

THE PARRIS ISLAND BOOT



Civilian medical team faces boot camp trials

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Swamp Romp success

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Participants crawl on stretches of muddy ground as they race toward the finish line of the Swamp Romp on Parris Island on Oct. 20. Competitors also waded through pits of muddy water, climbed over towering hills of dirt and ran along dirt paths that trailed throughout the course.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Caitlin Maluda

Recruits register to donate bone marrow

Lance Cpl. David Bessey
Staff Writer

The Fort Gordon, Ga., blood donor center began registering recruits as bone marrow donors during a recruit blood drive on Parris Island in July.

The purpose of the registry is to find suitable donors to provide bone marrow for patients suffering from blood related cancers and diseases such as leukemia and sickle cell anemia. Approximately 70 percent of patients cannot find a match within their own families.

Recruits will be able to join the registry as part of its regular blood drives at the All-Weather Training Facility on Sundays, said Erin Hawkins, a blood donor recruiter at the center.

Unlike the blood donors who are

pre-selected to donate blood, bone marrow donors are all volunteers.

The testing results are placed on the national registry of the National Marrow Donor Program in Minneapolis.

All results are coded to ensure that names and social security numbers are not entered in the data base.

Recruits will not be pulled from training if a match is found.

If a preliminary match for a patient is found, then the recruit would be contacted for additional testing. The process usually takes three to 12 weeks, said Hawkins.

The registry is for everyone who needs to find a donor, not just Department of Defense personnel.

Approximately 841 recruits have volunteered and have been registered since July.

Depot to conduct antiterrorism exercise

Gunnery Sgt. Bill Lisbon
Public Affairs Chief

Parris Island's emergency response personnel will practice reacting to a lone gunman firing into the crowd during a Family Day event Oct. 30 in order to stay sharp for acts of domestic terrorism.

The annual antiterrorism exercise will be held in the vicinity of the All-Weather Training Facility between 7:30 a.m. and noon. Traffic on Boulevard de France should not be affected, but Soissons Street will be closed during the exercise.

Passers-by should not be alarmed if they see role-players with weapons, said Keith Henderson, depot antiterrorism and force protection program manager. No live ammunition will be used during the event.

The exercise will not

interfere with normal access to the base; however, some offices or buildings may appear closed for portions of the morning as occupants rehearse how to barricade themselves inside to defend from a roving shooter.

With Family Day and graduation events nearly every week, exercises like these provide valuable training for first responders and auxiliary security personnel.

"The more we train, the better we become," Henderson said.

In addition to the simulated shooting, residents in family housing near Weapons and Field Training Battalion's headquarters will receive phone calls using the Beaufort County emergency notification system between 9:45-10:15 a.m. The system, commonly referred to as "reverse 911," is ca-

pable of calling landline phones in a selected geographical location and playing a pre-recorded message during emergencies.

"The exercise focuses on implementing current plans, policies and procedures and will validate or identify if there are any changes needed," said Henderson.

These types of exercises, which are required annually, increase the awareness of all depot personnel, Henderson said.

"The best weapon we have against potential acts of terrorism or a critical incident is our eyes and ears. If you see something, say something," said Henderson.

Anyone who observes any suspicious activity should report it immediately to the military police at 843-228-3444.

NEWS BRIEF

Kids Corps Birthday

The 5th annual children's Marine Corps birthday celebration is scheduled to be held at the All-Weather Training Facility on Oct. 27 between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

The celebration is purposed to give a chance to the children of Marines serving on Parris Island to have fun and learn about the Marine Corps.

The Marine Corps Community Service-sponsored event will feature a cake-cutting ceremony and an obstacle course and other equipment for children to play on.

Trick-or-treating hours announced for base housing

Halloween trick-or-treating will be allowed in base housing between 5-7 p.m. Oct. 31.

The scheduled times apply to family housing on Parris Island, at the Naval Hospital Beaufort and Laurel Bay.

