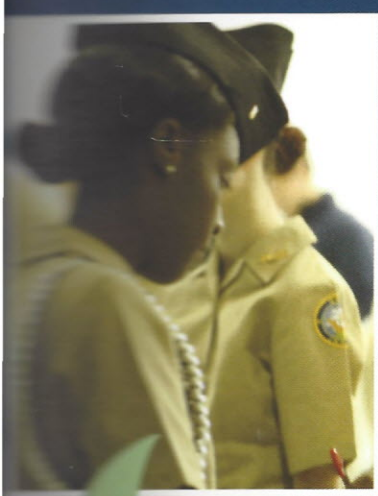




Officer Rebecca Smith

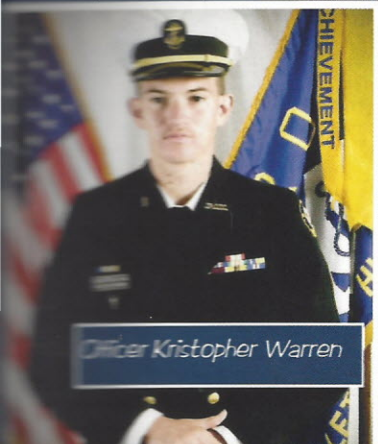


Company Commander Kyle Harrison

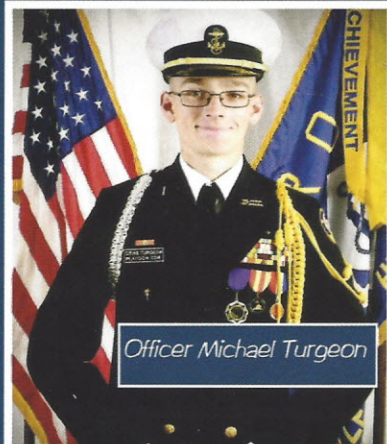


Company Commander Devon Breland

"The craziness of the first semester put a lot of stress on our commanders. Despite that, the cadets know they can rely on us to keep order and support them," says Executive Officer Shatterria Mays, describing the leader corps. Her focus to the job was clear as she spoke, never looking up from her clipboard.



Officer Kristopher Warren



Officer Michael Turgeon



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Learning to lead

Walterboro High's Naval Junior ROTC program aims to develop informed, responsible citizens by building self-discipline, pride, responsibility and accountability

By SYLVIA DUKES Staff Writer

In 1993 the Naval Junior ROTC program was formed at Walterboro High School under the leadership of Lt. Commander Charles Armentrout. As a 20 year active duty veteran, LCDR Armentrout served on six U.S. Navy ships and drove duty in Virginia, Rhode Island, and Washington, D.C., and served as a Naval Aviator in Vietnam. Among his decorations are the Bronze Star with "V", Purple Heart, and the Combat Action Ribbon. With the military experience of Armentrout and his organizational abilities, Walterboro High was well served to launch the program that has since become an award-winning battalion.

LCDR Armentrout is assisted by two experienced Associate Naval Science Instructors, Colonel County

and about 80 percent is military. "In the first year, the cadets are taught the basics of the ROTC program. They are oriented into military customs, leadership and following orders, government, geography, oceanography, and history," Armentrout explained.

The cadets are only required to attend the classes five days a week. However, there are a number of teams that meet after school to practice for competitions. Cadets can be members on one or all of the teams.

"We have two drift teams, and a color guard, which marches at football and basketball games, and at community affairs," said Armentrout with pride in his voice. "We have an athletic team, which competes in push-ups, sit-ups, races, relays. We have an engineering team, who are trained to erect masts and a compass, and have to be able to find their way from point A to point B in the woods. We have an outstanding academic team. They have not finished lower than ninth in competition and have come in second and third in meets. They have finished in the Top 10 in every one of the state meets this year."

"The drill team has stayed in the top five. In 1995 the team won the state championship. Last year we received the Naval Honor Unit. In the five and a half years of history in the NJROTC program at Walterboro High, the cadets have earned over 150 trophies," said Armentrout.

Though most schools have an ROTC program at the high school level, the military across the country are Army, Other schools may have the Navy, Air Force, or Marine cadet programs. Textbooks and uniforms are provided to students, so they all start off with the same opportunity. In today's ROTC programs, female students are often in the forefront and making up over half the students participating.

The battalion is made up of four different year groups, depending on how many years they have been in the program. The battalion is divided into two companies. Each class represents a platoon. The battalion's highest ranking student officers are Cadet Commander Amanda Martinez and the Executive Officer Cadet Lt. Commander Debra Williams. To reach advancement, each cadet must pass six exams. If they fail the first time, they have the opportunity to take the exam again. This allows each cadet the opportunity to move ahead.

Cadet Lt. Scott Hootey, Operations Officer, II, and Cadet Lt. Sharon Church, Company Executive Officer, VI, discussed how the NJ ROTC program has helped them during their four years as cadets.

"The discipline that you learn in ROTC helps a lot in other classes that you can't see. The leadership/managerial skills helps you out in other areas of your life besides ROTC," Church said. "And you learn to how to deal with other people."

"ROTC made me a stronger leader," said Hootey. "I have learned that the higher up you go, the more the



AWARDS EARNED. LCDR Charles Armentrout, USN, (RET) gives awards to cadets, Sharon Church, Debra Williams, Amanda Martinez, Jacquie Henderson, and Kristy Jones.



MARCHING SHARP. Cadets show their stuff as they practice on their campus.

ROTC
Continued in...

Naval Junior ROTC Program
LCDR Charles Armentrout
Featured In: The Press & Standard
February 26, 1999

responsibilities in the name of 3 have always been by example can't expect something unless you yourself. You do think before you. History has The Coast and the Marine is a combined effort best friend is a friend and...

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This newspaper pressing, displayed proudly in NJROTC's "bridge" (command room) describes the structure of the program as it was when LCDR Charles Armentrout started it. As NJROTC interim director PR 1 Christopher Hutchens attests to, "The program has stayed very true to that. We try to reinforce those ideas, even in spite of how large we've gotten. Our first duty is teaching that."

LEADING THE CHARGE

The ROTC roster is full of go-getters, but none exemplify leadership moreso than this year's Commanding Officer, senior Mileidy Villalobos. Described by her subordinates and superiors as unwaveringly direct, cheerful, and committed, Villalobos is always on-deck and at full attention when needed.