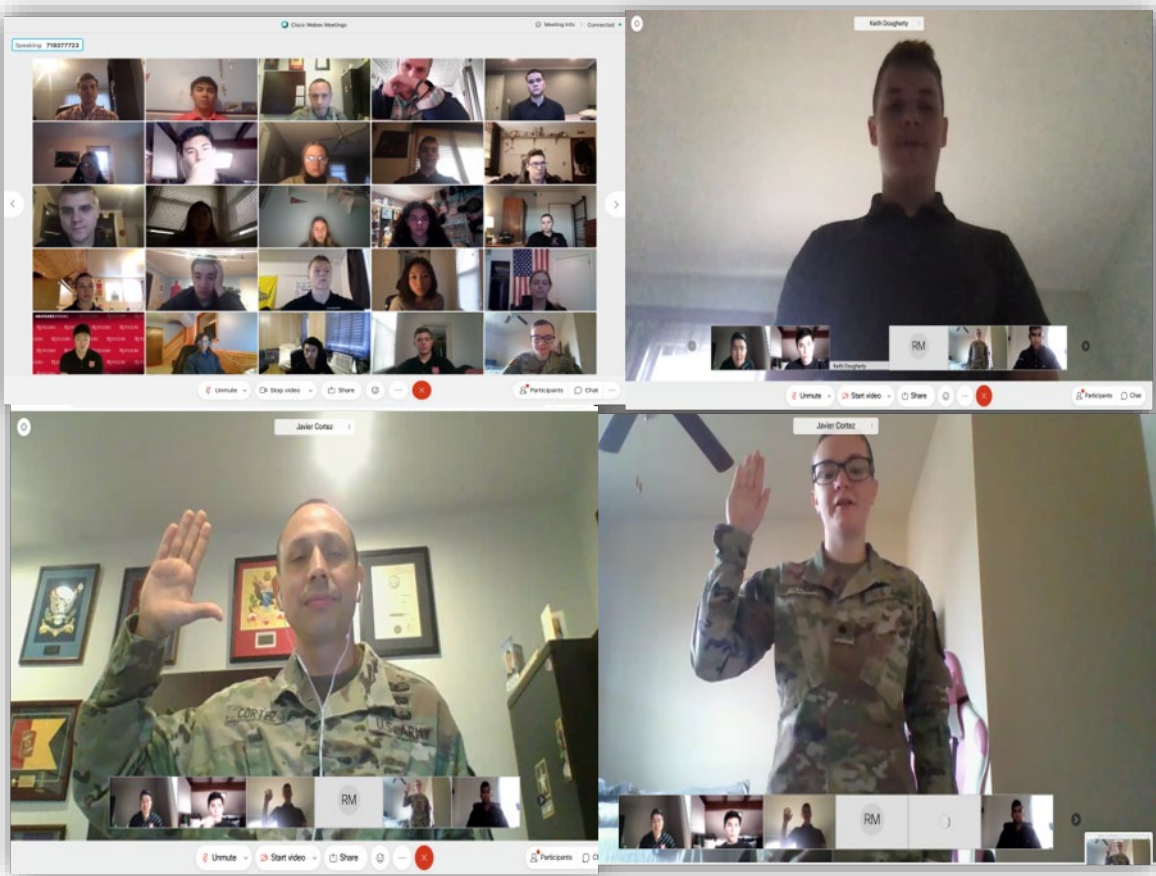


CONTRACTING

Throughout the semester, LTC Cortez had the privilege of contracting several Cadets. In each ceremony, the Cadet(s) commit to complete the Basic and Advanced courses of ROTC. Upon completion, each contracted Cadet will enter the Army as a commissioned Second Lieutenant after graduation. The contracted Cadets include (in order of appearance): **CDTs Battista, Emma, Garcia, Murphy, Van Der Mark, Sasa, Coronel, Hawkins, Brown, Chung, Kwon, Lee, Pieros, Dougherty, Sloop, Collart, Lim, and Bromfield.** We are all extremely proud of our Cadets!



CONTRACTING, cont.



WELCOME OUR NEWEST CADRE

Name: MSG Thomas Cain

Title: SMSI (MSIV)

Component: Active

MSG Cain joined the Scarlet Knight Battalion in August of 2020 from the 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii. He is currently serving as the Senior Military Science Instructor (SMSI) and assists in the instruction of MSIV Cadets. MSG Cain has a long record of leading and taking care of Soldiers in field/deployed and garrison operations. Throughout his Army career, MSG Cain has gained a wealth of knowledge and experiences, which he is eager to share with the SKBn.