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Air War College tours Parris Island



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Parris Island Marine Band performs in Connecticut



Tibet native becomes Marine

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Air War College visits Parris Island



Photos by Lance Cpl. Tyler Reiriz
Students from the Air War College get a chance to use the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer, a computer simulator used for Marine rifle training, during their visit to Parris Island on Oct. 17. The Air War College is a senior service school for the U.S. Air Force and has students from different U.S. branches of service, other nations' militaries and civilians. The visiting group came to Parris Island to receive a better understanding of how Marines are made.

A Marine teaches a class about Marine Corps rifle marksmanship to students of the Air War College as they tour Parris Island on Oct. 17. The students visited the island to learn about recruit training and get a better understanding of the Marine Corps in order to help during joint-service operations. The visiting group had students from the U.S., Spain, Bulgaria, Korea and New Zealand. The group toured the island and saw Marine Corps Martial Arts Program instruction, rifle marksmanship training and visited the Parris Island Museum.



Photos by Sgt. Esdras Ruano

Parris Island Marine Band members, under the direction of Band Officer Chief Warrant Officer 3 Joshua Stone, sing "Song of the Marines" during an evening concert in Bridgeport, Conn. For the past 25 years, a Marine Corps band has entertained Bridgeport audiences with concert band, ceremonial band and small ensemble performances during the city's Columbus Day celebration.



The Parris Island Marine Band stands to be recognized during a concert at the Klein Memorial Auditorium in Bridgeport, Conn., on Oct. 6. The performances Oct. 6 and 7 attracted more than 1,000 audience members each night. The band concluded their musical tour with performances and band clinics Oct. 9 and 10 for more than 500 middle school and high school students.

PARRIS ISLAND BAND CONTINUES CONNECTICUT COLUMBUS DAY CELEBRATION

Sgt. Joanne Matibag
Parris Island Marine Band

As the Parris Island Marine Band concluded an evening concert in Bridgeport, Conn., on Oct. 6, more than 1,000 members of the audience gave a standing ovation and waved American flags in the air.

The concert was one of a number of shows the band gave during a five-day visit Oct. 5 - 11, continuing a quarter-century tradition.

The Bridgeport community has had a Marine Corps band perform at its Columbus Day celebration for the past 25 years. The first Marine band arrived in Bridgeport in 1987, and the Parris Island Marine Band continued the tradition this year.

"The Marine Corps band visits are part of the city's annual calendar of events," said Chris Caruso, a coordinator for the band's visit. "The people of Bridgeport look forward to and welcome the Marines with love,

pride and heartfelt appreciation."

The Parris Island Marine Band performed two formal concerts in the Klein Memorial Auditorium, ending the performances with "God Bless America," accompanied by the audience singing along.

In attendance were community members, including Bridgeport mayor, William Finch, U.S. Rep. Jim Himes and State Rep. Jack Hennessy.

The concerts also paid tribute to other audience members. Montford Point Marines were recognized Saturday evening with the song "I'll Take the Marines," based on lyrics written by Montford Point Marine LaSalle Vaughn in the 1940s.

On Sunday, more than 60 family members of Connecticut service members who were killed in the line of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan were present.

The ceremonial band marched down the streets of Bridgeport to celebrate the 104th Columbus Day Celebration and the brass quintet performed at the Lord Chamberlain Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

To wrap up the tour, the concert band performed for more than 500 middle school and high school students and held band clinics after each performance.

Lance Cpl. Steven Farley, one of the newest members of the band, said one of the most memorable experiences for him was the positive response the band received from the crowd at their first concert, as well as the interaction with the high school students later the following week.

Bridgeport was his first major trip and formal concert with the band. Farley recalled a woman who approached him after the concert.

"She came up to me and told me she felt really proud," he said. "She actually felt like an American."

The city of Bridgeport plans to continue to have a Marine Corps band each year for Columbus Day.

"They have become part of the Bridgeport family, and each year we're eager to welcome them back home," Caruso said.

Civilian medical team endures rigors of recruit training

Terri Moon Cronk
American Forces Press Service

The mostly civilian team from the National Intrepid Center of Excellence in Bethesda, Md., ranged from doctors and audiologists to arts and recreational therapists and a pharmacist. By team approach, these experts treat service members with severe cases of traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder – the two signature wounds of war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

To enhance their study and treatment of service members, the team went through a full day of Marine Corps recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island last week to understand one of the most stressful events in a military member’s life, according to Joshua Stueve, NiCOE spokesman.

