FORGED

A PUBLICATION FOR
CADETS, ALUMNI, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS
OF THE FORGED GOLD BATTALION
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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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Greetings cadets, alumni, and friends and family of the Forged Gold Battalion! This newsletter not only marks the end of another academic term, but also an opportunity to highlight the success of the cadets and program. The cadre and I are extremely proud of the exponential growth made by each cadet in the program over the last term. With the return of students on-campus, the program has experienced one of the busiest academic terms in recent years. The MS4s returned from Cadet Summer Training motivated to improve training and the cadet development program to enhance the development of the underclass cadets. In addition to training, the cadets have been heavily involved with outreach and recruiting events to bolster enrollment in the program.

Over the last term, training highlights include the Basic Rifle Marksmanship (BRM) range and a combined Land Navigation and Field Training Exercise (FTX). The BRM range occurred at Camp Roberts where over 70 cadets participated and completed Individual Weapons Qualification Tables (IWQT) utilizing the M-4 rifle. All cadets qualified as Marksman with 29 cadets achieving Sharpshooter and eight cadets achieving Expert. In addition to the IWQT, cadets conducted concurrent training on hand grenades, Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TC3), and radio operations.

The combined Land Navigation and FTX occurred at Camp Parks, CA over a 72-hour period. All cadets conducted an iteration of day and night land navigation on Day 1 before transitioning into Situation Training Exercise (STX) lanes on Day 2 and 3. The intent of the STX lanes was to reinforce the cadets’ understanding of platoon tactics practiced during the Leadership Labs at respective schools. The training event was a great success in baselining all cadets from both UC Davis and CSUS on infantry platoon tactics.

We would not have been able to conduct these training events without the gracious support from 1-143 FA Battalion. In addition, the success of the program can only be accredited to the outstanding cadet leadership who planned, resourced, and executed the training. CDT Tanglao (Battalion Commander – CSUS) and CDT Smith (Executive Officer – UCD) were instrumental in bridging cadets from two separate schools with different academic calendars towards mission accomplishment. It is an honor and privilege to witness and develop the next generation of officers and guide the program to achieving the motto, “Forging Leaders!”

Though the term soon comes to an end, it feels like it just started yesterday. The team and I are incredibly proud of the things you have accomplished, executing multiple training events while maintaining your academic excellence.

I encourage you to spend time with your family and friends over this winter break. This is a happy time of year for many people; however, remember that some people struggle. Reach out to those you care about and make sure they are alright.

Additionally, ensure that you are maintaining your physical and mental health over the holidays. Be ready to hit the ground running upon your return. There are still quite a few significant training events left this academic year; we will conduct the Spring FTX, Land Navigation training, and multiple fitness assessments, to name a few.

Congratulations to all of the MS4s on their component and branch selection. We look forward to seeing you continue to grow into young leaders. It is exciting to watch you develop your leadership style. To the MS3s, this upcoming term is crucial for you. Now is the time to hone your skills before Advanced Camp; absorb all of the information you can, ask questions, and strive to be the best version of yourself.

Stay safe and have a great break. We look forward to seeing you back in January!

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“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

-Aristotle

FEATURED TRAINING EVENT

Ranger Challenge
Ranger Challenge 2021 was held at Fort Harrison, Helena, Montana and was a great experience for Forged Gold Battalion cadets. It started with tryouts that consisted of a 6-mile ruck, ACFT, rappel seat evaluations, donning a CBRN mask, and a written exam. From this we were able to make our team which consisted of Cadets Eng, Lafaver, Smith, Kwon, Dobbins, Thomson, Miller, Ochoa, and Westover. This also included Cadets Nolan and Nickels as alternatives. Additionally, Cadets Bohen and Williams were present to help support the team during training which were vital to our teamwork and success. Practices were led under our team captain, Cadet Eng. From there, we could get more in-depth training on the weekends to firing ranges with a national level marksmanship team that consisted of former infantry NCOs, and land navigation practice as well as river crossing familiarization. Through these practices, we were able to educate each other with the necessary skills needed for the competition and most importantly, bond as a team. Overall, our performance at the competition was great for the short amount of time we spent training for the event as compared to other schools. My personal favorite moments were the ruck march, river crossing, confidence course, and the ACFT. These four specific events incorporated our team bonding and really involved all of us uniting even though we were tired and in a lot of pain. Every individual was able to complete all obstacles on the confidence course, and the amount of cooperation and encouragement we gave each other during the ruck and river crossing were unparalleled to the other schools. The ACFT was the icing on the cake; we finished 4th overall in that event and we finished strong! Overall, the best thing we took out of the weekend was the team-bonding moments and how happy we were together. Our friendships together definitely grew and we plan to take that with us for next year’s Ranger Challenge.
CURRENT OPERATIONS
CWST | BRM | Land Navigation | Platoon STX
Forged Gold Cadets are consistently challenged, both physically and mentally; the training events they must complete successfully push them out of their comfort zones and to their limits. The Combat Water Survival Test (CWST) is no exception, teaching cadets survival techniques in the event of a water emergency. In order to successfully pass, cadets must demonstrate proficiency in four events while wearing the OCP (Operational Camouflage Pattern) uniform: 10 minute swim, 5 minute water tread, equipment don and ditch, and 25 meter equipment swim.

