

# FORGED



A PUBLICATION FOR FORGED GOLD  
CADETS & ALUMNI

# Staff

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## Disclaimer

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## Purpose

*Forged* serves as a forum for all past and present cadets and alumni and family and friends of the Forged Gold Battalion. The purpose is to show progress and development in a cadet and to cultivate a common understanding of cadets' ROTC experience.

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# Table of Contents

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<b>Message from the Command Team</b>	4
Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Alex Aquino Master Sergeant (MSG) Robert Schultz	
<b>Current Operations</b>	5-7
<i>CDT Melisa Flores</i>	
Land Navigation	
Field Leadership Reaction Course (FLRC)	
Platoon Operations	
<b>Featured Training Events</b>	8-10
<i>CDT Matthew Moon</i>	
Spring Field Training Exercise (FTX)	
Field Artillery Training Opportunity	
<b>Cadet Corner</b>	11-14
<i>CDT Dong Yeon Lee</i> <i>CDT John Gaw</i>	
<b>Cadre Corner</b>	15-16
<i>CDT Jameson Williams</i>	
<b>Alumni Corner</b>	17-19
<i>CDT Melisa Flores</i>	
<b>Projected Calendar</b>	20
<i>CDT Melisa Flores</i>	
<b>Forged Gold Battalion Cadre</b>	21

# Message from the Command Team

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**LTC Alex Aquino**

## **Department Chair and Professor of Military Science**

Greetings cadets, alumni, and friends and family of the Forged Gold Battalion! The last academic year was full of a whirlwind of emotions ranging from uncertainty, caused by the pandemic, to excitement, watching the senior cadets graduate and commission. MSG Schultz and I are extremely proud of the cadets and their accomplishments over the last term.

Beginning last January, our Army ROTC program was one of the only programs in the state of California to conduct in-person instruction, physical training, and military labs. This can only be attributed to the dedicated cadre who ensured strict compliance with COVID mitigation protocols. Conducting all classes and training in-person enabled the cadre to deliver quality instruction and better prepare the cadets for commissioning, advanced individual training, or Advanced Camp.

Over the last term, key training highlights included a Land Navigation Exercise, a Spring Field Training Exercise (FTX), and the Field Leadership Reaction Course (FLRC). The Land Navigation Exercise took place at Judge Davis Trailhead where the MS4s planned, resourced, and established a land navigation course. The Spring FTX took place at Camp Parks near Dublin, CA. The FTX focused on platoon level operations to assess cadets' Army Leadership Attributes and Competencies and prepare the MS3 cadets for Advanced Camp. The FLRC also occurred at Camp Parks and focused on team building and testing cadets' ability to think critically and creatively. The cadets were able to participate in all military training despite their heavy course loads throughout the term. This is a true testament of the resiliency of our next generation leaders.

We are pleased to announce that UC Davis and CSUS have both announced the return of all in-person instruction this Fall. We are excited to have the universities rejoin the program in-person and for cadets to enjoy their college experiences.

As all of the cadre depart this summer for Cadet Summer Training (CST) at Fort Knox, KY, we would like to wish all of you a fun, but safe summer, and we look forward to rejoining the cadets this Fall!

## **Senior Military Science Instructor**

Over the past 10 months, the cadets of the Forged Gold Battalion have worked hard to both succeed academically and excel in the ROTC program. This is impressive because the cadets completed the majority of their academic requirements virtually. The program was also able to complete the requirements set forth by Cadet Command. It has come time for a much-deserved break.

You, the cadets, have been extremely resilient in these times and that will prepare you for your future in the Army. Although you have some time off this summer, ensure to keep fitness in mind. Maintaining mental and physical fitness is a lifetime decision that you will need to make as a future leader. If you are an MSIV, you will be getting ready to enter the force and lead. Regardless of the branch you end up in, your physical fitness is one of the things that will keep you and your Soldiers alive on the battlefield.

Have a great summer and we look forward to seeing you all again in the Fall!



**MSG Robert Schultz**





# CURRENT OPERATIONS

Land Navigation | FLRC | Platoon Operations





# Land Navigation

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This spring, cadets took to the hills at Judge Davis Trailhead once again to put their land navigation skills to the test. This challenging training event afforded the MS3 cadets the opportunity to refine their terrain association

skills in preparation for Advanced Camp this summer. Additionally, the training event developed the land navigation skills of the MS1 and MS2 cadets, bolstering their confidence and ability to successfully navigate the steep terrain.