The first morning began when a drill instructor boarded the civilians’ bus and began shouting orders at them and ordered them to stand in a formation. She then rushed them through “the silver doors” where they ceased to be civilians and became Marine Corps recruits, she told them.

Team members quickly learned to shout out, “Yes ma’am!” “Aye ma’am!” and, “No ma’am!” to the drill instructor who worked them over for the first half-hour.

At dawn, the team ran, jumped and climbed their way through obstacle courses, shot M-16 rifles at a firing range, and later spoke with recruits during lunch in the mess hall.

Instructors took a wealth of questions from the medical team. How are recruits taught to drag a body? How are the injured saved? What if recruits fail? What happens if they fall from the obstacle course into a moat? How many recruits don’t make it and why?

The team witnessed martial arts maneuvers, water survival skills and tromped through isolated woods to watch recruits on their last make-it-or-break-it exercise to becoming a Marine: a grueling, 54-hour simulated combat environment known as the Crucible.

The medical team learned during their own basic warrior training that recruits are on the move constantly with little food, water or rest. They navigate through dark, wooded areas using only a compass, sprint through obstacle courses, and are put in critical decision-making roles to evaluate them as qualified Marines.

“I’ll be able to bring that core understanding back [to NiCOE] and integrate it into my treatment plans,” said Julie Liss, the pharmacist. “I can tell the Marines, ‘I know you made it through the Crucible, and this journey might be your Crucible again.’”

Liss said being able to share common experiences with her patients helps treatment.

Tony Panettiere, a neurologist and retired Navy doctor, said he was impressed with the training Marines receive.

“They’re all designed to weather the stresses that come against them, and press on regardless of how much they’re hurting, whether psychologically or physically, because there are other Marines who count on them,” he said.

While drill instructors shout at recruits for 12 weeks to prepare them for military readiness through discipline and responsibility for themselves and others, recruits also develop confidence and leadership skills, the medical team learned.

They learned the importance of the creed, “never leave



Photo by Terri Moon Cronk

From left, Navy Lt. Jessica Snyder, audiologist, and Celene Moorer, assistant technologist, of the National Intrepid Center of Excellence in Bethesda, Md., attempt to catapult themselves over an obstacle course apparatus during their day of boot camp at Parris Island.

a Marine behind,” and the Corps’ engrained ethics of honor, courage and commitment, they said.

“The stress created here helps them cope in combat,” a drill instructor told the group during an orientation.

Because Marines depend on each other, Panettiere said, that might be why they’re hesitant to seek medical treatment for significant injuries.

“They might not know what their limits really should be before we can get them back into a better state of health,” he suggested.

Panettiere said he learned how resilient the recruits are.

Celene Moorer, an assistant technologist, is new to the military medical environment. She said the boot camp experience made her realize why the Marines she sees at NiCOE are sometimes hesitant to share information about their medical conditions and limitations.

“I now have a better understanding of where it starts in terms of ‘OK, you need to be this strong person and never give in,’” she said. “I think I can adjust my approach in dealing ... and empathizing with the service members. It gave me a different perspective by going through the process.”

Panettiere added that even as a retired Navy doctor, he’d never seen boot camp Parris Island-style.

“That’s why I wanted to see where they all start

from,” he noted.

Understanding their code of honor and courage to always be responsible also impressed Peter Brooks, a primary care physician.

“As a civilian, I have great respect for them when I see what’s involved,” he said. “The other piece is we try to integrate a therapy connection with service members and speak in context. Being sensitive to the military culture confirms that approach.”

Later the first day, the NiCOE team visited Naval Hospital Beaufort, S.C., where Marine recruits and other service members are treated.

NiCOE members gave a presentation on what their interdisciplinary teams can do for those with traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress in four weeks, in addition to their research and education into those signature wounds of war.

