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ROTC Day returns to Lawrence Livermore

03/06/2018

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Upon arrival, cadets visited various tabletop displays, featuring a variety of Lab organizations involved in research of interest to military programs. Julie Jackson explains Engineering's research in additive manufacturing/3D printing to U.S. Army cadet Jane Quan. Photos by Carrie Martin/LLNL.

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) welcomed more than 75 cadets and midshipmen from the U.S. Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy and Merchant Marines last week for the annual Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Day.

The annual event, sponsored by the Office of Defense Coordination (ODC) and Strategic Human Resources Management, is an opportunity for attendees to learn more about LLNL, its mission and programs and internship and career opportunities through the ROTC Internship Program and the Newly Commissioned Officer Program.

Barry Goldman, manager of the Military Student Program, welcomed attendees and provided a framework for the day, followed by remarks from Brig. Gen. Tom Gioconda, LLNL's deputy director (USAF, retired); Michael Flynn, assistant manager for security Livermore Field Office, National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA); and Col. George Sakaldasis (USAF, retired), deputy director for military/nuclear affairs, ODC.

"We invited you to the Laboratory so that you may have an opportunity to learn about organizations, outside of the Department of Defense, that contribute to our country's national security capabilities," Sakaldasis said. "Our goal is to familiarize cadets and midshipmen with the Laboratory's capabilities to support the national defense effort, and to encourage you to apply to become ROTC or newly commissioned officer interns."

The daylong event included a Lab overview given by Lt. Col. Holly R. Franz (USAF, retired), deputy for Operations, ODC, along with tabletop exhibits, tours and a special panel discussion, "Science and Engineering Careers in the Military," led by Sakaldasis.

Panelists included Gioconda; Col. Ted Welch, U.S. Air Force, Maxwell Air Force Base; Col. Chad Schools, U.S. Army, director, Nuclear Science & Engineering Research Center, Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA); Capt. Jerrod Devine, U.S. Navy, University of California, Berkeley, NROTC commander; and Col. Brian Young, U.S. Air Force, executive director, Major Modernization Program, DOE/NNSA. The panelists discussed their own career pathways, what options are available in pursuing science and engineering careers in the military and answered questions from participants. In addition to participating on the panel, Young also gave a briefing later in the day, entitled "A Leadership Perspective."

Jordan Robertson, an aerospace engineering major at UCLA, enjoyed this first-time visit to the Laboratory. "I learned about the Lab through Barry Goldman, who came to UCLA and gave a presentation to my Air Force ROTC detachment on the Lab and the internship opportunities," Robertson said. "I immediately knew it was somewhere that I wanted to be because of how it offers an opportunity to combine my passions for engineering and national security."

Robertson was selected for an internship that will run April to January 2019 through the Newly Commissioned Officers Program, which is an extension of ROTC internship opportunities offered by the Lab. He will be working in the Engineering Directorate's Materials Engineering Division.

"After training hard for all of college to be able to serve my country, I didn't want to have to wait until my first assignment to start, so I'm very excited to be able to contribute to the mission of Lawrence Livermore," he said.

Also visiting the Laboratory for the first time was Catherine Hatala, a sophomore at the University of California, Berkeley. "After attending ROTC Day at the Lab, I learned that



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there are a lot more opportunities for STEM within ROTC and the military in general than I previously thought," Hatala said. Hatala, who is majoring in computer science with a minor in Russian, is interested in pursuing a career in cybersecurity and possibly working at the Lab.

Tour stops included the National Ignition Facility, the High Explosives Applications Facility, High Performance Computing, Forensic Science Center, Additive Manufacturing facilities and Advanced Conventional Munitions facilities.

"I continue to hear that the cadets and midshipman rank the ROTC Day event as a highlight of their ROTC experience," said Goldman. "It is an eye opener for them to learn about the breadth of research performed at LLNL that supports the military. Throughout the day I'm responding to questions about summer internship opportunities and LLNL's Newly Commissioned Officer Program for second lieutenants and ensigns."

Though Goldman has obligated available funds to host ROTC for the coming summer, he encouraged Laboratory organizations to seek additional applicants for placement.

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