Reflection On The Ordnance
Basic Officer Leader Course
By 2LT Natasha Lewis: Marywood University - Class of 2012

As I prepare to head out in to the force, I would like to share my Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) experiences with the Royal Warriors, especially the Military Science Level IV Cadets who are preparing to start their military careers. After 16 weeks of training, I have successfully completed Ordnance BOLC at Fort Lee, Virginia and graduated on January 23rd. Here, I have met new friends and peers, many of them who are prior Enlisted Soldiers who have shared with me many of their personal experiences and knowledge from the Army.

This course prepared me to be a logistician. I have acquired many skills in my time here to include the FBCB2—Blue Force Tracking Operator’s training course and Army Combatives Level I Certification. The Ordnance BOLC curriculum includes many courses on subjects about sustainment operations which related to my job, as well as, are of great importance to the Army. Maintenance, ammunition and supply operations are just a few of the subjects learned at the 16 week course.

I also had the opportunity to deliver many briefs on multiple topics and strengthen my briefing skills and techniques. As a squad leader in my class, I was responsible for my squad’s accountability at all times, collecting and revising paperwork for the S-1, as well as, relying all information provided by the class leader. Also, I was responsible to write DA 4856’s (Army counseling form) in order to counsel several individuals from my squad.

Other training opportunities included field exercises, tactics and several ruck-marches. I successfully completed a 10 mile ruck-march. Tactics training included exercises such as land navigation, convoy missions, and qualifying on the range with the M-16 rifle. I was also able to serve as the platoon leader of an Advance Individual Training Soldiers during their field training exercise. I was responsible for their 100% accountability, completion of training, and well-being at all times.

I participated in a class trip that included a tours of the Pentagon, Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian Museums and other sites around Washington, D.C. A second trip consisted of a six hour tour of the Army Research Laboratory located at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland.

My community service contributions included helping at a Veterans of Foreign Wars bazaar, helping to clean-up Pamplin Historical Park, running at the Heroes-Day 5K race, and donating food and toys during the holidays.

I had a great time at BOLC and met some great people. However, I am now ready and looking forward to arriving to my unit at Fort Bliss, Texas. The unit is projected to deploy later this year. Most importantly, I now proudly wear the gold bar I worked for at the University of Scranton Army ROTC program. I am happy and proud of this accomplishment, to be a part of such a respected profession. It is my honor to be serving my Country!
I commissioned from the University of Scranton May 26th, 2012 as a Field Artillery Officer with a Military Intelligence Branch Detail. My original date for the Field Artillery Basic Officer Leader Course was February 12th, 2013. But in late August when I received a call from LTC Ryan D. Remley, the Professor of Military Science for University of Scranton, asking me if I wanted to go to BOLC in three weeks, I said yes. Three weeks later I was in Lawton, Oklahoma at Fort Sill about to begin my Military Career.

Now most people think that in Field Artillery we just call for fire, how hard can that be? Wrong. Artillery is the support for other unit operations. While the infantry and armor operate using direct fire and maneuver. The Artillery allows them to maneuver with our ability to reach out and “touch” a target several kilometers away. By either destroying the enemy or influencing their actions in a way that a gaining commander sees fit.

The first month of BOLC is what is called Common Core. During this time we had our land navigation test, basic rifle marksmanship, combatives training, and leadership development training. It was a very relaxed environment in relation to actual Artillery classes.

On October 1st we began our Artillery classes. We have two sections, Gunnery and Fire Support. In Gunnery we learn manual firing first.

Manual gunnery is the process of being able to achieve accurate first round fire for effect. In order to do this we must account for the Five Requirements for Accurate and Predicted Fires; target location, gun location, weapon and ammunition information, meteorological data, and computations. In those we have to account for the nonstandard conditions; weather, propellant temperature, rotation of the earth, projectile drift, et cetera. If we can do all that then we will have accurate first round effects. Next we learned the automated system which does all the above very fast. But it is important to learn manual gunnery in the event all computer systems go down.