The second day of the team’s visit to Parris Island began with observing the colors and meeting the commanding general, Brig. Gen. Lori Reynolds. They also attended a graduation ceremony on the parade deck of 509 new Marines.

“I think service members will appreciate that we took the time to see what they go through,” Moorer said. “And they might be a little more trusting, giving us information. It benefits both parties in the long run.”



Photo by Lance Cpl. Caitlin Maluda
A man lifts himself over the edge of a muddy water pit and onto the slippery ground before crawling to the next pit during the first obstacle of the Swamp Romp competition Oct. 20 on Parris Island. The annual event was open to the public, attracting both civilians and military personnel. Contestants ran a 5-mile course through wooded trails and obstacles that left them covered in mud and swamp sludge.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Caitlin Maluda
Participants waded through a pit of muddy water after climbing up and over a large dirt mound. Most contestants were knee-deep in the water as they made their way to the end of the oversized mud-puddle before continuing on the dirt path that would lead them to the next obstacle of the Swamp Romp held on Parris Island on Oct. 20.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Caitlin Maluda
Sgt. Maj. Robert Williamson, Headquarters and Service Battalion sergeant major, smiles as he spends his Saturday morning knee-deep in muddy water while he treads his way through the swampy streams of the Swamp Romp held on Parris Island on Oct. 20. Williamson ran the course with a group of other Marines from Headquarters and Service Battalion.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Octavia Davis
Competitors in the annual Swamp Romp, held on Parris Island on Oct. 20, help each other climb the mountainous piles of mud and dirt during the 5-mile course. Attendees of the event included both military members and civilians who ran the course individually or in teams. The three fastest teams and individuals were awarded at the close of the event.

Parris Island hosts annual Swamp Romp

Lance Cpl. Caitlin Maluda
Staff Writer

Sliding into muddy trenches and walking waist-deep in swampy waters is just the way that some people chose to spend their Saturday morning Oct. 20 while on Parris Island.

Family and friends gathered at Parris Island’s combat training area to witness and participate in this year’s annual Swamp Romp competition. The 5-mile course was either an individual or group effort, and participants could be found running through wooded

trails or wading in waters.

The Swamp Romp was open to the public, drawing a mixed crowd of more than 500 military and civilian challenge-seekers. Throughout the course, participants climbed over hills of dirt, slid into pools of muddy water, and ran through canals of swampy sludge.

“I would definitely do it again,” said English Esway, a member of the Dirty Sistahs team.

Esway said she found the obstacles to be fairly difficult, but the course was a decent challenge.

Violet Rodriguez, an 18-year-old competitor, said

she was not expecting to run so much, but the course was still a fun experience.

“I don’t get to play in the mud on a regular day,” said Rodriguez. “It was a challenge.”

The Swamp Romp course, which was constructed by Marines of Marine Wing Support Squadron 273, from Marine Corps Air Station, Beaufort, was a fun, family-oriented experience that allowed participants to get down and muddy. Awards were given to the top three teams and individuals who finished the quickest.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Octavia Davis
Members of a contesting team in the Swamp Romp competition stands together after completing the 5-mile course at the combat training area on Parris Island on Oct. 20. The team was comprised of Marines from Headquarters and Service Battalion on Parris Island and their family members.

THEY CAME IN PEACE: THE IMPACT OF 1983 BEIRUT BOMBING

Cpl. Chelsea Flowers Anderson

Editor’s note: In 1982 Marines were sent to Lebanon as peacekeepers during the Lebanese Civil War. On Oct. 23, 1983, a truck filled with explosives crashed into a Marine barracks building in Beirut, Lebanon, killing 220 Marines, 18 sailors and three soldiers. A similar truck struck a French military barracks building, killing 58 French service members. The Beirut bombing resulted in the withdrawal of international forces from Lebanon.

Tim McCoskey, a Beirut bombing survivor, shares his story from that day.

I couldn’t believe my eyes. The barracks building was gone. The four-story building where hundreds of Marines with the Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, lived was gone.

No freakin’ way, I thought. Just to be sure, I ran to the other side of my tent. I knew from here I’d have to see the building.

