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Summer 2011

2011 O'Callahan Society Newsletter

O'Callahan Society, College of the Holy Cross

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O'Callahan Society Summer 2011 Newsletter



Back to the Future! NROTC to return to Harvard, Yale and Columbia

After 40 years of banishment NROTC is back at Harvard, Yale and Columbia Universities. These schools cite the change in DoD's 'don't ask, don't tell' policy for their changes in policy regarding ROTC.

At a ceremony at Yale on May 26, 2011 Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced that the Navy had reached agreement with Yale to return NROTC to its campus. He also said that a similar agreement had been reached with Columbia. This followed the Harvard announcement in March. Captain Ron Harrell USN, CO of the NROTC Unit at College of the Holy Cross, members of his staff and midshipmen from the Holy Cross battalion attended the ceremony.

According to the Navy press release the Yale NROTC unit will be part of a consortium with the NROTC unit at The College of the Holy Cross. As a member of the consortium the Yale unit staff will report to the Holy Cross commanding officer.

Captain Harrell will stand up a Yale detachment using staff officers from the College's unit until such time as permanent Yale unit officers are assigned to it. The Yale midshipmen will be on board not later than the fall of 2012.

Yale President Richard Levin pointed out that, unlike Harvard whose midshipmen do much of their training at MIT, unit activities will be headquartered on campus.

In other comments reported in the Yale Alumni Magazine, President Levin and Secretary Ray Mabus acknowledged that the Navy is launching new NROTC programs despite the surplus of officer candidates in existing programs and thereby costing the Navy money in times of tight budgets. Both emphasized the importance of having units at elite liberal arts-based universities, to provide strong officer candidates with critical thinking skills and to expose other students to military culture. "At a time when only one percent of America wears the uniform of America, interaction with NROTC midshipmen may be the only interaction with the military that people at Yale get," said Mabus.

Captain Harrell has asked the O' Callahan Society to assist him in reaching out to the recently formed Yale Veterans Association.

O' Callahan Society to Recognize 70 Years of NROTC at the College

The Society will host its 11th Annual Dinner on Homecoming Saturday, September 17, 2011 at 6:00 PM in the Hogan Campus Center Ballroom.

At the dinner the Society will commemorate the 70th anniversary of the NROTC Unit and the 60th anniversary of the AFROTC Detachment. It will also honor the Reverend John E. Brooks

SJ, President Emeritus, and Captain Harry Moore, USN, Ret (posthumously) for their leadership 40 years ago when the College decided not to banish ROTC from the campus.

The featured speaker will be Philip J. Crowley '73, COL USAF (Ret.). He now occupies the Omar N. Bradley chair at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania. He conducts classes at the college, the US Army War College and Penn State University in media and national security policy. He is a former Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and AFROTC Cadet Commander at Holy Cross.

10th Annual Dinner - Saturday evening of Homecoming Weekend, October 2, 2010. When the scheduled speaker was not able to be there the Society was honored to have two speakers: Captain Ronald Harrell USN Commander and Professor of Naval Science of the College's NROTC Unit, and Rear Admiral William McCarthy '76 USN (Ret.) Deputy Director Operational Test and Evaluation Force and Co-Chair of the Society. They addressed eighty members, special guests, and friends, including thirty midshipmen from the Battalion and members of ALANA.

News from the Unit & the Midshipmen Battalion

Change of Command - In the August of 2010, Captain Ronald Harrell USN ([see bio](#)) assumed command of the Unit. In May Commander Jamie Godwin USN reported aboard as Executive Officer. At a ceremony in the O'Callahan Ward Room Commander John Bishop USN, Unit XO for three years and Acting Commanding Officer for one year, retired in March 2011. He continues to work at the Unit in a civil service capacity in human resources.

Unit Military Staff - Marine Officer Instructor, Captain Chris Reinke, USMC; Naval Science Instructors, Lieutenant Scott McBride, USN, Lieutenant Austin Rasbach, USN, Lieutenant Molly Crabbe, USN, Asst Marine Officer Instructor, SSgt Steven Youngs, USMC, Supply Office, SKC (SW/AW) Dominic Dilorenzo, USN (Ret).

Midshipmen Battalion Strength - At the end of the academic year 2010-2011 the Battalion stood at 62. This included Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program (MECEP), Seaman to Admiral Program (STA 21) as well as Navy and Marine ROTC Midshipmen. The Battalion consisted of 26 students at the College of the Holy Cross, 30 at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and 7 at Worcester State University.

