Battalion Executes Warrior Challenge
By MS III Cadets Michael Shannon and Christian Burne

“Warrior Challenge” is an annual capstone physical training event conducted in the spring semester before Cadets embark on summer training. It is safe to say this year’s event, held on Monday, 29 April, was the most challenging to date. Cadets were pushed to the limit as their teams attempted to complete a challenging course consisting of nine grueling obstacles spread across Kirby Park in Wilkes-Barre.

Events such as the box jump competition and pull-up challenge tested each Cadet’s personal will to succeed for the benefit of the team. The sandbag relay tested small-unit cohesion as Cadets worked as a team to move more than 1,200 pounds of sandbags over a large dyke in the least amount of time possible. The 150-meter tractor tire flip obstacle forced Cadets to push their muscles to failure, while the litter run course tested their cardiovascular endurance to the limit.

Outgoing Cadet Battalion Executive Officer Ryan Lord of King’s College described Warrior Challenge as “the most challenging physical training event in my nearly four years as a Cadet.” As Cadets progressed through the course and became increasingly physically and mentally exhausted, their competitive nature pushed them to complete the mission at hand. Cadets understood that mere seconds on a single event could mean the difference between absolute victory or a second place finish.

All the teams demonstrated high levels of competitive spirit and will power, yet it was the “Brave Rifles,” led by MSIII Cadets Alexander Flynn and Michael Stauffer who walked away with the 1st place finish. Team “Brave Rifles” will have bragging rights until next year.

The MS III class conducted the planning, resourcing and execution of Warrior Challenge. The event presented the new command team, composed of Cadet Christian Burne, Michael Shannon, and Nicholas Constantino with their first challenge as they assumed Battalion leadership positions.

Cadet Shannon took the lead on the event, planning the stations and designing the grueling course. Cadets Burne and Constantino worked to secure supplies and instruct their fellow MS IIs Cadets in their duties for the event. The lane graders and team runners all participated in a full rehearsal of the event on the Friday morning prior to the event to help eliminate confusion.

The careful planning and attention to detail proved to be invaluable during the early hours before Warrior Challenge was to begin and as the competition was in progress. In the end, the event was a huge success and raised the bar for Warrior Challenge competitions in years to come.

Military Science Level I Cadet Peter Loven is ready for the next challenge following his team’s successful completion of the sandbag relay station.
The Month In Pictures

(Photo: left) Cadets from the Royal Warrior Battalion are formed on Founder’s Green awaiting the start of the Battalion Change of Responsibility and Change of Command ceremonies held on Thursday, 25 April. During the ceremony Cadet Christian Burne assumed command of the Cadet Battalion from Cadet Jessica Persoon.

(Photo: left) Military Science IV Cadet Carina Hanks receives the USAA Spirit Award during the Royal Warrior Battalion Awards Ceremony held on 25 April. Cadet Hanks will commission into the Army National Guard as a Medical Service Officer in May. (Photo: right) Military Science Level III Cadet Sean McKee receives The Military Order of the Purple Heart Award during the course of the unit’s award ceremony.

(Photo: left) Cadet Ryan Lord of King’s College briefs classmates on the Boxer Rebellion during MSL 402 battle analysis briefings. (Photo: right) University of Scranton alum and current TACOM Commander Major General Michael Terry addresses Cadets of the Battalion during an LPD held on Monday, 22 April.
After commissioning almost a year ago, I cannot believe how fast the time has gone. Even though there are so many great memories of this past year, there were a lot of learning moments and times of being humbled. A first year in anything is never easy, but it can be fun if you keep a positive attitude. Currently, I am a Platoon Leader in a Human Resources Company in the 82d Sustainment Brigade at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

My platoon has 13 Soldiers, and I am the Officer in Charge (OIC) of a United States Post Office unit. Yes, I know it is unusual, but in the Adjutant General community, there are only about 15 platoons available to be a PL for. The platoons in my Company are Human Resources Platoons or Postal Platoons. I started out in my company as a Human Resources Platoon Leader, and I now am the Postal Platoon Leader. My area of operation, in short, is a fully functional post office. I will only be a PL for about a year, and I am very grateful for the chance to be something other than an S-1.

LTC Remley asked me to write about my position here at Fort Bragg and include lessons I have learned in the past year.

First, ask for help. As a 2LT, you’re not expected to know it all, and you’re expected to make mistakes. Knowing that, it is too easy to be able to ask for help. If you do not know how or what to do (which will be most of the time), you have to ask or it will end in failure. I think it shows more character being able to ask for help, and show an interest to learn from those who have been doing their job longer than fresh LTs.

Asking for help also empowers those under you, and it gives them a feeling of value and worth towards making something happen. It is also very important to ask for help in a mental way. If stress is too great, swallow your pride and ask your higher or someone for help. Staying physically fit is important, but staying mentally fit is most important. Finding a group to attend, a friend, or a counselor is not being weak. Accomplishing a big task is impossible without accomplishing the minor tasks first.

Ask and seek a mentor, and do not be intimidated. Everybody in the world puts pants on the same way. Meaning, don’t be intimidated, just ask someone you want to ADOPT traits from to be your mentor. Don’t say “I want to be like you” because then you’re not yourself. Find people you want to learn traits and skills from, and ask. If for some reason they turn you down, then why would you want to learn from them anyway?

Working at the Leader Training Course at Fort Knox, we had a guest speaker, Colonel (now Brigadier General) Peggy Combs. She was a short, spunky, and outgoing female Colonel something I had never thought could happen. But it was great. She was so….cool. I emailed her and asked her if we could get lunch because I honestly never thought we could happen. But it was great. She was so….cool. I emailed her and asked her if we could get lunch because I honestly never thought being that high ranking could still support being a little different and spunky. She pushed back her promotion rehearsal to meet with me, and refused to bring a watch in order to make sure we had an honest lunch together. I still email her every couple months just to keep in touch and be reminded I have to be myself every day. To me, she represented what I was hoping I could find in the military.

Learn by example, with both good and bad: Officers above you are going to be good and bad. Pay just as much attention to the bad and write down the things you never want to do to those under you. Break the cycle of bad leadership, and learn from everyone above you.

Do not expect those not in the military to understand your stress. Those not in the military generally have no clue what you’re talking about, i.e., rank, responsibilities, rules. Do NOT get mad if your loved ones just do not know how to relate and console you.

Be yourself: If you are not yourself, Soldiers will see through you. Be comfortable with yourself and do NOT try to be something you are not. Talk to the Soldiers and let them know your are relatable and approachable. Being yourself is the most important thing I learned this year.

Finally, replace “I don’t know” with “I will get that information for you, Sir/Ma’am.”