Sure enough, as I rounded the other side, there was nothing but a mushroom cloud where the barracks building once was.

It was at that moment I realized the cakewalk was over.

Now, this was for real.

I arrived in Beirut, Lebanon, May 29, 1983, aboard the USS El Paso. Half my platoon had been to Beirut the first time 24th Marine Amphibious Unit went to Lebanon in Oct. 1982. They told us being stationed here was like a holiday.

When outside the wire, though, we saw blown up motorcycles and buildings that hinted at a fight we weren’t a part of.

My days consisted of driving to the embassy to transport Marines or supplies, picking up troops from the beach, delivering chow to line troops and dumping trash. We always heard the fighting, but we were there to be peacekeepers and not get involved.

I woke up the morning of Oct. 23 when my buddy Lance Cpl. Ronald Putnam returned from his night duty around 6 p.m. He wanted to go get chow at the BLT, but since I had Meals Ready to Eat in my tent already, I decided to just cook them up in there and deliver them to the line troops. As I began boiling water, Putnam told me how the base had been put on high alert because there had been a terrorist threat the night before.

By this time, a few other Marines in our tent began to get up and move around. Suddenly, we all heard an explosion that sounded like an artillery round had hit right outside our tent.

A second later, chunks of concrete were coming through our tent. In an instant, chaos broke out. Everyone was yelling, “Get to the bunkers; get to the bunkers!”

I was already running to the bunker. As soon as we were all inside, I heard someone say the BLT was gone. Slowly, we emerged from the bunkers and the rumors were confirmed.

Honestly, I can’t remember what happened on our trip from the bunker to the site of the explosion. Maybe I saw something so terrible my mind blocked it out. But my memory picks back up five minutes

later as I stood next to a pile of rubble amidst the settling dust of the explosion.

All I could think was, ‘What’s next? Will they attack again?’

Those thoughts only lingered in my mind for a minute, because reality took over. We had to help our Marines.

The building was like nothing I’d ever seen. Everything was mangled. Dust was flying everywhere so it was difficult to breathe. People walked around who had just gotten out of the building. They were full of concrete dust. Some were bloody.

Right away, we started sifting through the rubble for survivors. Occasionally we could hear muffled cries for help. We would have to sift through the concrete to slowly uncover those trapped. We transported the injured to the Marine Security Guard building, which became our aid station. It was difficult work because debris was everywhere.

A few Marines found one body under the rubble that was still zipped up in a sleeping bag. They decided to take him out of his sleeping bag before putting him in a body bag. When they unzipped the bag he opened his eyes and said, “Anybody got a Pepsi?”

After a while of picking through the debris, we started to run out of survivors. That’s when we began to come across the dead. My buddies, Lance Cpl. Tony McVeigh and Putnam and I started hauling bodies and loading them onto the trucks. Eventually, we began piling the bodies any way we could so we could transport them faster. We took them to the airport hangar and stacked them in three rows of 10. The rows just went on and on down the hangar. I stopped counting at 150 bodies and went back to retrieve more.

When we didn’t have any bodies to take to the hangar, we sifted through the rubble. We found one Marine whose legs were pinned by a huge beam. We went to get a crane, but I was filled with this crazy-ass strength and just lifted the beam off of him. Another Marine grabbed him, and we pulled him out of there.

At one point as we were walking through the rubble looking for any signs of life, a Marine hollered that he had found another survivor.

We rushed over and began digging. We dug for what must have been 10 minutes, or maybe it was 30 minutes, but finally we saw two fingers – just two fingers moving. The sign of life motivated us to work harder and we started pulling out pieces of concrete. The more we dug, the more of the survivor we uncovered. There was a huge piece of concrete that was about 3 feet by 3 feet and 6 inches thick. I don’t know how I did it, but I just picked it up and moved it off of him. Eventually, we got to the point where we were able to identify him as the chaplain and uncovered all of his body except for one ankle.

The chaplain started screaming at us, “Get me out of here. Get me out of here!”

At that point we realized if we moved any more debris, the building would collapse on the chaplain. I wanted to just yank the chaplain out and run the risk that he would lose his foot, but was ordered to continue to uncover him.