Name: CPT Matthew Gounaris

Title: MSIII Instructor

Component: NJ NG (Active)

Bio: CPT Gounaris joined the Scarlet Knight team in July of 2020 as the New Jersey Army National Guard Liaison. He graduated from West Chester University with a B.S. in Exercise Science and commissioned through the Army's Officer Candidate School in 2011. As an Engineer officer, he has served as a platoon leader, executive officer, staff officer, and company commander with the 104th Brigade Engineer Battalion. He has deployed to Puerto Rico in response to hurricane Maria, as well as the Middle East in support of Operation Spartan Shield.



Name: CPT Robert Marsh

Title: MSI Instructor

Component: Active

Bio: CPT Marsh arrived in September 2020 and serves as our MSI instructor. He graduated from the United States Military Academy with a B.S. in Systems Design and Management and commissioned as an Armor officer in 2016. His previous assignments include Tank Platoon Leader, Sniper Team Leader, and Scout Platoon Leader in the First Cavalry Division in Fort Hood, Texas with a rotational deployment to Poland and Germany. He now serves as a Military Intelligence officer in accordance with the Army's branch detail program.



CADET STORYBOARDS

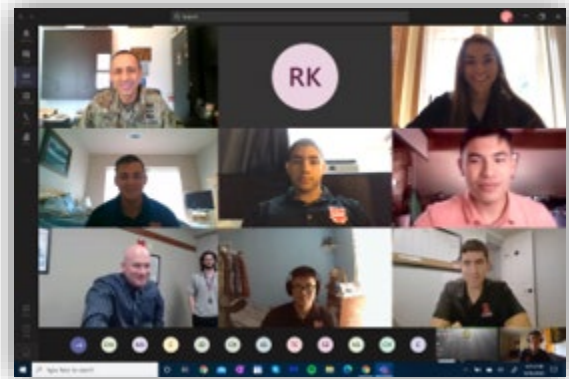
Who: MSIVs, PMS, SMSI, Mr. Michael Moran (Facilitator), Mr. Joe Gonzalez (Technician)

What: Virtual Staff Ride

When: 25 September

Where: Microsoft Teams

Summary: On 25 SEP, the MSIV class, PMS, and SMSI conducted the annual staff ride virtually via Microsoft Teams. The MIV class were given pre-reading materials that covered the 507th Maintenance Co. Ambush and the Palm Sunday Ambush. The purpose of this event was to understand how the past events of both ambushes affected the various departments of the Army and a reflection of decision making, analysis, tactics, and development as future leaders. The MSIVs delved into background and informatics followed by a 3D walkthrough of how the events unfolded. Each ambush was approximately 1.5 hours long with fluid discussions of how both ambushes unfolded. The Cadets also received personal insight from the PMS and facilitator. All of the insights learned will assist the class in their research paper assigned in Military Science 401.



Who: SKBn, Cadre

What: Rutgers SHI Stadium Detail

When: 19 October

Where: SHI Stadium

Summary: On 19 October, the SKBn completed the SHI Stadium Seat detail at SHI Stadium on Busch Campus. All cadets were required to wear masks and complete a university COVID questionnaire and screening before attending. The cadets installed a total of 786 cushioned seats in preparation of the 31 October Rutgers football game vs. Indiana. The SKBn used this opportunity to support Rutgers University and the ROTC program by raising funds, which were deposited into the Battalion's Cadet Fund.



WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA



RUTGERS

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A special thanks to our Alumni
and Supporters for their continual
support of the Scarlet Knight
Battalion!

To stay up to date on our activities/events,
please follow the links below:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RutgersArmyRotcScarletKnightBattalion/>

Instagram: @rutgersarmyrotc

Website: <https://armyrotc.rutgers.edu/home>

Donations: <https://armyrotc.rutgers.edu/donate>

Stay tuned in for updates on our social media and website to include:

- Photo Galleries
- Virtual contact forms directly to our Recruiting Operations Officer
- Better ease-of-use

A Message from the Outgoing Cadet Battalion Commander

By CDT Joseph Hom

Serving as the Cadet Battalion Commander has been an incredible experience and has taught me many valuable lessons as a leader. As this semester comes to a close, I am overwhelmed with pride in the dedication and work that the Cadets of the Scarlet Knight Battalion have put into this program this semester.

The three super military leadership labs that we conducted were a great success, and the upperclassmen did well adjusting to leading the rest of the labs over a virtual platform. It was encouraging to see so many underclassmen volunteer to come to our in-person training and to witness how the cadets reached out to each other to work out informally and stay physically fit even without organized physical training.

The excellent work done by all members of the program this semester is to be commended and has set us up well for next semester. With our return to in-person physical training and weekly labs, as well as the announcement of the Ranger Challenge Competition being held this spring, we have a lot to look forward to as a program. I am confident that the Scarlet Knights will be able to handle any challenges that come their way next semester.

Personally, I am excited to commission at the end of this Spring semester as an active duty Aviation Officer. The experience I've had here at Rutgers Army ROTC and the relationships formed here are by far the most valuable thing that I've received over my college career.

RU MOTIVATED

Go Knights!

