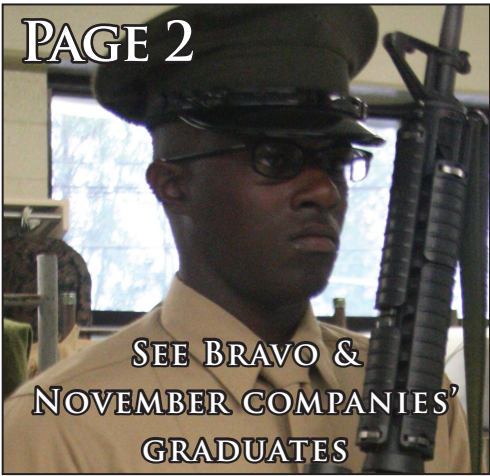


THE PARRIS ISLAND BOOT

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SEE BRAVO & NOVEMBER COMPANIES' GRADUATES

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Bravo and November RECRUITS DRESS TO IMPRESS FOR INSPECTION

Lance Cpl. MaryAnn Hill
Staff Writer

Marine Corps recruits completed another portion of training as they showed the confidence and military bearing they've gained so far during their company commander's inspection Feb. 16 on Parris Island.

Upon completion of this event, the recruits of Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, and November Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, finished their ninth week on Parris Island and entered their final phase of training.

"The biggest thing I look for during this inspection is confidence in how the recruits act and speak to me," said Capt. Trysten Coffey, November Company commander. "At this point in training, they should be able to confidently speak to an officer about anything."

The recruits have similar evaluations at the end of each phase of training. The first is given by their senior drill instructor, the second by the company commander and the last is given by the battalion commander.

"This inspection and the senior drill instructor's inspection are like checkpoints for the recruits," said Coffey, a 29-year-old native of Amherst, N.H. "We are ultimately trying to prepare the recruits for their final inspection, which they must

pass in order to graduate."

The recruits spent a lot of time preparing their uniforms, weapons and barracks for this big event.

"I spent one or two hours every night this past week preparing for this," said Pfc. Deziree Ortiz, Platoon 4008. "I steamed and ironed my uniform a lot, reviewed all the previous things we learned and cleaned my weapon every night."

Recruits are taught from the early stages of training that in order to succeed, they have to rely on others as well as themselves. Even a seemingly individual evaluation like this was no different.

"A lot of teamwork went into this inspection," said Ortiz, a 27-year-old native of Virginia Beach, Va. "We only had eight irons for 61 uniforms. It took a lot of our personal time to get everything ready."

The recruits split up into different groups to ensure everything for the inspection from ironing to cleaning the barracks was completed in time.

The recruits of Bravo and November companies completed the senior drill instructor's inspection at the end of their third week of training as a rite of passage to begin the second portion of training. They have now completed their company commander's inspection as a rite of passage to begin their last weeks of training before earning the title of U.S. Marine. They are scheduled to graduate today.



Photos by Lance Cpl. MaryAnn Hill

Rct. Rocio Mancillas, Platoon 4008, November Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, stands at attention while her company commander inspects her uniform and weapon Feb. 16 during the company commander's inspection, held outside of the squad bay on Parris Island. Mancillas, an 18-year-old from Dallas, earned an above-average score on her inspection. November Company is scheduled to graduate today.



A drill instructor from Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, measures a recruit's belt length Feb. 16 during the company commander's inspection in the company's barracks on Parris Island. The drill instructors also checked the recruits' ties, shirts and trousers prior to them being inspected by the company commander. Precision is important because the recruits will have to look professional at all times as Marines. Bravo Company is scheduled to graduate today.

Recruits get taste of Marine Corps history

Lance Cpl. MaryAnn Hill
Staff Writer

The recruits of Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, and November Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, enriched themselves with Marine Corps history at the Parris Island Museum on Feb. 9.

Every recruit who comes through training has a chance to go to the museum to see for themselves the history of the title they are so close to earning.

"This visit gives them a chance to learn about their history, and it is also supposed to be a motivational tool," said Sgt. Eric Droste, senior drill instructor of Platoon 1021. "First phase was about breaking them down,

second phase was about building them back up and third phase is about mentoring them and treating them like Marines, which is why this visit is right before they enter third phase."