I slid into the tiny space where the chaplain was

trapped, with my arms protecting my head, so I could remove the rubble. Sure enough as soon as I moved the piece of concrete, that portion of the building collapsed on the chaplain and me. We were pinned underneath the rubble for about 30 minutes before the other Marines were able to free us.

Thankfully the chaplain was all right, and although I had no circulation in my arms for half an hour, I was uninjured.

Even while rescuing as many Marines as we could, we had to stay on our guard. While I was loading bodies on the truck, I caught sniper fire and had to lie down on the dead bodies for cover. We had to trust that our infantry Marines on the perimeter were doing their job, so we could take care of our own.

As we got deeper into the pile of rubble, we began to find arms and legs and bodies that were charred from the fire. There were some really mangled Marines in there. There was one Marine I will never forget. I could make out a Pegasus tattoo on his arm, but a concrete slab had taken his entire face off. Those are the things that haunt my dreams at night.

During the rescue efforts, we had to be cruel. We couldn’t have emotion. You had to block out what you were seeing, because there was no way any of us would have made it through otherwise.

When I was a teenager, I once attended an open-casket memorial and vowed I would never touch a dead body. Now, just a few years later, I was hauling countless of my fallen comrades from the rubble in Beirut.

After three days, I was ordered to get some food and sleep. I went back to my tent and tried to eat an MRE. I took one whiff of it and felt sick to my stomach. I laid down on my cot with my cammies still on, but when I closed my eyes, all I could see was dead people. Then I felt something brush against my leg and that was it – I was up and back at the rescue site.

About five days into the rescue efforts, they chased us off and the FBI came in to investigate. All the able-bodied Marines went back to our normal duties for the next few weeks until we pulled out of Lebanon. But none of us were ever quite the same.

Most of us wanted to stay. We wanted to find those responsible for the explosion and repay them for all our brothers lost. But we followed orders and returned to the States Dec. 7. It was then that reality began to set in.

When we shared our stories with those back home, they just didn’t understand. No one could comprehend what we went through there. No one could understand the nightmares that filled my nights and the faces I’d see when I closed my eyes. No one except for the Marines who were there will ever fully understand.

It’s been 29 years since the bombing, but I still have a nightmare every once in a while. I’ve stayed in touch with a handful of my buddies from Beirut, and we try to get together a few times a year. Although we all bear the scars of that day, we also learned just how valuable life is. We made it through Beirut together, and we will continue to look out for each other as long as we can because that’s what Marines do.

