

Mighty Hawkeye News

The Official Newsletter of the University of Iowa Army ROTC



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Alumni Spotlight

COE College Graduates Give Their Story

Mighty Hawkeye Battalion alumni, Majors Zach (Coe College '13) and Caroline Sunkle (Coe College '14), are serving in two different Army components together. Zach, a logistics officer in the Army Reserves, and Caroline, an Active Duty nurse, married in 2015. The flexibility of the Army Reserves enabled Zach to find assignments with Caroline, enabling both to excel as Army officers, achieving their professional and family goals.

"To say it hasn't been hard sometimes is a lie, but we have successfully progressed in both careers by taking turns."

-MAJ Caroline Sunkle

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Upon graduation, Zach was assessed into the Army Reserves as a quartermaster, a logistics branch responsible for supplying Soldiers. Caroline graduated from the Coe College Nursing program. She was initially assigned to Fort Eisenhower, GA, in Med-Surg, progressing to her position as Assistant Clinical Nurse Officer. Zach transferred to nearby Fort Valley, Ga. He was assigned as a platoon leader and executive officer, earning his Airborne and Parachute Rigger badges, and deploying to Afghanistan.

The Sunkle family then moved to the Republic of Korea. Caroline was assigned to the 121st Combat Support Hospital with duty at the Brian Allgood Army Community Hospital in the Adult and Pediatric Multi-Care Unit, served in operations as the Assistant Security and Operations Officer, and trained as a Forensic Health Examiner, where she assisted victims of sexual assault across the Korean Peninsula.

Assigned to the 658 Regional Support Group in Korea, Zach conducted command inspections and duties as a Supply and Services Officer (assistant S4). He also developed mobilization planning for several key Reserve units in the Pacific.

Upon returning to the United States, Caroline was assigned to the 520th Medical Company (Area Support) but performed duties at Madigan Army Community Hospital, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA. She conducted patient hold operations, taught Army medics advanced skills, worked in the Progressive Care Unit, and progressed to the Clinical Nurse Officer-in-Charge of the Adult Medical-Surgical/Oncology unit.

Zach, assigned to the 654th Regional Support Group in Tacoma, commanded Headquarters Support Company 654th RSG, deploying to Guatemala for 29 days, providing humanitarian support while aiding in school and church construction. Zach and his company participated in several Seattle Seahawks games, performing as the color guard for opening games.



AIRBORNE!

Most recently, Caroline was accepted to the University of Colorado's Doctorate in Nursing Practice program (Boulder, CO), where she will attain her Doctor of Nursing Practice, Clinical Nurse Specialist degree, through the Army's Long Term Health Educational Training Program. This milestone gives her the flexibility of being an APRN, able to see and treat patients. It is also greatly focused on improving systems and the nurse-work environment. This will help her reach her ultimate goal—to make Army nursing an unbeatable career and stop losing highly proficient, trained nurses to the civilian sector.

Zach volunteered for a 1-year mobilization in Fort Bliss, TX, supporting the Mobilization Force Generation Installation with the 654th Regional Support Group.

The Sunkles have four children and a menagerie of pets. They continue to give back to the Mighty Hawkeye Battalion, providing mentorship and career advice to cadets, as well as sponsoring cadets during the annual Military Ball.



MAJ ZACH SUNKLE AND HIS WIFE MAJ CAROLINE SUNKLE (PICTURED AS CPT SUNKLE)

IVETS Counselor

Chuck Xander: Interviewed by CDT Bay

Meet Mr. Chuck Xander. Chuck is an embedded therapist on staff for the Iowa Veterans Education Transition and Support (IVETS) at Iowa supporting military connected students which include prior service, currently serving, and dependents. His unique position at IVETS is the only one found in the state of Iowa and the only one of all Big 10 universities.

Chuck is an Army combat veteran himself, serving within the Iowa National Guard as a 31L, which at the time was Signal Operations. Following his service, he became a licensed mental health counselor in the state of Iowa and worked with the VA for 10 years. Chuck is beginning his second year on staff with IVETS.

When asked about why mental health awareness is important, Chuck says "We're all going through things in life. Being able to talk about those things allows for healing and growth." He adds, "Someone who doesn't admit to going through struggles would never start the road to recovery. Admitting is not failure."