The museum here contains artifacts from many different time periods in history, concerning not only Marine Corps history, but the history of the U.S. as well. Different uniforms worn by Marines throughout the ages are displayed here and weapons used during those time periods.

"I think it's really cool to see how the Marine Corps has evolved," said Pfc. Samuel Stanton, Platoon 1021. "The uniforms and training might have changed over the years,

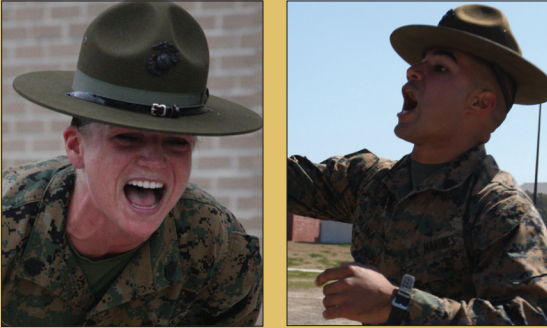
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Photo by Lance Cpl. MaryAnn Hill

Recruits from Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, look at a poster showing the progression of different parts of training throughout history during their museum visit on Parris Island on Feb. 9. Bravo Company is scheduled to graduate today.

WHY I BECAME A DRILL INSTRUCTOR



Sgt. Brittany Molina and Sgt. Ruben Molina

are currently serving as Marine Corps drill instructors on Parris Island as husband and wife.

Sgt. Brittany Molina, from Racine, Wis., joined the Marine Corps in September 2007 and became a drill instructor in October 2012. She trains recruits with November Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, and serves as an administrative specialist off the drill field.

"I wanted to be a drill instructor to show these recruits that females have a place in the Marine Corps just as much as males do. I push them to be the best they can be and instill in them that drive to always strive to do better."

Sgt. Ruben Molina, a Cedar Park, Texas, native, has been in the Marine Corps since December 2007. He became a drill instructor in October 2012, and currently trains recruits with Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion. He is also an administrative specialist while not serving as a drill instructor.

"I decided to become a drill instructor because my leaders were all previous drill instructors and I wanted to emulate them. I also wanted to give back to the Marine Corps."

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Congo native becomes Marine against all odds
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Bravo & November Companies’ Graduates

Bravo Company Honor Graduates

Platoon 1016

Pfc. Bretton K. Carr, Jacksonville, N.C.
Senior Drill Instructor: Staff Sgt. Marco A. Ibarra

Platoon 1017

Pfc. Jeff O. Feasel, Circleville, Ohio
Senior Drill Instructor: Sgt. Justin T. Morphis

Platoon 1018

Pfc. Ghannon K. Burton, Belmont, Miss.
Senior Drill Instructor: Sgt. David C. Brown

Platoon 1020

Pfc. Daniel C. Huntington, Chelmsford, Mass.
Senior Drill Instructor: Staff Sgt. Jose M. Ramirez

Platoon 1021

Pfc. Samuel F. Stanton, Feura Bush, N.Y.
Senior Drill Instructor: Sgt. Eric S. Droste

November Company Honor Graduates

Platoon 4008

Pfc. Kheana J. Bell, Birmingham, Ala.
Senior Drill Instructor: Staff Sgt. Amanda A. Dunn

Platoon 4009

Pfc. Noelani R. West, Tehachapi, Calif.
Senior Drill Instructor: Staff Sgt. Monica J. Evans