Cadet Elyhia Trevino, an MS2 at Sac State, prepared mentally and physically for the event, though, she remarked that “training is nothing like the real deal.” For Trevino, CWST ran smoothly up until the final event. In order to successfully pass the last hurdle, cadets must swim 25 meters while carrying a weighted plastic rifle above the water. While Trevino had previously practiced swimming with her equipment, she had not yet swam the full 25 meters. Relating her experience on the swim, “once I reached 15 meters, I started sinking. I panicked and couldn’t keep myself above water.” Struggling to stay afloat, she latched onto the nearby flotation barriers, officially disqualifying Trevino for this portion of the test. “I was so disappointed and upset,” Trevino said, “but that only fueled my hunger for success.” From the moment she stepped out of the pool, she was ready to give the 25 meter equipment swim a second try without hesitation. At 15 meters, she started to sink again. On the brink of failure, she recalls hearing her dad’s voice in her head, saying “you better not quit!” and she absolutely refused to give up. “I took the best breath I could with my face nearly underwater and started swimming. I raised the rifle in the air and submerged myself to get more speed,” said Trevino. Before she knew it, she had successfully traversed the 25 meter distance, passing the final stage of CWST. “I was coughing and out of breath, but I was alive,” she remarked. Her drive to success was given extra impetus by her unwillingness to give up and her desire to triumph. Reflecting on her achievement, “I always tell myself that it’s not going to kill me. I’m not going to die. It’s not going to hurt for long. Pain is temporary; success is forever.”
The Army is making individual weapons qualification more combat focused. The new standard requires Soldiers to engage targets faster and to operate as if they are engaging an enemy. Starting on October 29th, the FGB spent several days completing the M4 Individual Weapons Qualification Tables (IWQT) I - VI; preliminary marksmanship instruction (PMI), pre-live fire simulation, shooting position drills, group and zero, practice qualification, and qualification. Because most cadets were not familiar with the new qualification standards, cadet leadership planned a thorough PMI which was executed during a previous leadership lab. PMI was again completed at the range in order to review and refine practices. In order to maximize the time available for those waiting to shoot, the MS4s conducted three stations of concurrent training on the range: 

**Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC)**, taught by Cadets Flores, Kuehl, and Puerto; **ASIP radio training**, taught by Cadets Martinez-Perez and Power; **hand grenade employment**, instructed by Cadets Lee, S. and Megenney. Additionally, the MS3s received practical training at the Call for Fire simulator in preparation for Advanced Camp 2022! 

The new four-phase qualification features standing firing positions. Soldiers are still issued four 10-round magazines to engage 40 pop-up targets, but there are four firing positions; Soldiers start in the standing position and then go to prone unsupported, prone supported, kneeling supported, and finally standing supported. To receive a passing qualification of Marksman, one must hit a minimum of 23 targets (Sharpshooter is a minimum of 30 targets and Expert requires one to hit at least 36 targets). Upon completion of qualification on Day 3, UC Davis Cadets competed against Sac State Cadets in a friendly competition. The best Marksmen from both schools had to conduct a 100 meter litter carry and numerous burpees before completing a Table VI qualification. UC Davis secured the win by hitting the most targets. 

**UC Davis**: Cadets Brar, Miller, Thompson 
**Sac State**: Cadets Spurgeon, Chaverra, Vega-Ochoa 

The weekend was a great success! Cadet Bondale (UC Davis) said that she "got to know everyone really well," describing how close she became with her peers. The FGB successfully achieved 100% qualification, meeting the commander’s intent.
LAND NAVIGATION

By CDT Flores

On November 19th, the Forged Gold Battalion completed Day 1 of a 3-day FTX consisting of both Land Navigation and STX lanes at Camp Parks. During the day, each cadet was given a map, protractor, compass, and grids, and afforded three hours to plot and locate their respective points. To successfully pass day land navigation, each cadet must locate three out of the four points. For night land navigation, each cadet had to locate at least one of two points within two hours. To maximize training, the MS4s executed a hands-on M249/M240B weapons familiarization class, led by Cadets Huang (UCD) and Louie (CSUS) after the day land navigation iteration in order to prepare for the follow-on operations.

