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Five enroll at Woodmore

Written by Yaneek Smith and Taylor Myerholtz
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Sea Cadets provides military training for students

If a parent knew there was an organization out there that could help young people develop valuable skills, teach them discipline and help them to develop confidence, they'd probably want to learn more about it.

The U.S. Navy Sea Cadet Corps is that organization, and it's had a profound influence on five Woodmore High School students that are currently participating.

According to the website, the mission of the program is to provide "leadership, management, organization and discipline while developing honor, courage, and commitment. The (organization) helps fulfill that goal by providing critical mentorship, training, and leadership opportunities to young people, enabling them to reach their fullest potential."

The five participating are Ryan Otte, Nick Fruchey, Shale Wahl, Ian Fruchey and Parker Lowe.

The NSCC (Naval Sea Cadet Corps) is a program for young teens (13-17) who are interested in furthering their education about joining the Navy or Marines. The NLCC (Navy League Cadet Corps) is another program for younger teens (11-14) that introduces basics of the naval life.

The cadet program is sponsored by an individual councils of the Navy League of the U.S. It is a non-profit organization which is made up of U.S. citizens who support the sea services. The Cadets are instructed by the naval personnel, senior cadets and adult volunteer leaders.

Along with advance training, they also have the opportunity to travel to different training sites all over the country during the summer training period. Some outstanding Sea Cadets are selected to participate in the NSCC International Exchange Program.

The cadets learn a variety of subjects, which help them become a better citizen and a stronger person. They also study naval history, customs and traditions, seamanship and navigation.

"I like the program because it teaches leadership skills," says Wahl. "It's a great program for people who want to join the military."

Fruchey, a sophomore, says the program has had a positive influence on him.

"It's a prep course for people who want to join the military -- the Navy, Marine Corps and Merchant Marines," Fruchey said. "I'm in it for the training and because I am thinking of joining the Marines. We learn facing movements, how to march, how to respect an officer, stuff like that. There is a training list -- culinary, band, field ops, scuba diving. There are a lot of things you can get training for.

"It's about kids exploring what they can do and exploring their limits. I've always wanted to go in as a cook and then I (took an interest) in scuba and I really like that. It's good for people to test their limits. It tests their leadership -- they teach you how to be a leader and how to stand out and lead others."

The students train for one weekend per month at the local community college in Monore, Michigan as part of the Wolverine Division. Fruchey notes that joining the program does not mean that the person will have to enlist in the military when he/she turn 18, though. That remains the choice of the individual.

An average day of training, which lasts from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., begins with the commanding and executive officers explaining to the students what they'll be doing during the day. That usually includes physical training, called PT by trainers, and a physical reference test, called PFT. In the afternoon, the new recruits will undergo training on how to march and try to learn some of the proper techniques that come with being part of the program.

"The program teaches us cadets about the importance of good leadership and citizenship qualities," Wahl said. "We have drill one weekend each month, where we are inspected on our uniforms, military knowledge, and military bearing. At drill, we also endure physical training every day. Advanced trainings are available all year round and all around the country for cadets who want to expand their knowledge in different military careers.

"I've learned the importance of teamwork, discipline, pride, leadership, citizenship, and I've improved my personal well being through the program. It's an amazing once in a lifetime experience. I joined the program last year because I had been thinking about the Navy after high school. Even if I don't join the military, I've still learned many things, had many great experiences, challenged myself and others, and made many new friends in the program."

The program offers a number of opportunities for students to advance their training. Advanced training includes Military Law Enforcement Training, Music Training, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Airman Training, Seabee Indoctrination, SEAL Team Training, Submarine Orientation, and Leadership Academy.

Fruchey credits his experiences with helping him to develop more confidence in himself.

"I used to never really be good in front of crowds," he said. "With the Color Guard, we've done many of them at Mud Hens games, Monster Truck rallies, parades -- it's given me a lot of confidence. When you go out with your cadets you have that confidence."

Fruchey also credits the organization with helping him plan for his future, about making the military more than just a short-term thing in life.

"They pretty much teach you to do well in school and to plan for your future but to also have a backup plan. At first, I just wanted to join the Marine Corps, but they told me to plan for a little longer down the road. (The officers) don't want you to just join the military. They want you to have a career in the military that will carry on later in life."

For more information about Naval Sea Cadet Corps or Navy League Cadet Corps visit www.monroeseacadets.com or www.seacadets.org. Portions of this article are from Woodmore To Window, a student publication, with permission. That article was written by senior staff writer Taylor Myerholtz

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