



PRESS RELEASE: Ferris ROTC Enrollment Growing

Betsy L Musolf to: Archive

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Here is a press release about the Ferris State University ROTC program and its growing enrollment. Any questions about this release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.

Here is a link to the story online: <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2012/june/rotc.htm>



Ferris ROTC.jpg



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Ferris State University ROTC Enrollment Growing

BIG RAPIDS – While Ferris State University students are spending their summer taking classes, interning or simply taking a break from school, Michael Semenic is spending his learning combative field training.

Semenic, a Criminal Justice major from Three Oaks, is one of 18 students enrolled in Ferris' Reserved Officers' Training Corps who this summer are participating in a four-week evaluation of their skills and training.

"I like ROTC, because not only am I getting my education but I'm learning leadership skills that will help me when I become an officer and benefit me in my civilian career, post-service," Semenic said.

Ferris' ROTC program teaches students leadership skills through classroom work, leadership

labs and field training exercises as part of their college curriculum. Students can receive merit-based scholarships that cover all or part of tuition in return for active military service after graduation. Graduates are commissioned as Army Second Lieutenant.

Students participate in regular drills during the school year and extended training activities during the summer. In March, Semenic and 17 other Ferris ROTC cadets took part in combative field training exercises with six other universities during a week-long series of situational tactical exercises. Those same cadets are attending the Leadership Development and Accessions Course in Fort Lewis, Wash., through July.

Semenic, who has been involved in ROTC for two years, said the bond with fellow cadets is strong.

"ROTC is like a fraternity," he said. "We're all really close and spend a lot of time together in class and out of class.

"My life has changed since joining ROTC, because I feel more confident, my communication skills have improved and leadership roles just seem to be easier."

Ferris' ROTC does offer an actual fraternity, the Pershing Rifles, a cadet-organized professional fraternity in conjunction with the nationwide ROTC program. There also are several Cadet Clubs available to enhance training.

ROTC Army National Guard Liaison Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Fries has seen enrollment grow significantly from about 25 cadets when he started at Ferris in December 2008 to 68 in Spring 2012.

"As you can see by the numbers, we have made significant strides in our enrollment," Fries said. "We are actively engaged in recruiting cadets to the program."

Fries said many students choose to enroll in ROTC to help make their tuition more affordable. ROTC offers stipends and scholarships, including a four-year scholarship for incoming college students, and two- and three-year scholarships for students already enrolled.

Thirteen of the 68 cadets enrolled as of spring are women, including Jewel Colon, a Criminal Justice Administration major from Grand Blanc. Colon is spending this summer in Cambodia, teaching American culture to Southeast Asian military through a specialized ROTC cultural awareness training program.

"Because I am in ROTC, I have the chance to travel the world," Colon said. "I am doing things I would never be able to do as a civilian."

For more information on Army ROTC at Ferris, visit: <http://www.ferris.edu/education/ROTC/>

Army ROTC began when President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Defense Act of 1916. Since its inception, Army ROTC has commissioned more than a half million officers at schools and universities across the country. More than 20,000 students are currently enrolled nationwide; 20 percent of them are women.

For more information, visit <http://www.rotc.com/>.

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