As Cadets in the Royal Warrior Battalion, we learn that, as officers, we must live the Warrior Ethos and the Army Values not just while in uniform but at all times. Through our actions and the way we live our lives, our commitment to upholding those standards must be reflected. Stories of heroism in battle are placed in newspapers and widely told to many, but when our own get wounded, their stories are seldom told. Wounded servicemen and women show us how to live the Army Values in the hardest of times.

Captain Thomas Jerome (TJ) Hromisin is a graduate of the University of Scranton. On May 29, 2007, Captain Hromisin was shot in the head by an Iraqi sniper. He sustained a severe traumatic brain injury and was rendered completely blind. Today, at the age of 26, Captain Hromisin requires 24-hour supervision and assistance from those who care for him. For us, as Cadets about to commission as 2LTs in the US Army, he offers the reality of the conflicts we will see and how an officer should conduct himself/herself when faced with adversity.

When we sat down to have lunch with Captain Hromisin, Cadet Sarah Chantrell and other graduate Occupation Therapy students also joined us. While we couldn’t conduct a traditional interview, what we learned from him and those who worked with him was just as invaluable. What struck us first about Captain Hromisin was his sense of humor and determination to do things his way. His situation is far from ideal but he seems to be making the best of things and using humor as a way to not only help himself but all those around him.

The Thomas Jerome House is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping those who have honorably served our country. On April 8, the OT students organized a fundraiser for the Thomas Jerome House, which we and Cadet Jeff Mason had the pleasure of attending. Cadet Chantrell was an integral part in the planning and execution of the event along with other members of the OT and PT Departments. At this event, Captain Hromisin exemplified personal courage and selfless service.

In his uniform, he was featured in the videos presented to the guests telling his story of recovery. He, his family, and those connected to the Thomas Jerome House continue to work for our servicemen and women who sustain brain injuries in combat and are unable to live independently in the community. Like a true officer, Captain Hromisin is a both a hero and an excellent role model for the cadets of the Royal Warrior Battalion.

As Captain Hromisin said, "The most difficult thing after my brain injury was going from the person who helped everyone with whatever they needed to the person that needs help with almost everything in life. I want to have the opportunity to participate in the community the way I did before my injury. I support the Thomas Jerome House and its efforts to bring normalcy and purpose to every Marine, Sailor, Airman and Soldier that passes through its doors".
Training Highlights From April

Photo (Above): MS I and II Cadets work to transport an injured Soldier across an obstacle on the Field Leaders Reaction Course during the Battalion Spring Field Training Exercise at Fort Indiantown Gap. Photo (Right) MS IV Cadet Michael Maritato completes his evaluation on MS IIIs during Squad STX Lanes at the FTX.

MS IIs Sean Cogan, Kevin Demko, Ashley Bahlatzis and Ryan Lord hang out with their MS II Instructor SFC Wilkerson following the Field Leaders Reaction Course at the Spring FTX. MS IIs served as Squad Leaders during each rotation of FLRC lanes and received evaluations on their performances while in leadership.

MS IIIs come together to celebrate the successful completion of the Joint FTX conducted at Fort Indiantown Gap 14-17 April. The Royal Warriors conducted training in preparation for LDAC along with MS III Cadets from Leigh, Bucknell, Dickinson, and Widner Universities.
Royal Warriors Conduct Spring Field Training Exercise
By MS I Cadets Tyler Doherty and Kayla Ellman

On Friday, April 1, the highly motivated Cadets of Royal Warrior Battalion departed for their 2011 Spring Field Training Exercise at Fort Indiantown Gap. From the time the weekend started, it was well-organized and every minute was utilized efficiently to prepare each respective Military Science class for their future years in ROTC and ultimately, the Leadership Development and Assessment Course. The MS I class focused on events such as Day and Night Land Navigation, Field Leadership Reaction Course (FLRC), Call for Fire, and the Engagement Skills Trainer 2000 (ETS).

On Friday evening, the MS I class took a refresher course on Land Navigation, where they reviewed how to read coordinates, plot grid points, and determine azimuths. The following day, each MS I was paired with a MS II and sent out into the woods to find their points. During Land Navigation, MS I’s were able to reinforce out in the field what they had learned in the classroom, thus giving them a chance to prepare for future Field Training Exercises. Cadet Seth Gray, an MS I from King’s University, said that Land Navigation gave him “a sense of class and individuality” as he was expected to complete this task as an MS I with very little experience. Night land navigation was also great practice in solidifying MS I skills. Cadet Gray, as well as other fellow MS I cadets, agreed that it was “quite the challenge, but still a lot of fun.”

Later that day, the MS I’s and II’s had the opportunity to put their heads together at the Field Leadership Reaction Course (FLRC). Each team was presented with an obstacle and certain resources to use to determine a manner of getting their team and supplies across the obstacle in 25 minutes or less. FLRC enabled both MS I’s and II’s to assume a leadership position in which they practiced taking charge and using effective communication. Cadet Gray said he though FLRC was a “great experience as it showed MS I’s and II’s what being evaluated would be like in the future” and “showed individuals where they need to improve in their leadership skills.” Cadet Gray had the opportunity to act as Squad Leader for one obstacle. His scenario was to get his team, along with weapons and an oil canister, across a minefield. Gray said that this experience “definitely showed [him] how difficult it is to be the leader giving the orders rather than the individual taking the orders.” Overall, Gray said that “the hardest part about being the squad leader was trying to remain organized and giving clear communication.” Gray, who received an overall evaluation of “Satisfactory,”, said that FLRC “showed us what is to be expected of us as leaders.”

A new training event in the FTX was the Call for Fire class. The Call for Fire simulator allows military personnel to view a simulated battlefield where they can practice calling in artillery strikes. The simulator was a realistic training device for MS I Cadets to experience. MS I Cadet Maureen Bullis commented about her experience with the Call for Fire saying, “It gave the MS I class great exposure to an important Army skill, and learning this will better prepare us in other aspects of the military.”

Along with the Call for Fire simulator, MS I Cadets experienced another new training event, the Engagement Skills Trainer, otherwise known as the EST 2000. The EST provided Cadets with simulated weapons training on the M-16 and M4 rifles. The EST utilizes actual rifles modified with an air pressure system, which gives Cadets an opportunity to fire actual weapon systems without the costs of ammunition. At the end of the training, some Cadets qualified as a “Marksman” by successfully hitting a prescribed number of targets. Cadet Sean McKee said that the EST 2000 “was one of the best parts of the FTX “I learned a ton of new information from interacting with the simulator,” he said.

Overall, the EST and FLRC training events received the most acclaim. Most MS I’s have never had the feeling of holding and firing a weapon, and even though the “bullets” used were not real, it still had a realistic feel and was therefore an effective training device that everyone enjoyed. MS II Instructor SFC Wilkerson said “hands down, the best event was the FLRC training. Watching the MS I’s and II’s negotiate the lanes and improve their decision making skills was priceless.” SFC Wilkerson continued by saying that “the Spring FTX was a resounding success all the way around.”

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