A Professional Battalion Video: From Foresight to Fruition

In March of 2015, the Golden Buffalo Battalion announced the release of a professional battalion video that embodies the character and resilience of future officers in the United States Army. When the idea first surfaced in August, it was a simple vision, and seven months later, it became a reality.

Special thanks to Kenneth Apodaca, who spent long hours capturing footage of ROTC events, compiling and editing, and bringing forth an unforgettable finished product. Additional thanks to the cadre of the Golden Buffalo Battalion for coordinating the making of this video and providing valuable feedback. Both versions, the longer of which includes additional testimonials, are now available on YouTube in the links provided below.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gptIujwXltQ

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_MoWYyhnmo
Spring 2015 Labs
Planned and Conducted Like Never Before

Responsibility and planning play a large part in the development of future leaders. During previous spring semesters, the Golden Buffalo Battalion had exclusively hosted Saturday leaderships labs—all-day events that occurred only once a month on a battalion-wide scale.

The spring labs of the past focused on tactics—squad- and platoon-level missions rooted in infantry techniques. This year, labs encompass a much grander scale.

In stark contrast to tactics, which were the focal point of previous years’ training, cadets are now participating in unconventional training events such as cold weather survival.

This spring semester, not only did the cadets return to the Thursday lab rhythm of the fall semesters, but they also had the opportunity to plan and execute the labs that they themselves would participate in. Given an end goal, but not any instructions on how to get there, sophomore through senior cadets worked together to transform concepts and visions into practical training and leadership experiences. With labs ranging from Human Performance to Rappelling, cadets had the opportunity to conduct practical and diverse training. Each week, cadets in charge would meet after PT to update cadre and peers on the status of their labs.

“Planning a lab [showed] me how critical and thorough the military decision making process is. By working with both peers and subordinates, I was given a task and able to plan and execute a large-scale mission. I learned that mission planning is not as easy [as it seems], and requires competent leaders to be successful.”

-Hayden Smead, MSIII cadet, University of Colorado Boulder
Hit The Ground Running

The Transformation of PT at the Buffalo Battalion

Spring 2015 has brought countless changes to the Buffalo Battalion’s Human Performance Program, and to the traditional circuit workouts that had long since plateaued for the cadets.

Under the supervision of Sean Linehan, an MSII cadet at the University of Colorado Boulder, David Anderson, an MSIV cadet at Colorado Christian University, and Eric Brink, an MSIII cadet at the Metropolitan State University of Denver, the program has transformed to encourage fitness outside of the traditional Army physical training regimen.

A five-mile time trial conducted across all three ROTC companies served as a benchmark to gauge cadets’ cardiovascular endurance. Small group physical training became the central focus at PT. Utilizing this small group method, cadets worked in teams of four to six cadets in order to foster more personalized attention and a sense of belonging. Cadets were able to maintain focus during intense run sessions and push each other to their limits.

In addition to running groups, cadets engaged in a variety of specialized activities once a week, including weightlifting, swimming, and rowing. These groups gave cadets a chance to engage in physically strenuous activity where they otherwise didn't have the opportunity. On top of rigorous physical training, cadets learn the importance of maintaining a healthy diet in order to perform at optimum levels as well as how to take care of their bodies outside physical training. The future of the Human Performance Program looks bright as cadets continue with new and interesting ways to become physically fit.
Adventure Race
A New Perspective on Super Lab

On the morning of Saturday, February 28th, 2015, 14 teams of cadets roamed the city of Boulder in a massive scavenger hunt. The goal: to travel to as many geographic landmarks in the city as possible. Some landmarks were simple, involving only a picture of the team in front of the sign. Others were more complicated, involving a challenge such as knot tying or blindfolded pen assembly. Still others were mandatory, and also the most demanding. A bike assembly at Full Cycle, a tactical activity at the CU Police Department, the Royal Arch at Chautauqua, and the summit of Mount Sanitas. With the exception of driving, cadets had to utilize whatever means possible to transport themselves around the city, such as running, taxiing, or taking the bus. Teams consisted of a mix of cadets from various schools in the battalion, and were allowed to split into two smaller teams of equal size in order to accomplish their goals.

Adventure Race focused on critical thinking—how to design a route that was efficient, how to apply a team’s joint knowledge to maximize potential, and how to manage time effectively and collect as many points as possible without being able to drive. Unlike the third-year cadets from previous years, team leaders were now second-year cadets—maturing leaders stepping over the threshold from followership to leadership. The mental barriers of complex problem solving, as well as the physical barriers of several inches of February snow, made for a prime environment for the teams to forge a sense of unity.