On the fire support side we learn proper call for fire, command and support relationships between the firing unit and the unit we are supporting, how to run a fire support team and fire support planning for maneuver commander operations.

During BOLC we have several live fires. A gunnery live fire consists of running a fire direction center, which receives calls for fire and translates them into information to be passed down to the gun line in the form of a fire command. For fire support we are calling in fires, observing the rounds and making necessary adjustments. As well as running the fire support team that receives the calls for fire and transmits them to the fire direction center.

After twenty-two weeks of we have our cap-stone training event called the “Redleg War”. This is a week long field exercise during which we apply all the we have learned. Spending time on the gun line, fire direction center, going into the field and being a forward observer calling fires and being the fire support officer. And once that is over, we can now graduate.

Our graduation is Tuesday February 12th, 2013 and having been selected for a JFO, Joint Force Operator Course I will remain at Fort Sill a few more weeks learning how to call aircraft onto a target. Once I have completed JFO I will report to Fort Drum, New York where I am hoping to be assigned as a Fire Support Officer to a Battalion in the 10th Mountain Division, 1st Brigade Combat Team.
Welcome back from the holidays, Royal Warrior Battalion! I am honored to have been invited by LTC Remley to share my thoughts with you on what ROTC has meant to me in my life. Who am I?

My name is Major Tucker Shosh and I was born and raised in Bethlehem, PA. After graduation from high-school, I decided to enlist in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard while working full-time and attending Community College in the evenings. When I was 24, I went to East Stroudsburg University (ESU) to become a high-school teacher. In that process, a family friend introduced me to the ROTC program at Lehigh University. At the time, ESU was not affiliated with the University of Scranton and I was the only Cadet at ESU.

My plan was to teach high school and become an Officer in the PA Army National Guard. Because of the incredible development and constant mentorship I received from my ROTC instructors, I decided to compete for Active Duty. I was accessed into the Field Artillery and began Active Duty in January, 2000. Along the way, I was fortunate to meet LTC Remley, my previous Battalion’s Executive Officer, who helped me get my dream job, teaching ROTC. I have been an Assistant Professor of Military Science at Providence College in Rhode Island since 2009.

Although there are hundreds of lessons I’ve learned through my own experience, there are three things that I want to share that were introduced to me in ROTC. First, always be positive and full of optimism. As leaders, your job is to guide the organization forward and your behavior and attitude will reverberate through your organization. Leading is easy when things are good, the challenge is when things don’t go your way and that is when your example and direction are most needed. I have personally experienced what happens when the leader vents his frustration in front of the troops - it has a lasting effect on the attitude of your organization. When difficult things occur, take the time to process the emotion personally or with a trusted advisor, find the opportunity for success in the event, and then lead your organization through the necessary change.

Your organization will see you as a problem solver and move with you toward achievement. Then celebrate that success together. Second, be good - be one that others call a “good man/woman.” Do not confuse this with being liked. I believe that being good means being competent, reliable and authentic. Discover who you are and what is important to you, understand the organizational values, and always lead with those beliefs at the core. Your charisma, passion and commitment will shine through and energize everyone you come into contact with. When the time comes that you need a hand, and those times will come, those people will respond in ways that will amaze you. Lastly, understand that leading-following is a relationship between people. You are not better than the people you are in charge of, you have only been given the authority. All leaders are following someone else and all followers have the capacity to lead. I have seen organizations where the true leaders, those driving the behavior of the organization, are not in the positions of authority. Leadership is not about being in charge – it’s about being the one that the organization trusts in and is willing to follow. Take all of your relationships seriously and don’t marginalize anyone because we, as humans, need others to accomplish anything.

In closing, each of these lessons I was taught in ROTC, but I only truly learned their value through my own experience. We all make mistakes but remember that the best learning and development comes out of our challenges. Best of luck in all that you do!