This is the first time that the FGB has executed the Camp Parks land navigation course. The course is self-correcting, meaning that the point placards have the grid coordinates attached for confirmation. However, the terrain was intense, with its steep slopes and long climbs. In 2022, the difficulty will increase by removing the self-correcting aspect and challenging our cadets with the new terrain of Judge Davis Trailhead. By doing so, we are ensuring our MS3s are one step closer to excelling at Advanced Camp!
The remaining two days of the Fall FTX was focused on STX lanes. The MS4s conducted a “Crawl-Walk” aspect of Platoon Operations to mimic the Wolverine Phase at Advanced Camp. This phase is conducted during the first three days of the field at Fort Knox, KY. The Advanced Camp cadre fill the roles of key platoon leadership and instruct the cadets on the proper standards for an operation. To mimic this for our FTX, each platoon operation began with an MS4-led iteration to set the standard and create a shared understanding for all Military Science levels. This transitioned to an MS3-led but MS4-assisted iteration.

For the first lane, the FGB conducted a full reconnaissance and platoon attack on the objective. Upon completion, they executed an attack on a follow-on objective and then transitioned into a platoon defense. Upon completion of the last iteration, the platoon stepped off to complete an MS4-led patrol base occupation, followed by an MS3-led/MS4 assisted occupation. The Observer, Coach, Trainer (OCT) team for this FTX included Cadets Strupp, Lee, S., Kracke, Louie, Power, and Lafaver.

Throughout the operations, MS4 leadership battle-tracked movement, logistics, and reports at the Tactical Operations Center (TOC).

The next day, the FGB executed a linear ambush. Upon completion, cadets cleaned their weapons and ate pizza that was kindly provided by the cadre. After a short ruck back to the bus pick-up point, cadets returned to campus more prepared than ever for future training.

**Words from our Cadets**

"I learned a lot, had some fun, and got to sleep outside. [A highlight was] waking up to see the moon!"
- Cadet Nickels (MS1, UCD)

"Exhausting. Tiring. But it was a great experience. Would definitely do it again!"
- Cadet Spurgeon (MS1, CSUS)

"It was a great learning experience for the MS1s and MS2s that haven’t done this before."
- Cadet Miller (MS2, UCD)

"It was fun being in the field. It was kind of like camping."
- Cadet Merville (MS3, CSUS)

"It was a good introduction to what we are going to do."
- Cadet Bohen (MS3, UCD)

"A great success for prepping us for future operations."
- Cadet Strupp (MS4, UCD)
Cadets of the Forged Gold Battalion conducted an organized field day for both UC Davis and Sac State at Bryte Park in Sacramento in order to strengthen unit cohesion and esprit de corps before Thanksgiving weekend.

Teams from both universities faced off in competitive games of football and soccer and closed-out the day with a skits and a delicious BBQ!

Photos by CPT Rolls
We held a contracting ceremony for our future leaders during the CSUS Military Appreciation Football Game. Additionally, we had the honor to witness the MS4s discover the branches they were assigned!

Contracting Ceremony at the CSUS Military Appreciation game.
Photo by CPT Rolls

Cadet Stallworth receives her scholarship check from LTC Aquino and COL Paoletti (Chief of Staff, California National Guard).
Photo by CPT Rolls

From Left to Right:
CDT Flores - Adjutant General
CDT Lafaver - Military Intelligence
CDT Lee, D. - Signal Branch Detail Field Artillery
CDT Louie - Quartermaster
CDT Megenney - Ordnance
CDT Shea - Aviation
CDT Smith - Infantry
CDT Hutton - Armor
CDT Sood - Quartermaster
CDT Strupp - Signal Branch Detail Armor

Not pictured:
CDT Puerto - Signal
CDT Rojas - Infantry
CDT Kracke - Military Intel. Branch Detail Infantry
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.
CDT JUNELLE ANGARA

By CDT Gaw

CDT Angara is an MS3 at Sacramento State University, pursuing a B.A. in Education with an emphasis in Art. She will return next semester as the CSUS Cadet Public Affairs Officer.

What obstacles did you face during your time in Army ROTC and how did you overcome it?