“During the race, I was a team leader, and the greatest challenge I faced was using the skills and abilities of all the people in my team.”

-Christopher LeBaron, MSII cadet, Colorado School of Mines
Power of an Interventionist
Army ROTC Bystander Training

With so many exciting Army training events that happen before our eyes, it’s easy to forget what can happen behind the scenes. In college as well as in the Army, hazing, harassment, and unwanted sexual advances are very real issues that deserve special attention. For that reason, the Golden Buffalo Battalion set aside a leadership lab in which cadets could discuss these issues.

On February 5th, 2015, in the University Memorial Center, Alpha Company cadets divided into small groups and went through possible scenarios, written by their peers, that could occur in their daily lives as college students. In the small groups, cadets discussed potential solutions to these scenarios.

Based on their discussions, each group presented their solutions to the particular scenario they were given. Some group presented formally what their decisions were, while others acted out the scenario. Then, cadets could comment on the proposed solution and offer their own solutions.

“I liked how [the lab] gave everyone an opportunity to voice their opinions and confront each other in what is acceptable and what isn’t.”

-Madison Maloney, MSIII cadet, University of Colorado Boulder

Two representatives from Community Health offered their expert advice on the topic, and provided guidance to cadets when necessary.
The Spring LTX Experience

It is often said that adversity breeds toughness, and when we endure the worst of times, we emerge the strongest.

The Golden Buffalo Battalion’s 2015 Spring LTX did just that, going where no LTX had ever gone before in a series of mental and physical challenges. “I was under the impression that this spring’s LTX was going to be strenuous,” stated Lauren Presgrove, a second-year cadet at the University of Colorado Denver. What the cadets knew, however, barely scraped the surface of what they actually did.

On Saturday, April 12th, at 5:00am, the cadets began their day with a 12-mile ruck march, interwoven with a series of challenging stations that would continue for the next 12 hours. A one-mile litter carry and a grueling obstacle course were only a fraction of the day’s events. 12 miles of ruck marching and a full day of training culminated in an Army Physical Fitness Test in ACU’s, boots, and rifles. The cadets were exhausted by 5:00pm, but the greatest challenge was yet to come.

Unbeknownst to them beforehand, cadets suddenly faced a night mission, an outdoor survival course, and night land navigation. Each time a training event ended, a new one greeted them. The restless night continued until 5:00am on Sunday morning—a full 24 hours after they’d begun their training. The cadets were rewarded with a hot breakfast and an early departure back to their respective schools.

Though this year’s LTX was very different from years past, cadets found the weekend extremely rewarding, and a valuable opportunity for true leader development. There is no knowing what the Buffalo Battalion will bring in years to come, but as future officers of the United States Army, our cadets will be looking forward to the challenge.

“I now know how far I can push myself, and know that I will never be a quitter. I am happy with my LTX experience, [and] I got a lot out of it.”

-Taylor Mullane, MSIII cadet, Metropolitan State University of Denver
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Army ROTC welcomes donations of all amounts, and all gifts directly support the program and our cadets. If you would like to make a donation to Army ROTC at CU Boulder, please make your check payable to the CU Foundation, and in the Memo section of your check, state “Army ROTC Program Fund #0121348.” All checks should be mailed to the following address:

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Denver, CO 80217-9155

To make a donation to Colorado School of Mines, please make checks payable to CSM Foundation, and in the Memo section of your check, state “645188 Military Science Development”, as well as the purpose for your donation. If you have questions, please call 303-273-3275. All checks should be mailed to the following address:

CSM Foundation
1232 W. Campus Road, Building 4
Golden, CO 80401

Special Events

Mark your calendars! All Buffalo Battalion alumni are invited to a reunion on Friday, November 6th, 2015. Come support the Buffaloes as they play against Stanford on Saturday, November 7th. For more information, please email armyrotc@colorado.edu.
About the Authors

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Emily Wu is from Superior, Colorado, and is a senior at the University of Colorado Boulder. She will be graduating with a degree in Biochemistry, and commissioning as an Adjutant General Corps officer in the Army Reserves. She has an immense passion for teaching and is planning on becoming a middle or high school science teacher.

Javier Jerez is a senior at the Metropolitan State University of Denver. Graduating with a degree in Psychology, with aspirations to be a counselor, he will be commissioning as a Signal Corps officer in the Army Reserves. Growing up in California, Javier has always enjoyed being active. He has a strong passion for football and works as a personal trainer.