Platoon 1016

Pfc. C. M. Alexander, Pvt. N. P. Aloisio, Pvt. S. P. Baldwin, Pvt. J. K. Bamberg, Pfc. J. B. Beccue, Pvt. L. J. Bingham, Pfc. N. M. Blake, Pfc. H. W. Blankenbeckler, Pvt. W. C. Boccabello, Pvt. D. W. Boyd, Pfc. D. F. Bradshaw, Pfc. L. M. Brock, Pvt. V. L. Brooks Jr., Pvt. C. J. Bryant, Pfc. M. R. Bunch, Pfc. K. B. Campbell, Pfc. B. K. Carr, Pfc. K. A. Cavender, Pvt. A. E. Clark, Pvt. Z. S. Cochran, Pvt. T. E. Dalton, Pfc. C. A. Davis, Pvt. J. R. Dennis, Pfc. N. S. Foust, Pfc. K. A. Frey, Pvt. S. C. Fuller, Pvt. T. J. Goodson, Pvt. J. Guerra, Pvt. D. D. Hart, Pfc. K. R. Haynes, Pvt. S. R. Hill, Pfc. A. P. Kaigler Jr., Pvt. M. J. Keesler, Pvt. H. Khan, Pfc. L. Knowles, Pvt. L. P. Lawson, Pvt. J. E. Marron, Pfc. J. T. Matteson, Pfc. J. A. Milicia, Pfc. A. J. Miller, Pfc. N. A. Moran, Pvt. S. D. Paradeses III, Pvt. V. T. Preston, Pfc. J. H. Quek, Pfc. J. D. Racke, Pvt. R. F. Rodriguez, Pfc. J. R. Rogers, Pvt. F. Rojasgarzon, Pfc. L. A. Sherrod, Pvt. C. J. Smith, Pfc. J. T. Smith, Pfc. C. L. Stacks, Pvt. A. M. Stone, Pvt. D. J. Tallman, Pvt. K. R. Valdez, Pvt. J. B. Vaughn, Pvt. H. Viars, Pvt. G. C. Warnock, Pvt. M. A. Watola, Pvt. B. Weaver, Pfc. J. E. White, Pfc. G. Yovetich

Platoon 1017

Pvt. O. A. Antigua, Pfc. S. R. Baig, Pfc. J. A. Bernard, Pfc. T. S. Brady, Pvt. J. A. Branham, Pfc. M. C. Bruno, Pvt. S. Byas, Pvt. A. A. Caple Jr., Pfc. M. A. Clark, Pvt. L. D. Conn Jr., Pvt. J. S. Crago, Pvt. J. M. Dorroh, Pvt. K. D. Dunbar, Pvt. K. V. Duran, Pvt. S. T. Ellis, Pvt. C. M. Ely, Pfc. M. A. Fantauzzi, Pfc. J. O. Feasel, Pvt. M. J. Fitzgerald, Pvt. B. A. Foor, Pvt. P. R. Fox, Pvt. M. E. Galoflores, Pvt. J. J. Graham IV, Pvt. G. M. Greenfield, Pfc. J. L. Greer, Pfc. M. M. Gregory, Pvt. K. R. Henline, Pvt. Z. J. Hilton, Pfc. D. M. Johnson, Pvt. R. A. Krenzien, Pvt. R. N. Lamb, Pvt. D. R. Leighty, Pfc. B. L. Lynch, Pvt. B. L. Manningjohnson, Pvt. B. J. Martie, Pvt. E. A. McCoy, Pvt. C. G. Monts, Pvt. R. T. Moyers, Pfc. M. A. Ortizjustice, Pvt. A. M. Pellegrin, Pfc. M. Ramirezgonzalez, Pvt. K. D. Reiners, Pvt. J. A. Retter, Pvt. M. C. Richards, Pfc. C. R. Rose, Pfc. B. R. Sanders, Pvt. K. R. Scarberry, Pvt. P. M. Schelke, Pvt. J. G. Schnering, Pfc. B. C. Sklener, Pfc. E. Y. Suarez, Pvt. S. M. Summers, Pvt. B. J. Theisen, Pvt. J. B. Tomicich, Pvt. D. T. Toomsen, Pfc. C. Tuanacarleton, Pvt. S. W. Weaver Jr., Pfc. M. V. Webber, Pvt. M. R. Weems, Pfc. K. N. Worley, Pvt. T. B. Wright