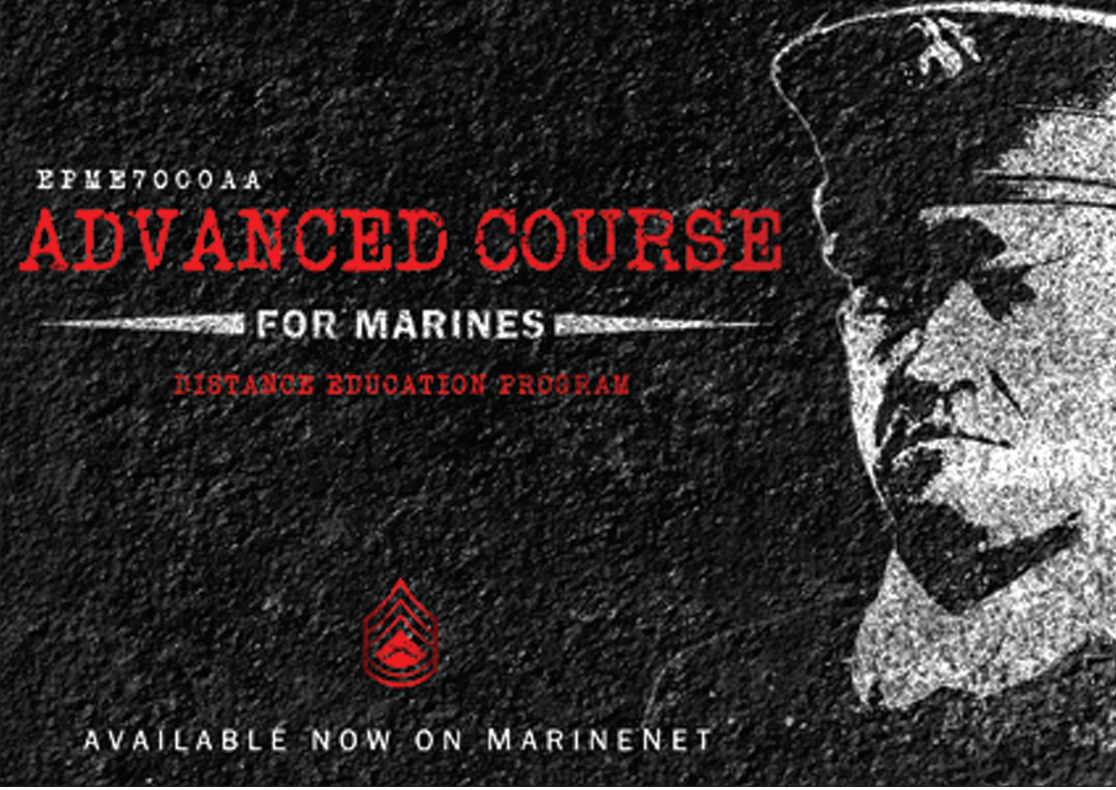




Photo by Sgt. James Mercure

Lance Cpl. Tashi Dhondup, a supply warehouseman with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6, stands with his M-16 during a deployment in Afghanistan. Dhondup left his home of Lhasa, Tibet, and moved to northern India to practice his religion. Now, Dhondup serves as a Marine and received his U.S. citizenship earlier this year.

Tibet native earns citizenship as Marine, serves in Afghanistan

Sgt. James Mercure
1st Marine Expeditionary Force

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SABIT QADAM, Afghanistan – When an 8-year-old Tibetan boy fled his home country with his family for religious and cultural freedom, becoming a United States Marine was the last thing on his mind.

For Lance Cpl. Tashi Dhondup, a supply warehouseman with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6, leaving his home of Lhasa, Tibet, and moving to northern India was the first step on his journey of becoming a U.S. citizen.

“When I was 8, my family ran away from Tibet because there is no freedom of religion, no freedom to learn our own language,” Dhondup said. “We moved to India so we could study our own language and learn our culture.”

After going to a boarding school in India until the eighth grade and learning Hindi, one of the most commonly spoken Indian languages, he left for the

states in search of more opportunities for his family.

“I was at school in India, and my mom told me we would have a better life in the United States,” Dhondup explained. “We moved to Jersey City, N.J., and after six months there, we moved to Connecticut. I’ve always wanted to serve in the military. I had a language teacher who taught me English. He had been in the Army but he told me to join the Marines because it was tougher and better.”

When Dhondup turned 18, he joined the Marine Corps protecting a country that was not yet his own.

“I applied to become an American citizen last March, and when I was in [Enhanced Mojave Viper] training before our deployment, my citizenship paperwork was approved,” Dhondup explained. “I took the oath for citizenship July 25, 2012, and it meant a lot to me. Because we ran from Tibet, if we had returned without citizenship, we would be put in prison. Now that I am an American, I can visit where I came from without fear, and I can return to

my new home with no problems.”

Now as a citizen, when Dhondup returns home, it is evident to his friends that his experiences in life and in the Marine Corps have boosted his maturity.

“I’m glad I’m an American now, but I do miss where I came from,” Dhondup said. “A lot of my friends complain about little things. Going home on leave and being in the uniform means more, and if they were to step in my shoes they wouldn’t have anything to complain about.”

Dhondup’s work ethic is also evident to his fellow Marines.

“He is the only supply warehouseman out here, and he was handpicked to deploy,” said Staff Sgt. Terrell Kelly, battalion supply chief and a Detroit native. “He is one of the hardest working Marines we have in our shop. He will take an order and actually execute as if he were a corporal or sergeant. He became a Marine because he wanted to defend America, and to become a Marine and then to become a citizen is outstanding.”