# FLRC

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At Camp Parks, cadets executed the Field Leadership Reaction Course, a team-building event focused on nurturing skills critical to a leader. Cadets were split into teams and were faced with five separate problem sets and a limited amount of time to complete each one. The course is designed to develop and test skills that include mission planning, communication, cooperation, emotional intelligence, time management, and decision-making. Upon completion of the exercise, the cadets walked away with greater trust in one another and a deeper understanding of their team and group dynamic.



# Platoon Operations

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To prepare for CST, cadets successfully completed numerous Situational Training Exercise (STX) lanes to include a platoon attack, defense, ambush, movement to contact, react to contact, and raid. The MS3 cadets continued to develop and refine their leadership and tactical skills before being assessed this summer.





**FEATURED TRAINING EVENT**  
Spring Field Training Exercise





# Spring Field Training Exercise

## *The Art of Navigating Hills at Camp Parks*

Forged Gold Battalion cadets completed the Spring FTX, conducting platoon level operations to further test their leadership and tactical abilities. The training event marked a familiar return for returning cadets following its cancellation the previous year due to COVID-19. Cadets were given the opportunity to apply lessons-learned from both the classroom setting and weekly leadership labs in an open environment that tested their intestinal

fortitude and resilience. Cadets from UC Davis and Sac State University were organized into two platoons in order to ensure all MS3 cadets were afforded multiple leadership positions. The platoons conducted an attack, raid, ambush, movement to contact, and established patrol bases each night. The varied terrain, constant movement, fluctuating extreme temperatures, and highly-engaged opposing force (OPFOR) pushed the cadets to their limits.







# Field Artillery Training Opportunity



In early January, Cadets traveled to Camp Roberts, CA to see cannons and the devastating results of 'Call for Fire' in action. Throughout the day, Cadets received hands-on training with the unit's Field Artillery weapon systems and assets. Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery Regiment demonstrated the entire Sensor-to-Shooter process, giving the Cadets a greater understanding and appreciation of why Field Artillery is aptly named the **King of Battle**.



**CDT Miller prepares to load a 95 pound 155mm projectile into the M777 Howitzer. Field Artillerists need to be physically fit.**



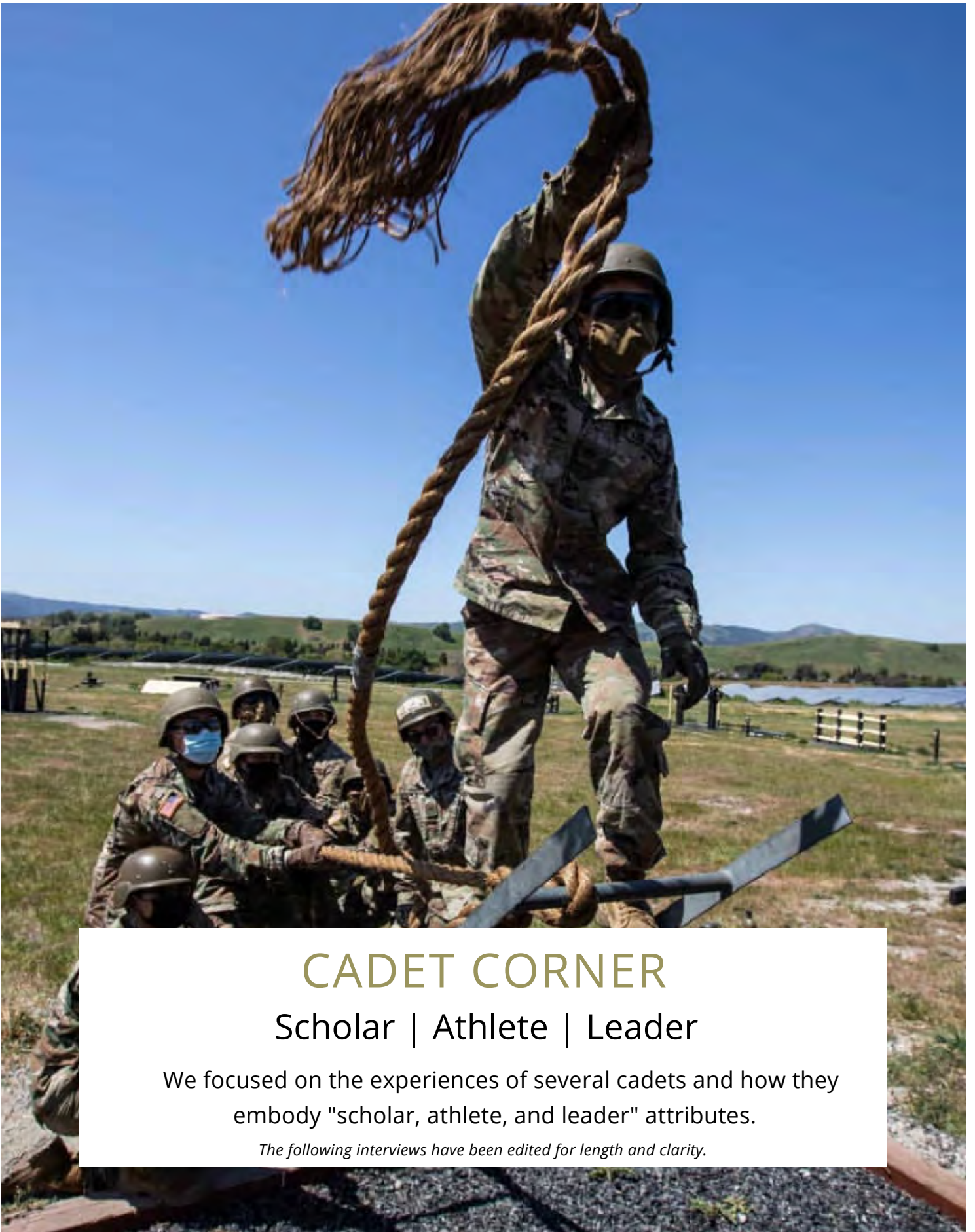
**CDT Citroen pulls the lanyard of the M777 Howitzer, sending a 155mm round several kilometers away into the impact area.**