Platoon 1018

Pvt. L. A. Bagley Jr., Pvt. R. D. Balcerzak, Pfc. B. L. Botha, Pfc. N. Buonaiuto, Pfc. G. K. Burton, Pfc. D. R. Bushey, Pfc. W. A. Bustos, Pfc. A. J. Caine, Pfc. J. J. Caminiti, Pvt. W. T. Christian, Pvt. Z. D. Coggins, Pvt. S. R. Cook II, Pvt. S. W. Corino, Pfc. P. N. Costanza, Pfc. S. R. Crawford, Pvt. S. Daniel, Pvt. S. M. Dauphin, Pfc. E. A. Diaznieves, Pvt. D. L. Dunlap Jr., Pfc. R. T. Fischer, Pfc. D. M. Fredman, Pfc. A. J. Gabriel III, Pvt. M. A. Garbounoff, Pfc. O. E. Garcibravo, Pvt. P. M. Gerhart, Pfc. A. J. Giampa, Pvt. C. J. Goliday, Pvt. J. B. Gorman, Pvt. C. M. Gritten, Pvt. R. C. Haye, Pfc. E. E. Hernandezrivera, Pvt. E. K. Howell, Pfc. T. B. Illian, Pfc. K. P. Kroth, Pvt. A. D. Lehman, Pvt. R. L. Marini, Pvt. I. R. Martinez, Pvt. C. J. McLeod, Pfc. S. T. Mohammed, Pvt. N. D. Moitozo, Pvt. J. L. Moxley Jr., Pvt. J. Ocasio, Pvt. M. Peronski, Pvt. K. Y. Portee, Pfc. C. M. Rowe, Pfc. J. A. Schmidt, Pvt. J. C. Solis Jr., Pvt. A. M. Steen, Pvt. T. L. Swift, Pfc. C. E. Tanner, Pvt. E. P. Tolman, Pvt. C. B. Tucker, Pfc. J. D. White, Pvt. E. K. Williams, Pvt. J. A. Williams, Pvt. T. L. Williams, Pvt. C. A. Wilson, Pvt. E. R. Wolgamott, Pvt. J. P. Wood, Pfc. J. J. Yoscovits Jr.

Platoon 1020

Pvt. J. D. Ashman, Pvt. T. J. Bajramoski, Pfc. J. R. Banks, Pvt. D. L. Battles, Pvt. A. T. Bennefeld, Pfc. J. D. Bowman, Pfc. L. T. Campbell, Pfc. S. Conille, Pfc. B. M. Cooper, Pvt. J. A. Davis, Pvt. M. F. Davis, Pvt. J. Friedlander, Pvt. N. W. Galante, Pfc. M. J. Gatlin, Pfc. E. Gonzalez, Pvt. M. A. Grosshans, Pfc. T. W. Han, Pfc. D. C. Huntington, Pfc. D. D. Jones, Pvt. N. T. Kenedy, Pfc. A. L. Kozak, Pvt. J. E. Lane, Pvt. R. Laparra, Pvt. C. J. Latvenas Jr., Pvt. R. T. McCarth, Pvt. M. T. McLaughlin, Pvt. M. Mercedes, Pvt. T. D. Morris, Pfc. D. M. Munoz, Pvt. C. L. Nunez, Pvt. K. D. Nyesmith, Pvt. J. Ortiz, Pfc. B. R. Powers, Pvt. A. R. Pratt, Pfc. C. V. Randolph, Pfc. D. Z. Rentz, Pvt. S. G. Robinson, Pfc. E. O. Rodriguez, Pfc. R. C. Ruggio, Pfc. C. A. Ryan, Pfc. A. S. Samuelson, Pvt. A. L. Santiago, Pvt. A. L. Santiago, Pvt. S. W. Sheets, Pvt. S. A. Simms, Pvt. J. J. Simpson, Pfc. J. W. Sparks, Pvt. E. D. Stitz, Pvt. T. G. St. John, Pfc. J. R. Thompson, Pvt. P. P. Toner, Pvt. B. Torres, Pfc. J. M. Tozier, Pvt. B. Triepshi, Pfc. C. A. Tschantz, Pvt. B. F. Vennell, Pvt. C. A. Walsh, Pvt. R. P. White, Pfc. R. P. Wilson, Pvt. J. A. Yancey, Pvt. B. S. Yanchapanta