"I carried my biggest obstacles within myself. I learned early-on that it's important to be genuinely motivated and grateful and happy while giving my full attention and energy to whatever it is I'm doing (whether exercising, running, studying, or spending time with family and friends). Rather than having a mindset of 'I have to do this', I tell myself that 'I get to do this.' From now on, whenever things get hard or I start facing adversities one after the other, I will never give up and will always give things my all."

What advice would you give to the new Army ROTC Cadets?

"Become a team player. Once you start viewing things as a whole and not just as an individual, things will function better. You'll make great friends that will support you and it will be a fun experience."

How do you balance your time between ROTC and college?

"It is pretty hectic sometimes but everyone has their own methods. I am someone who loves to run five to ten miles in the morning with weightlifting and calisthenics in the evening. I have work, college, and Army ROTC. I need to balance these by always knowing how much time I have and what I have to get done and when I need it done by. Knowing and prioritizing my schedule is all I really do. And if I ever do have free time, I'll go get tea and food with friends, dance, buy some cute houseplants and have that self-care kind of free time to recharge and keep myself happy overall. "
CDT ALEXANDER THOMPSON

How long have you been with the UC Davis Lacrosse team and what is your position?
"I've been on the team for 3 years now. I mostly play midfield, more specifically the faceoff position."

What sparked your interest in the UC Davis Lacrosse team?
“I wanted to be able to play lacrosse after high school but wasn't interested in trying to play for an NCAA school because of ROTC. The club lacrosse program here at UC Davis was the perfect mix of competitiveness and flexibility for me.”

What is your perspective on the upcoming events for both ROTC and school sports?
“"I'm pretty excited for both. I always enjoy the training we get to do for ROTC; it's always exciting and a good way to get new experiences that I cannot find anywhere else. I also get to spend time with some of my closest friends in the program. For lacrosse, this is the first official season back since distance learning due to COVID-19, so everyone on the team, including myself, is pretty excited to be able to compete at the national level again. We're hoping to maintain our title as league champions for the third year in a row.”

Do you have any advice for those who are struggling to find balance between athletic requirements and ROTC responsibilities?
"It's easier to balance lacrosse and ROTC now that I've been doing it for so long. But it was pretty hard at first and sometimes still is. I sometimes find myself sacrificing one for the other, but only occasionally. Always take advantage of free time to do your school work. Learning to not procrastinate and finish work in a timely manner is what helped me the most. But also learning to take care of your mind and body is very important; that way you always have a fresh mind going into schoolwork."
What recommendations do you have for anyone placed in that peer-to-peer leadership role in the future?

"Be the leader that your unit needs – not the leader you want to be. You need to be prepared to do what it takes to solve the problems of your unit. I wanted to try a lot of different things that I thought were important but realized that our unit needed other things: development on training management, instruction on reconditioning PT, PCI/PCC time with leaders fully engaged, etc. Leaders must look hard at what their unit needs and move toward that.

Commanders are responsible for everything that their command does or fails to do. There will be well-intentioned individuals who will offer you their thoughts on a certain subject. It frequently takes the form of 'This is really essential to the MAJ or CPT.' or 'This is how we've always done things here at the Forged Gold Battalion.' I'm not talking about unlawful command influence. I'm referring to those who want to make sure the commander does the right thing. I recommend listening to their advice, but to make a decision based on the facts, which should be tempered by your experience and the conditions. Every circumstance is unique and requires the commander's undivided attention."

How did you balance your ROTC responsibilities with student responsibilities?

"You must be willing to marry your two responsibilities. Over time, each training will inform the other – even if at first glance the collegiate work bears little resemblance to military operations. Both occupations require sleepless nights, discipline, and persistence. Whether in a military or academic environment, it helps to be resourceful, collaborative, and people-oriented. In order to be able to balance both responsibilities, I would ensure that all your work is completed and passed on to correct representatives so that the unit always had accurate and up-to-the-minute data.

Have a support system; asking for help, the ability to say 'no', time for yourself, and getting enough sleep. Even with good habits, doing anything difficult is still going to involve discomfort. Whether military duty or undergraduate study, each in its own way is stressful and requires hard work. Realizing that discomfort is a normal reaction to those stresses, and learning to handle them more constructively, have been important lessons for me. Perseverance requires working through periods that can be very uncomfortable but having a good support network and healthy outlets mean not having to face those stretches alone."
What would you say was the most difficult part of being a leader in the Forged Gold Battalion? What was the most satisfying part?

"The most difficult part of being a leader for the Forged Gold Battalion is living up to the incredibly high standard of leadership the cadets deserve.