**Overlooking the impact area at the Observation Post, Cadets receive hands-on instruction from Field Artillery Forward Observers.**

**From left to right:** CDT Kwon (MS2), CDT Wong (MS2), CDT Flores (MS3), CDT Rojas (MS3), CDT Citroen (MS3), CDT Miller (MS1), CDT Lafaver (MS3), CPT Rolls (UC Davis MS2 instructor and Field Artillerist).





## CADET CORNER

Scholar | Athlete | Leader

We focused on the experiences of several cadets and how they embody "scholar, athlete, and leader" attributes.

*The following interviews have been edited for length and clarity.*

INTERVIEW BY CDT GAW

Second Lieutenant Quinn is a recent graduate of Sac State University. He earned his commission as an Aviation officer in the California National Guard.



***Did you find it difficult balancing your academics and ROTC responsibilities over the last four years?***

"I would say it was challenging but never impossible to balance the two. When I was a Freshman, someone told me there were three things that would take up my time in college: academics, athletics, and social life. I considered ROTC to be athletics. I always prioritized the Army and school... because of that, it was never impossible. We have to manage our time well. Always stay ahead of your assignments and backwards plan."

***Do you have any advice for those who are struggling to balance their academics and ROTC responsibilities?***

"Do *not* procrastinate. Finish your work as soon as possible; you never know when something will come up in ROTC that demands your time. Value the time you have and use it wisely."

"Personally, I would lock myself in my room and turn my phone off if necessary. I would always look ahead on the syllabi of my university courses. As for ROTC, we have the entire training calendar mapped-out so I would just plan from there. I do what I can when able so that I was able to give the ROTC program my time for training. I always planned ahead because you never knew when you had to go in for a last-minute Color Guard detail or cover for someone and run a PT session or make a CONOP...you never know when something else is going to come up so always be ahead of your assignments."

***You were recognized as a Distinguished Military Graduate - could you speak about how you achieved this accomplishment?***

"[Becoming a Distinguished Military Graduate] is based on your national standing on the Order of Merit List (OML) across all ROTC programs. My academic performance and placement on the Forged Gold Battalion OML led to my national ranking. I wasn't expecting that at all; it wasn't something I was going for. I always prioritized my schooling. I know it sounds cliché, but I simply put my time and energy into my academics and ROTC and it paid off."



INTERVIEW BY CDT LEE, DY

CDT Strupp is an MS3 at UC Davis, pursuing a B.S. in Genetics and Genomics. She will attend CST at Fort Knox this summer and will return in the Fall as the UCD Women's Rugby team captain.