Platoon 1021

Pfc. W. C. Agisotelis, Pvt. M. S. Ali, Pvt. W. L. Almond, Pvt. R. D. Barber III, Pfc. M. W. Baroncelli, Pvt. B. T. Bickford, Pfc. M. D. Boykin, Pvt. E. K. Brown Jr., Pvt. M. S. Caicedosimpson, Pvt. J. S. Carroll, Pfc. D. J. Carulli, Pvt. D. L. Cavanaugh, Pfc. J. A. Chattler, Pfc. S. C. Deguisto, Pvt. G. R. Delgado, Pfc. B. A. Dial, Pvt. S. M. Dickson, Pvt. M. A. Dominguez, Pvt. J. P. Edwards, Pfc. D. A. Enright, Pfc. E. H. Fairbank, Pvt. J. L. Franklin, Pvt. D. L. Green, Pvt. J. A. Hamlet, Pfc. D. N. Hart, Pvt. S. M. Harvey, Pfc. D. J. Hone, Pvt. S. A. Jackson, Pvt. M. A. Jeffers, Pvt. A. J. Kauffman, Pvt. D. R. Ladd, Pfc. D. T. Langford, Pvt. M. W. Mahanes Jr., Pvt. K. L. McKinney, Pvt. J. A. McKnight, Pvt. B. A. Nagle, Pfc. J. C. Nuber, Pfc. D. R. Oakley, Pfc. J. A. Philpot Jr., Pvt. J. B. Poole, Pvt. C. A. Prunty, Pvt. C. M. Przelenski, Pvt. W. L. Qualls, Pvt. C. M. Ragone, Pfc. J. M. Rosal Jr., Pfc. R. A. Sides, Pvt. E. J. Skabisky Jr., Pfc. C. D. Smith, Pvt. B. M. Snow, Pvt. E. K. Spector, Pfc. S. F. Stanton, Pvt. W. E. Stewart III, Pvt. W. L. Stokeling IV, Pfc. R. A. Swann Jr., Pvt. C. A. Swanson, Pvt. K. M. Thornton, Pvt. M. D. Todd, Pvt. J. M. Tommer, Pvt. L. L. Vess, Pvt. K. E. Weeden, Pvt. L. K. Wilkerson

Platoon 4008

Pfc. B. J. Alvarezrobles, Pvt. M. M. Babauta, Pfc. K. J. Bell, Pfc. A. T. Bisimwa, Pvt. S. T. Campbell, Pvt. T. R. Campbell, Pfc. M. L. Casper, Pvt. R. Cazares, Pfc. M. K. Cluff, Pvt. N. L. Colonperez, Pvt. M. Correataborda, Pvt. M. K. Cryer, Pvt. B. E. Delosreyes, Pfc. M. Diaz, Pvt. C. M. Dolan, Pfc. T. A. Dollinger, Pvt. R. M. Finsel, Pvt. R. K. Fleshman, Pvt. S. J. Francois, Pfc. A. C. Gaddy, Pvt. M. E. Garrison, Pvt. G. D. Gaytan, Pfc. B. M. Gibson, Pfc. D. M. Gill, Pfc. S. Guerrero, Pfc. M. C. Hall, Pvt. M. L. Hirzel, Pvt. L. F. Johnson, Pfc. K. A. Jones, Pvt. S. O. Lewis, Pfc. R. Mancillas, Pvt. M. A. Matusiak, Pvt. Z. M. McNabb, Pfc. A. T. Messina, Pvt. S. R. Middleton, Pfc. D. A. Ortiz, Pfc. B. M. Paganvelazquez, Pvt. M. A. Reinert, Pfc. A. N. Rhea, Pfc. P. J. Rock, Pfc. K. R. Ruiz, Pvt. A. Saldana, Pfc. H. D. Schell, Pfc. M. L. Silva, Pvt. S. K. Smith, Pfc. E. N. Snider, Pvt. Y. Solis, Pvt. J. M. Stier, Pvt. A. G. Todd, Pfc. P. Vang, Pvt. K. M. Virgue, Pvt. C. A. Walker, Pvt. D. C. Weatherwax, Pfc. K. L. Williams, Pfc. Y. N. Williams, Pfc. C. J. Wilson, Pfc. S. R. Wolosin, Pfc. G. Xiong, Pfc. C. Zepeda

