

Northeast Lauderdale High School holds annual military inspection

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Staff Writer

Eighty-four Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) cadets stood in their well-pressed uniforms inside the Northeast Lauderdale High School gym prepared for their annual military inspection, Jan. 26.

Sophomore Cadet Molly Bridges, 16, was checking her platoon-mate's uniform while waiting for the inspector.

"I'm so nervous. This is my first year in NJROTC and my first inspection," Bridges said. "There is no such thing as being too prepared. It's not just about an individual cadet, but about the unit as a whole."

"Attention on deck!" called a cadet from the gym's entrance.

Accompanied by Northeast Lauderdale NJROTC Naval Science Instructors Lt. Cmdr. Michael Joseph and Master Chief Dexter Deen, NAS Meridian Commanding Officer Capt. Charles Gibson walked in as everyone stood at attention. Capt. Gibson served as the guest speaker and inspector.

The day's events began with a personnel inspection, followed by basic marching

drills and awards ceremony.

One by one, Capt. Gibson went face-to-face with each cadet, checking their uniform and asking them questions about basic military knowledge.

"Who is the Commander in Chief?" Gibson asked.

"The Commander in Chief is President Barack Obama, sir," answered one cadet.

"Who is the CNO?" Gibson asked another cadet as he moved along down the formation.

"Admiral Gary Roughead, sir," replied a cadet.

Eight cadets were awarded best in uniform and six cadets were promoted to their next rank during the awards ceremony. Six cadets were also recognized for completion of their Emergency Medical Services (EMS) training.

The last phase of the inspection was a display of the unit's marching teams during the pass-in-review.

"I think that they are accomplishing everything that we could have hoped for," Deen said. "I am very proud of them and I would stack them up against any unit anywhere."

After the morning events, the senior

staff of 15 cadets had a chance to hold a question and answer session with Capt. Gibson who shared stories and his experiences to help the cadets understand life in the military.

"I've obviously chosen a military career and I'm thrilled with it," Gibson said. "Always apply your goals... Find a mentor and a role model to help you in life. (Remember) teamwork and discipline will serve you well in life."

Cadet Dustin McDaniel, 17, a senior who was promoted to the unit's cadet commanding officer, made positive comments about his fellow cadets' performance and the base CO's visit.

"Everybody did great from the preparation down to the inspection itself," McDaniel said. "This is a great learning experience. I enjoyed Capt. Gibson's presence as our guest inspector."

Lastly, Capt. Gibson sat down and enjoyed lunch with the senior staff after a brief tour of the uniform supply rooms and the campus.

"The inspection was great," Gibson said. "This is a very nice experience and I'm glad to be here."