## ***What is your perspective on the upcoming events for both ROTC and school sports?***

"I am excited for both for different reasons, but mostly because I want to prove myself as an athlete and a leader. I would like to show what a few years of learning, understanding, and growing can accumulate into. I also enjoy the company of my peers in both, and it's exciting to see us mature together."

## ***Are you excited about rugby coming back?***

"I am definitely excited for rugby to return and hope our contact practices are just as fun as they used to be. I'm hoping for some late summer scrimmages!"

## ***What is the most interesting thing about Davis opening up?***

"The most interesting thing to me is how people are eating indoors now; it feels like it has been ages. I am still wary of it, and spring quarter weather is almost too nice to eat indoors, anyway."

## ***In what other clubs or sports do you participate? After a year of distance learning, how is the transition back to campus?***

"I also participate in jiu-jitsu during the summer with my friends, but that is a sport I have been avoiding since lockdown for obvious reasons. However, once things return to a sense of normalcy, I will be attending a gym in Dixon to train with a world-renowned jiu-jitsu professor."

## ***Do you feel safe to workout again in preparation for rugby?***

"I do feel safe returning to rugby because I trust myself and my teammates to make wise choices with our time spent outside of rugby; I know that my house personally follows a strict guideline for who we are allowed to see, and that sentiment echoes with my teammates. With more of my friends getting vaccinated, and following CDC household visitation guidelines, my approved friends list has been expanding even more, and I know it is the same for others."



# CDT MELISA FLORES

# LEADER

INTERVIEW BY CDT LEE, DY

CDT Flores was activated with her unit in early January in support of OPERATION CAPITOL RESPONSE II, where she conducted missions and provided support before and after the 59th Presidential Inauguration in Washington, District of Columbia. She returned two months later, having learned much from her unique experience. CDT Flores is an MS3, pursuing a B.S. in International Relations at UC Davis. She will attend CST this summer and return in the Fall as the UCD Cadet Public Affairs Officer.



## ***How did your overall mission and your time in D.C. impact your view of active duty?***

"It made me realize that I wanted to go active duty even more because, despite the long hours, I genuinely enjoyed it. It didn't affect my view of activations because this was not my first. However, it was definitely a unique and very rare activation that I am glad I got the opportunity to experience."

## ***If given the chance, would you do this again?***

"Oh, definitely! Like I said before, this was a rare opportunity, and well, I feel like a part of history. It's not every day you get to explore the tunnels around the Capitol and get paid for it or be present during a presidential inauguration but I also think it depends. For staff, we worked long hours daily. As a part of staff, trying to manage school and work while still getting enough sleep was challenging."

## ***How was teamwork incorporated?***

"We had different coverage areas. My unit was a part of 'Team House' so we would cover the Entry Control Points (ECPs) and roam within the House of Representatives area coverage. Our neighboring teams were 'Team Senate', 'Team Capitol', and 'Team SCOTUS'. We came together from different states and worked as teams to provide integrated security operations and reinforce the United States Capitol Police (USCP). 'Team House' itself was comprised of service members from five different states and one territory: California National Guard, Wyoming National Guard, Kentucky National Guard, Illinois National Guard, Pennsylvania National Guard, and Guam National Guard. Our team's purpose was to provide security."



# Cadre Corner

INTERVIEW BY CDT WILLIAMS

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Captain Nathan Rolls graduated from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County with a B.S. in Geography and Environmental Systems and earned a commission in the Field Artillery from Johns Hopkins University in 2011. He is the primary advisor and instructor to the MS2 cadets at UC Davis.



## ***How did ROTC help prepare you to start your military career?***

"I joined ROTC my junior year. Thrust into a world previously unknown to me, it forced me to step out of my comfort zone, ultimately bolstering my confidence. The program afforded me the opportunity to understand and develop my own leadership style, which I would continue to develop and refine over the next nine years.

"My program's cadre were always engaged and invested in our success as future leaders, and I owe much of who I am today to their guidance and mentorship. I still stay in contact with several of them and reach out for their input to this day."

## ***Describe a challenge you have faced and how you overcame it.***

"There will be countless situations throughout your time in the Army where you will be tested physically, mentally, and emotionally. Successfully overcoming these challenges makes you stronger; you come away with a greater understanding and reverence for the situation, and use that experience to better lead your peers and Soldiers.