Platoon 4009

Pvt. Y. A. Abdulahi, Pvt. L. A. Alvarezrosas, Pvt. J. Bailon, Pvt. A. V. Barronmosqueda, Pfc. A. B. Basoco, Pvt. A. D. Benson, Pvt. K. B. Brim, Pfc. D. R. Bromley, Pfc. C. V. Bryson, Pvt. G. Camacho, Pvt. M. K. Camerer, Pfc. C. M. Casepo, Pvt. A. S. Casey, Pfc. F. J. Cochran, Pvt. S. B. Davies, Pvt. S. L. Deltoro, Pfc. C. M. Difranco, Pvt. I. K. Durst, Pvt. C. E. Fero, Pfc. C. D. Galvez, Pvt. A. J. Gehly, Pvt. T. N. Grady, Pvt. C. L. Grindle, Pfc. E. R. Guerrero, Pvt. S. M. Hauer, Pvt. B. J. Hayes, Pvt. L. N. Hillyer, Pvt. M. A. Islascastilleja, Pvt. K. K. Kumar, Pvt. S. C. Marine, Pvt. E. R. McNew, Pfc. N. D. Mendoza, Pfc. N. T. Nguyen, Pvt. K. H. Pastian, Pfc. T. J. Peinado, Pvt. J. Peraza, Pfc. D. L. Reinke, Pfc. R. A. Respicio, Pvt. B. L. Rogers, Pvt. T. K. Rondan, Pvt. E. L. Rudolph, Pvt. C. M. Samaniego, Pvt. H. J. Schwaiger, Pfc. S. E. Siebert, Pvt. L. J. Silo, Pvt. A. M. Silvers, Pvt. R. A. Sotopalma, Pfc. A. D. Stephens, Pfc. A. R. Stolfi, Pfc. V. M. Tapia, Pvt. S. M. Torres, Pvt. R. A. Trimmer, Pvt. T. M. Tulley, Pfc. J. Uribe, Pvt. B. N. Vazquez, Pfc. M. R. Vega, Pfc. M. M. Verduzco, Pvt. A. L. Washington, Pfc. N. R. West

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ABOUT FACES

Bravo & November Companies



Pfc. Kevin Kroth, a 22-year-old native of Southaven, Miss., trained with Platoon 1018, Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, and is scheduled to graduate today after 13 weeks on Parris Island.

“I wanted a challenge. I also wanted to belong to the brotherhood that the Marine Corps offers.”

Pvt. Samandina Francois, a 19-year-old native of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, spent her 13 weeks on Parris Island training with Platoon 4008, November Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, and is scheduled to graduate today.

“I saw how helpful the Marines were in my hometown after the earthquake happened in 2010. When my family moved to the United States and I saw all the things they gave me, I felt like I owed something to this country.”



Pvt. Eric Tolman, an 18-year-old native of Goffstown, N.H., spent his time on Parris Island training with Platoon 1018 and is scheduled to graduate today.

“I wanted to do something meaningful to more than just myself. I’ve never really won any trophies before, but I feel like an (Eagle, Globe and Anchor) would be the ultimate trophy.”

HISTORY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

but the important things like honor, courage and commitment have remained the same.”

The recruits learned about the different things that used to be part of boot camp, such as throwing grenades and firing automatic weapons, which are now done during combat training at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

“All this stuff really motivates me,” said Stanton, a 23-year-old native of Feura Bush, N.Y. “When I see all the stuff in here and how many people have done the exact same thing I’m doing now gives me the strength to finish training. I think if they can do it, then I can do it too.”

One thing the Marine Corps prides itself in is its rich history, and it is important that recruits learn the history they are about to be a part of, said Droste, a 27-year-old native of Fort Dodge, Iowa.

The museum visit gives the recruits a visual aid to better understand the lessons they have learned during their six history classes, said Droste. The recruits have been taught it and read it, but now they can actually see it.

“They need to come through here and learn all this history,” said Ken Jones, a 64-year-old museum technician and native of Port Royal, S.C. “These young people are not being taught history like I was anymore. If I could, I would have every public school around here come to this museum so that they can all learn this history of the nation they are a part of.”

