

## North Georgia takes top spot at LDAC

9/8/2010 9:19:39 PM

by University Relations

(Sept. 9, 2010) -- The new academic year has gotten off to a great start for the Corps of Cadets at North Georgia College & State University, who continued their tradition of excellence with a top-place showing at this summer's Leader Development & Assessment Course (LDAC).

Every summer, ROTC cadets from across the country attend LDAC, often said as "el dak," located at Fort Lewis, Wash. The course is required of all contracted Military Science III cadets, those who will be commissioning into the armed forces upon their graduation from a senior military college. Cadets spend their junior year in "pre-camp," or two semesters of training to get them ready for the following summer's LDAC.

A total of 81 North Georgia cadets went to LDAC training this summer and 75 completed the course. Not only did North Georgia have the highest number of cadets rated in the top five of their individual platoons, but the university's cadets also received the highest peer evaluation ranking of all participants. Since 2007, North Georgia has bested all five other senior military colleges in the number of cadets receiving an "excellent" rating.

COL Mike Pyott, North Georgia's professor of military science, said he is extremely proud of the performance of his cadets. And, as an alumnus of North Georgia himself, said he is glad to uphold the Boar's Head Brigade's strong tradition of excellence.



"This year, we're off to a very good start with our performance at LDAC," Pyott said. An active duty soldier in the U.S. Army, Pyott attended LDAC along with the cadets.

He sent an e-mail to all cadets who completed LDAC, congratulating them on their performance.

"I want them to understand that they made the right choice in becoming a cadet at North Georgia," Pyott said. "When things get hard, doubts may start to creep into the cadets' minds, but I just want to continue to reinforce that they made the right choice with North Georgia."

Pyott said he evaluates the cadets not only by their individual performances at LDAC, but also how they are perceived by other cadets -- their peer evaluations.

"LDAC is a quantifiable way to compare North Georgia to the other senior military colleges," he said. "The peer evaluations are how other cadets rank us and we were off the charts compared to the other military colleges. That's the mark of how well our cadets performed."

Pyott said many factors contribute to making a cadet from North Georgia one of the best in the country, including having the university's military program integrated into the regular student body.

"The 'North Georgia experience' provides a much more well-rounded officer," he said. "The cadets interact with civilians on a regular basis and can join fraternities and sororities and clubs. I think that's what leads our cadets to be so successful and be such strong leaders."

The cadets' results from LDAC, along with their overall grade point averages, ROTC grades, the Army Physical Fitness Test scores and extracurricular activities all are compiled and submitted for the Order of Merit List. The annual list ranks cadets in more than 270 Army ROTC programs, based on those criteria. Last year, more than 4,700 cadets were ranked; Pyott said around 6,000 cadets likely will be on the Order of Merit List.

Cadets' rankings on the list play a role in determining their military assignments, such as aviation, infantry, military police, and other branches. Those who rank in the top 10 percent are guaranteed their first choice in duty assignments and graduate as Distinguished Military Graduates, one of the highest honors an ROTC student may achieve.

The past two years, North Georgia cadets have been ranked in the top 10 in the country. Cadet Jessica Carlock was ranked No. 7 in the nation in 2009 and cadet Earl Porter was the No. 1 cadet in the country in 2008. While Pyott said he expects some North Georgia cadets have performed well enough to be highly ranked, but can't know for sure until the results are released.

After the Order of Merit List is released, cadets will be counseled on their assignment choices, which then will be submitted to the U.S. Army. Assignments are announced in mid-October.