"One challenge that tested my emotional resilience was the Advanced Airborne School at Fort Bragg. I spent three full weeks successfully completing each hurdle, only to narrowly fail the Jumpmaster Personnel Inspection (JMPI). In order to pass JMPI, you need to inspect three jumpers, one with combat equipment, in under five minutes using proper sequence and correct nomenclature while verbally identifying all equipment deficiencies. Most of the students that are successful on their first attempt (fewer than 30%) finish their inspection with only seconds remaining. As I was a Battery Commander at the time, I felt utterly defeated having to return to my unit unsuccessful. However, my superiors, peers, and Paratroopers were extremely supportive. I took the time to reflect on my approach and attitude and maintained a positive outlook upon returning to the school later in the year, which I successfully passed."

## ***Describe a memorable experience you have had in the Army.***

"My most memorable experiences all involve times I've spent with my Soldiers; downrange with the rocket jockeys and cannoneers, alone and unafraid with the fire supporters in the Mojave Desert, and hitting a pitch-black Drop Zone in the middle of the night among steely-eyed Paratroopers. I've developed both personally and professionally through their camaraderie, expertise, and drive for success.

"But the memories that stand out the most involve hanging out the side of an aircraft flying at 130 knots and 1,200 feet in the air. As a Jumpmaster, I was directly responsible for preparing Paratroopers for Airborne operations and ultimately exiting them safely from the aircraft.

"I realized how far I had come while giving jump commands to the Paratroopers in the aircraft - from an extremely nervous cadet literally taking his first jump into the unknown to a Jumpmaster leading the way and instilling confidence in his team."

## ***What advice would you give to cadets to succeed in both ROTC and in the Army?***

"Take the initiative, stay humble, don't be afraid to take risks, and above all, be a genuine person who leads with integrity. Your Soldiers don't care if you're the most physically fit leader or have the most chest candy; they want you to be someone they can trust... someone they know will put their needs above your own."

# Cadre Staff Ride to Montana

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When the cadre are not instructing cadets, they are conducting professional development in order to grow as professionals, instructors, and leaders. The Forged Gold Battalion cadre conducted a military history staff ride at the U.S. Cavalry School located near the battlefield of Little Bighorn, Montana. They executed a horse-mounted field study of the battlefield (following in the hoofprints of Custer's 7th Cavalry and Sioux Warriors of Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse), fired several authentic weapons including the Springfield Carbine, 45 LC

Revolver, and traditional bow and arrow, and studied the military history, Native American cultures, and major decision points of the Little Bighorn and Rosebud battles.

The cadre departed Little Bighorn with a thorough understanding of the mission command philosophy and warfighting functions and are prepared to carry lessons-learned as future leaders, be stewards of the profession of arms, and dedicate themselves to be life-long learners of the profession.



# Alumni Corner

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**LTC (Ret.) Jeffrey Tally**

LTC (Ret.) Jeffrey Tally is a veteran, G.I. Bill recipient, and was an Army ROTC Student while attending Sacramento State University. He served as a Special Forces Officer in numerous locations to include Germany, Africa, Afghanistan, and Iraq. He still has an active role in the Sacramento State ROTC program, offering scholarships to cadets in the top of their class. He and Mrs. Janet C. Tally established this scholarship in appreciation for the many memories and life rewards received during their years of service together in the United States Army.

***What made you want to join the ROTC program when you were a student at Sacramento State?***

"As a prior service NCO, I began actively drilling with the 12th Special Forces Group during my second year of college and wanted to potentially grow into a leadership position with that great organization. Money was the primary motivator

to start actively drilling; every penny helped at that point as a married student with two children. But the primary reason changed as my studies in Civil Engineering advanced toward graduation. I saw the opportunity to branch Engineer, further my education, retire while still young, and transition to a civilian job as a Civil Engineer."

***Did what you learn during your time as a cadet in the Forged Gold Battalion set you on the path to success?***

"I think I came to the program a little better equipped than the average student to be successful. I was a Special Forces NCO and had been exposed to many leadership styles. I understood teamwork and team building and understood the level of excellence that one should display if you are serious about the military profession.

"I finished well in everything I took on and made it a point to help others along the way. I think the program and cadre provided me a platform or stepping stone on a path of success."