Stanton said while all the recruits are focused on the physical and mental parts of training, it is important to be reminded of the heritage and legacy of the Marine Corps they are all being charged with to carry on.

They are scheduled to graduate today.

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AGAINST ALL ODDS

Escapee from African war immigrates to US, joins Corps to fulfill grandfather’s wish



Photo by Lance Cpl. MaryAnn Hill
Pfc. Aline Bisimwa, a 19-year-old native of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, escaped her homeland’s civil war and finally moved to the U.S. when she was 7, where she was placed in foster care until she turned 18 and joined the Marine Corps. Her late grandfather’s wish was for her to be part of the military, so Bisimwa now serves as an honor to him. She trained with Platoon 4008, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, and is scheduled to graduate today.

Lance Cpl. MaryAnn Hill
Staff Writer

One recruit escaped war in Africa, moved to the United States and grew up in foster care before coming to Parris Island to earn the title of U.S. Marine.

Pfc. Aline Bisimwa was born in the town of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, where she lived until the age of 5, when her family fled the country.

Following the 1994 Rwanda genocide, the Republic of Congo destabilized due to the influx of refugees trying to escape mass slaughter. Civil war followed, leaving Bisimwa’s homeland too dangerous to remain.

“She went to kindergarten in the Congo, and there were a lot of killings going on around our town, especially in the schools,” said Nyota Maninga, her 25-year-old aunt, now a resident of Fargo, N.D. “We took her out of school and ran before anything happened to her.”

Bisimwa, with her family, roamed around the forests of Africa for two years, never staying in one place for too long, fearing they would be caught.

“The longest time we

stayed in one place was in Kenya, and that was for almost a year,” said Bisimwa, 19. “We only stayed that long because my grandma knew people there that would keep us safe.”

At age 7, Bisimwa and her family moved to the U.S. to give themselves a chance at a better life.

Shortly after moving to the U.S., Bisimwa’s mother sunk into a deep depression from the memories of their exile. So, Bisimwa was taken away from her and put into foster care.

“I moved around to three different foster homes until I turned 18,” said Bisimwa. “I learned to grow up really quick because once I was in a house with seven other kids, and we only ate once a day.”

Although Bisimwa had a tough time during her years in foster care, it didn’t stop her from excelling at school. She played football and basketball and ran track all four years of high school.

“It was really hard to keep track of her since she was so busy,” said Staff Sgt. Dave Servold, her recruiter, and a 27-year-old native of Sioux Falls, S.D. “She was definitely one of the best poolees I put in and sent to Parris Island,

by far.”

Shortly after Bisimwa graduated high school, she joined the Marine Corps, finally pursuing her grandfather’s wish for her.

“When I was little I always remembered him referring to me as his little soldier,” said Bisimwa. “He always wanted me to be in the military. We talked about it all the time when I was younger.”

Bisimwa arrived at Parris Island’s yellow footprints Dec. 17, 2012. Since she has been here training with Platoon 4008, November Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, she has continued striving to complete recruit training.

“I’m learning a lot about leadership and how to handle stressful situations,” said Bisimwa. “I want to go back to the Congo in a few years and help the people there in those situations cope with everything that’s going on.”

Even though her grandpa died when she was in first grade, Bisimwa has kept him in her thoughts every day while on Parris Island, hoping to make him proud when she graduates.

Bisimwa is scheduled to graduate today.

MARINE CORPS RECRUITS PRACTICE COMBAT MARKSMANSHIP



Rct. Pete Costanza, Platoon 1018, Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, fires at his target, which was 25 meters away, Feb. 20 on Parris Island’s Hue City Range during the company’s Basic Warrior Training week. The recruits’ scores were added to the scores from firing earlier in training to determine their overall rifle qualification level. Costanza is an 18-year-old native of Rochester, N.Y. Bravo Company is scheduled to graduate today.



Rct. Pete Costanza, Platoon 1018, looks through his scope at a target Feb. 20 during the company’s Basic Warrior Training week on Parris Island’s Hue City Range. Costanza, an 18-year-old native of Rochester, N.Y., fired a total of 50 rounds during the course of fire. Bravo Company is scheduled to graduate today.