The most rewarding aspect of the Executive Officer's job is to witness the development of members of the staff and see their hard work have a positive impact. It was particularly satisfying to plan complicated training events as a team. The planning process was often intense and stressful. On multiple occasions, the staff was pushed to its limit, but that made the success of the training events even more rewarding."

What recommendations do you have for anyone placed in that peer-to-peer leadership role in the future?

"Focus on being present. Speak with as many people in the organization as possible and constantly strive to learn from mistakes and improve yourself and the organization."

How did you balance your requirements of being the Cadet Executive Officer at ROTC with the responsibilities of being a college student?

"During my tenure, I repeatedly reminded myself of the privilege and responsibility associated with leading the Battalion and being able to study Civil Engineering. This allowed me to stay motivated and focused. Most importantly, I relied on my incredible peers. There were some difficult days that required additional determination; however, I could always count on my fellow peers to support me and cover down."
MSG Spangler recently join the Forged Gold Battalion in October and is the MS3 advisor for CSUS.

**What is one thing that you enjoy most at Sac State?**

"Although my time at Sacramento State is still relatively new, the thing I have enjoyed the most, thus far, is seeing the willingness to learn. Between working full/part-time jobs, waking up earlier than most college students to conduct PT, spending time in-between classes to review ROTC curriculum, performing your staff jobs, and asking questions is outstanding. Continue to put your best foot forward and do not be afraid to make mistakes. Learn from it and share that information with others."

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

"A challenged I faced as a new Platoon Sergeant was complacency with my platoon. I came into that position and observed some things that did not uphold to the Ranger Creed. Yes, they were technically and tactically proficient, but a majority just seemed lazy. I noticed this trend at the company level as well. This led me to do a self-assessment. For most of us in the Army, we are competitive by nature, yet we tend to do things the easy way. Sometimes it is hard to do the right things when no one is looking. Every single one of us is capable of great success. We cannot fall in to getting complacent. Do not take the easy way. Be hard and tough on yourself. Have a winning mentality and earn it. So, I challenged my subordinates with tough and realistic training, and we molded into one lethal platoon. 40 bodies, 1 soul."

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

"There will be times in your career where transitions happen, moments of replacing leaders, and moments of losing leaders. The thing that keeps me optimistic and 100% committed is to know that we always want to continue to improve, regardless of the hand we are dealt. The one thing that sticks out the most is when my platoon had new leadership: Pl/PSG and all Squad Leaders. You cannot change how we got there. The platoon still has talent. It is like being dealt a new hand. Instead of having four aces and a king, we now had four kings and an ace. It is not as good as it was, but it is still a good hand. We were never as good as the other two platoons in the company, always seemed to finish last in most events, but we continued to get better. The very first mission we did overseas together was special. Our Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) was visiting our outstation and asked to join us on a raid we were planning that night. Fortunately for us, everything went very well and once we returned to base, we conducted an AAR. There was nothing more satisfying to hear the RSM say than that the mission he just witnessed was one of, if not the best mission he had ever been a part of. I will never forget how excited we were to hear that."

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

"Continue to ask questions; the only stupid question is the one that is not asked. Leverage the experience cadre have, leverage prior service/SMP cadets, and build cohesive teams. Establish trust amongst each other, the Army is not one person; it is a team of teams. You are only as good as the weakest link, and as future platoon leaders, you are responsible for everything your platoon achieves or fails to do. Control what you can (e.g., GPA/PT score). Take initiative outside of ROTC. What have you done today to get better? Do you have goals established? You all can achieve greatness. I am very fortunate to be a part of this organization and look forward to working with you all. Rangers Lead The Way!!!"
## RECENT ALUMNI

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We want to hear from our Forged Gold Battalion alumni and graduates!

Currently serving in uniform or now working in the civilian sector, we want to share your story.

Please reach out for the opportunity to be featured in our next issue!

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Instagram: @ucdavisrotc | @sacstatearmyrotc
2022 PROJECTED CALENDAR

January 3  UCD Winter Quarter Begins
January 19  Winter Commissioning
January 24  CSUS Spring Semester Begins
February 8-10  MS2 & MS3 Virtual Branch Engagement Sessions
February 26  Land Navigation Practical
March 14-18  UCD Winter Finals Week
March 19-27  UCD/CSUS Spring Break
March 28  UCD Spring Quarter Begins
April 8-10  Spring FTX
April 29  CWST (at UCD)
May 16-20  CSUS Finals Week
June 3-9  UCD Spring Finals Week
June 9  Commissioning Ceremony
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