***Does the ROTC program today differ from the program you attended?***

"I think it is basically the same program. It seeks to develop the leadership potential of each cadet within a scholar-athlete environment for service in one of the Army branches, active or reserve. I think it is much more diverse than when I went through the program with more females and minority students participating. I think there is much more informal interaction and mentorship between the cadre and students today. I think those things have made it a better program and one that allows for more informed decisions on the part of the cadets."



*LTC (Ret.) Tally standing at one of the firebases in Bamian, Afghanistan above the stone walls where the Taliban blew out the buddha carvings. Photo taken in 2002.*

***What is your favorite memory from Sacramento State University, either as a cadet or student?***

"I genuinely enjoyed Sacramento State University. The campus is beautiful, and the Engineering Faculty were exceptional while a student there. However, school was strictly a means to an end for me, so the morning that I graduated and that same afternoon that I was commissioned onto active duty are my two favorite memories. I felt a lot of pride in both events and immense gratitude to my wife and family for everything they had done and sacrificed to support me up to that wonderful celebration. A month later, I was on active duty, and seven months later, I was serving in Germany with my wife and children."

***Do you have a favorite memory from your time in the Army?***

"That is a hard one to answer. I had the opportunity to attend a fully-funded graduate school while serving on active duty for two years. I majored in Operations Research which was extremely challenging for me. As a payback tour for graduate school, I was assigned to a small Joint Test and Evaluation Agency in New Mexico where I had the opportunity to work on several cutting-edge technology acquisition programs as the lead Test/Project Officer. It was an amazing experience, and I can remember often thinking that I could not even believe that I was getting paid to do the job. I was working on projects that are still impactful today with brilliant people. That job also set me up for years of post-retirement work."



# Recent Alumni

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2021

Beltran, Carlos  
Bordas, Mark  
Castro, Fidel  
Della catena, Ilario  
Gonzales, Devyn  
Majumder, Rishav  
Montgomery, Logan  
Moore, Raymond  
Quinn, Jacob  
Vazquez, Stefanie  
Zalewski, Nicolette

2020

Arciniega, Madelyn  
Avillanoza, Kyle V.  
Chaidez, Eduardo  
Cornejo, Roman A.  
Cruz, Joseph  
Garner, Alex  
Guevara, Nikolas S.  
Huntsman, Nicole  
Lau, Brittany  
Luangphonh, Billy  
Luna, Josiah  
Nguyen, James  
Phillips, Ronald  
Quijas, Kaytlin  
Singh, Seth D.  
Tran, Hoang  
Valdez, Isaac  
Vigars, Joshua M.

2019

Bardo, Joseph A.  
Calderon, Eddy  
Do, Benjamin H.  
Dowling, Patrick M.  
Fox, Tyler M.  
Hong, Vincent  
Kim, Steve E.  
LaMar, Karly A.  
Lu, Esther  
Meech, Jacob  
Parry, Austin S.  
Perenon, Shiloh D.  
Rankin, Micah N.  
Serena, Elliot  
Smith, Daniel E.  
Stinfort, Guetchine  
Villegas, Jorge A.  
Xie, Emily  
Zhang, Kevin

2018

Bilandzich, Domagoj P.  
Cheong, Eugene J.  
Cho, Joshua  
Corso, Christopher  
Davis, Austin  
Do, Benjamin H.  
Dowling, Patrick M.  
Gee, Nathan  
Hackenburg, Shelby  
Jones, Phylester I.  
Kim, Steve E.  
Koeneke, Patrick  
LaMar, Karly A.  
Owens, Chela  
Perenon, Shiloh D.  
Rankin, Micah N.  
Reed, Joseph  
Saldivar, Gerardo  
Smith, Daniel E.  
Tovar-Ruiz, Arturo  
Ureno, Jared T.  
Villegas, Jorge A.  
Williams, Renonedo A.  
Wong, Daphne  
Zhang, Kevin  
Zhen, Raymond



**UC DAVIS** SACRAMENTO STATE



## FORGED GOLD BATTALION



*Graphic created by CDT Moon*

# 2021 Projected Calendar

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**August 30th**

CSUS Fall Instruction Begins

**September 22nd**

UCD Fall Instruction Begins

**October**

TF East Ranger Challenge Competition

CWST

Cadre Army Ten-Miler

**November**

BRM / Hand Grenade FTX

Land Nav / STX FTX

**December**

FGB Turkey Bowl

UCD / CSUS ACFT

UCD Winter Break

CSUS Winter Break



# Forged Gold Battalion Cadre

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