Annual Presidents' Review - On April 15, 2011 the Unit conducted the 60th Presidents' Review in the Hart Recreation Center. Vice Admiral Peter H. Daly '77 USN, Deputy Commander Fleet Forces Command was the featured speaker. Reverend Michael McFarland SJ, President of the College hosted a post review reception for all who attended.

Commissioning - This year the nine senior midshipmen were commissioned in separate ceremonies. At a joint services ceremony with the Army and the Air Force at WPI, six midshipmen were commissioned by RADM Lothrop (Buzz) Little, USN, Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command. Before graduation on May 27, in Memorial Plaza (behind O'Kane Hall), the three Holy Cross midshipmen were commissioned, by their respective fathers,

currently on or retired from the Navy or the Marine Corps. The new Ensigns will report to Surface Warfare Units (3) and Flight School (2). The Second Lieutenants (4) will report to the Basic School.



Battalion Newsletters – In the fall the Battalion began publishing its own newsletter. It distributed three editions to midshipmen family members, the O’Callahan Society, program alumni and friends as well as the Battalion.

Remembrances

Commissioning - 2002 – Here is an excerpt from a piece published by alumnus TJ Mayotte ’02. Check out his full version of Holy Cross sea stories at [End of an Era](#).

“ROTC’s importance to me and its central position to my college experience were driven home on my final day at Holy Cross.

For a midshipman, graduation also means commissioning: the start of your actual, real-life military career. Our commissioning speaker that morning was an admiral of the Navy SEALs, and his speech remains perhaps the most motivating oration I have ever heard. It had been eight months since 9/11. The Taliban had fallen, but bin Laden had escaped. George W. Bush was spelling out a framework for “rebuilding” Afghanistan. The world had become a shifting, uncertain place, and we were preparing to enter its deepest rifts.

The good admiral was excited to serve, and it showed. He reminded us what we were going to be doing, and why. When he was done speaking, I think the entire hall would have followed him across the River Styx.

The ceremony stands out in my mind for one other reason: After the names had been called, my class swam into the crowd to have our families and friends formally trade our midshipmen shoulder boards for those of an ensign. My girlfriend at the time did one, my parents the other. After my official ascension to the only rank used an insult (“ensign” was not a term of endearment in the Navy), my father did something he had literally never done in my lifetime. He

hugged me. My mother gasped. He was never a demonstrative man. Seeing me in uniform, among my peers and exhorted by admirals, headed out into a dangerous world, finally actually moved him emotionally.

After that, the traditional graduation ceremony was sideshow. Yes, it was the culmination of four years of academic struggle, but it simply couldn't match the power and pride of commissioning. ROTC meant early mornings, extra classes, weekends spent scrubbing old ships and getting inspected. It was also enough to earn a hug from my father. Pretty good deal."

~ TJ Mayotte, May 11, 2011

In Memoriam – Patrick L. Townsend Major USMC (Ret) – September 7, 2010

A graduate of Marquette University and commissioned in the Marine Corps in 1963, Major Townsend retired from the Corps in 1983. He was the Marine option instructor in the NROTC program at the College of the Holy Cross from 1977-1981. During those years his classes in American Military History were often attended by as many or more civilian students as midshipmen. In 1979 he received the Leo A. Codd award as the best ROTC instructor in the country. He received the Bronze Star with Combat V for meritorious service in Vietnam.

In the private sector Pat was a successful international speaker on business quality and leadership. He co-authored nine books and hundreds of articles with Joan, his wife of 43 years. They both were very active with the College's Theater Arts Department, where Joan continues to work.

Pat was a valued member of the O'Callahan Society's Board and Executive Committee. He regularly stressed the benefits of ROTC on campus because it exposed not only the midshipmen but also the civilian students and members of the campus community to military culture.

He was buried from Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in West Boylston, MA. Rev. John E. Brooks S.J. concelebrated the Mass. Midshipmen from the College's battalion rendered military honors.

Update to Yellow Ribbon Program

In last year's newsletter we reported that the College had agreed to participate with the Veterans Administration in the "Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program." Its participation would be to provide \$18,000 in scholarship aid to up to 10 veterans (or their dependents) who are eligible for education benefits under the New GI Bill. Under the program the College's scholarship would be matched by the VA in addition to its basic education benefits. What was not reported is that Yellow Ribbon agreements are renewed year to year. The above was for academic year 2009-2010.

For the next two academic years the College agreed to provide \$5,000 in scholarship aid to eligible veterans.