Lance Cpl. Michael Vaughn, a range coach on Parris Island’s Hue City Range, scores a recruit’s target Feb. 20. The area Vaughn, a 27-year-old native of Jacksonville, Fla., is scoring is one of three sections recruits aim to disable their target during the combat firing portion of their Basic Warrior Training week.

Parris Island recruit loses 95 pounds to join Marine Corps

Lance Cpl. MaryAnn Hill
Staff Writer

One recruit’s journey to become a Marine began almost five years before he stepped on Parris Island’s yellow footprints Dec. 17, 2012.

What kept Pfc. Joshua Rogers from fulfilling his dream to become a U.S. Marine was his weight – nearly 100 pounds too much of it.

“I went through life never really knowing what I wanted to do,” said Rogers, Platoon 1016, Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion. “After I graduated college and worked for a while, I felt like I wasn’t doing what I was meant to do in life, so I started doing some serious research about the military. I read about the Marine Corps infantry and I was instantly hooked.”

Rogers, a 27-year-old native of Jacksonville, Fla., ran on his middle school’s cross country team, but stopped in high school because his family moved to Beijing for his father’s job. He said that was when the weight gain began, due to his lack of exercise.

After Rogers graduated high school, he moved back to the United States and studied at the University of Minnesota and earned a bachelor’s degree in English.

Rogers’ first encounter with the Marine Corps was in March 2008. He went to the local recruiting office and asked if he was qualified to join. The recruiter told him if he could lose enough weight to be eligible to begin recruit training, the Marines would give him a chance to earn the title.

“At first, I didn’t really take losing the weight seriously,” said Rogers. “I didn’t really have any motivation. Then, one day at work, one of my co-workers was talking about how awesome his gym was, and I told him I would try it, and I loved it. After that, I got serious about my weight loss. I cut out fast food, started eating low-calorie meals, running and lifting weights.”

Rogers began his transformation in May 2011, weighing 260 pounds. By August 2012, he shed 95 pounds.

“He wasn’t very confident in himself and was overall very unhappy with his weight before he lost it,” said Carolyn Rogers, his mother. “After he lost the weight, he was a much happier person altogether.”

In March 2012, Joshua Rogers revisited the recruiting office and met a new recruiter. The recruiter told him to lose five more pounds over the next two weeks and he could get him into the Marine Corps.

When Joshua Rogers went to the Military Entrance Processing Station two weeks later, he found out he was able to join. As soon as he was in, he stayed committed. He went to the recruiting station at least twice a week to physically prepare himself for recruit training and to trim the last few pounds off.

“I was kind of apprehensive the first time he told me he joined the Marine Corps,” said Rogers’ mom, a 52-year-old native of Jacksonville. “But I got used to the idea



Photo by Lance Cpl. MaryAnn Hill

Pfc. Joshua Rogers, a 27-year-old native of Jacksonville, Fla., had to shed 95 pounds before coming to recruit training. In May 2011 he weighed 260 pounds and spent nearly a year and a half of strict dieting and exercise to lose enough weight to enlist. Rogers spent his time on Parris Island training with Platoon 1016, Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, and is scheduled to graduate today.

and agreed it would be the best thing for him.”

Keeping himself motivated for the year and a half it took him was difficult, but definitely worth it in the end, said Joshua Rogers.

“Whenever I wanted to give up, I just kept thinking that it was now or never,” he said. “If I didn’t lose the weight now, I wouldn’t be able to join the Marines, which is what I’ve wanted since I was 22.”

Joshua Rogers had a tough time enlisting in the Marine Corps, coming to Parris Island and enduring recruit training. Now, after almost two years of hard work and dedication, he is scheduled to walk across the parade deck today as one of the nation’s newest Marines.

NEWS BRIEF

Notice to Boaters

Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island is scheduled to conduct extended live-fire training Monday through Wednesday from 6 a.m. to midnight. The marsh and waterways in the range impact area to include Archers Creek, Ribbon Creek, and Edding Creek will be closed to boater traffic.

For questions regarding firing times and waterway closures please contact the Weapons and Field Training Battalion Range Control at 843-228-3170.