Mr. Xander is a wonderful resource at Iowa for all military connected students. His office is found on campus in Calvin Hall, room 207B. For more information and to request an appointment, please visit the Iowa IVETS website at: <https://veterans.uiowa.edu/mental-health>



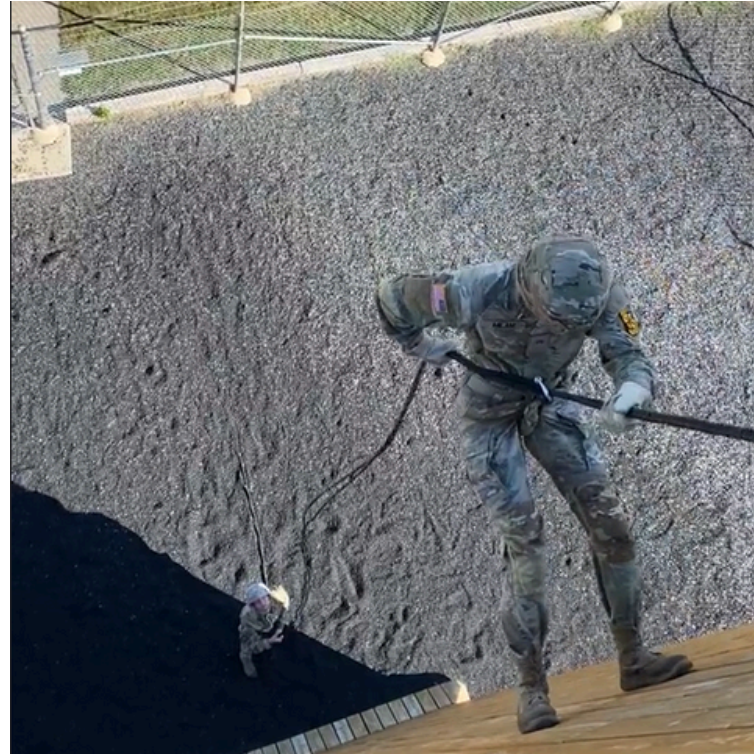
PHOTO CREDITS: CDT BAY

2024 Fall FTX

CDT Milam's Personal Experience

Looking back at my experience with the Fall FTX, I am very grateful to have gone. Before going, I was unsure of my capabilities, such as shooting and repelling, as I had not completed those tasks in over two years! I was nervous to go as I had never completed an FTX with the MHBN before and was unsure what to expect. This nervousness extinguished pretty fast once we had gone boots on the ground due to the overwhelming support and friendliness I had received from other cadets and cadres. For example, we completed the range for M4s on the first night! We had to zero our weapons during this event and complete the qualification range. During the zero range, I was pretty nervous as I had not shot with iron sights in over three years and had difficulties in the past. Although I was pretty nervous, my fellow Cadets and Care were there to help guide me in the right direction by giving me key points that I could use to improve my aim and finish the Zero range! After this event, I could go to the qualification range, use what I was recently taught, and put it to the test of qualifying, which I could accomplish on the first try! In the past, I have struggled with shooting as I have never been a great shot, but with the extra help from my fellow Cadets and Cadre, I could easily accomplish this task! Moving on to day two of the FTX, filled with Patrol Base operations, leadership courses, and grenade training, I also had to overcome one of my fears of repelling. We were tasked with repelling down a wall and completing an open-face repel, which I had never previously done. I have never been a fan of heights and found myself constantly doubting my ability to complete this event as we maneuvered through different phases of repelling. During the initial repel down the wall, I was very nervous but found myself gaining confidence as my spell master guided me down the wall and helping to instruct me to complete this event. I was confident once I completed the initial jump down the wall, and my nervousness faded into excitement!

I had to complete the open-face repel, which I was extremely nervous about. At the top of the tower, I filled myself with emotions and had to step off to gather myself. With the help from the Cadre and other cadets, I found myself back at the top of the tower to attempt to repel again. I had to pause multiple times to gather myself but found that once I had completed the initial jump just like the other repel, I had gained more confidence in my abilities, and the nervousness had gone away! Moving onto the third day, primarily filled with an obstacle course, medical training, and some fun competition, I was filled with pride and joy to be part of a time that was always sticking there and out to help one another. Overall, I recommend that anybody who wants to push themselves, have fun, and try some new things to attend the Fall FTX. It can be initially intimidating to not truly understand everything happening, but your fellow Cadets and Cadre are there every step of the way to help you in any way they can!



CDT MILAM BRAVING THE RAPPEL TOWER (ABOVE)
MSG ROBERTS INSPECTING A CADET'S RIFLE (BELOW)



CDT HEAD STEPPING OFF FROM THE 'DANGEROUS' WATERS
OF THE FLRC

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