



PRESS RELEASE

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UOG ROTC cadets earn trip to Oregon for Ranger Challenge

CAMP RILEA, Ore. — Eleven cadets from the University of Guam Army ROTC program earned a spot to test their skills at the 8th Brigade ROTC Ranger Challenge Competition from Oct. 23–24 in Oregon. Hosted at the Oregon National Guard’s Camp Rilea along the state’s Northern coast, the cadets experienced a different view of the Pacific than usual while measuring their skills in rifle marksmanship, land navigation, map reading, physical fitness, and teamwork against other schools.

The UOG cadets defeated ROTC teams from larger universities, including the University of Washington, University of Alaska, and University of Seattle, earning a seventh place finish in the military skills and physical fitness competition.

Coached by Major Thomas Vu, the 11 cadets competed in different fitness and endurance challenges over the course of the semester to earn a spot representing UOG at the competition.

“It was a very rewarding experience,” said Noel-Brandon Degracia, team captain for UOG ROTC and a 2018 graduate of Simon Sanchez High School. “My role was understanding what everyone’s strengths and weaknesses were and being able to capitalize on that based on the events or tasks. The obstacle course was a challenge for us since UOG doesn’t have an obstacle course like other schools. Our team cohesion was a big positive, though, and we were able to communicate without even talking at times because our connection was so strong from our training at UOG, like the litter carries up Marine Lab hill and the ruck marches.”

Fellow UOG competitor Louis Randall said the experience was beneficial in multiple ways.

“Ranger Challenge was a bigger team-building exercise than I thought it would be, and it brought out ... mostly the best in all of us,” he said with a smile. “It was great to be able to compare where we stand against the best of the best from other ROTC schools. Ranger Challenge was an extremely unique experience that you won’t get outside of Army ROTC.”

Deja Whitt, a UOG ROTC cadet working toward her Master of Public Administration, said it was one of the most memorable experiences she’s had.

“I’ve been on a lot of sports teams,” she said, “but I’ve never seen this sense of camaraderie and trust from my teammates. It was a great experience, and I encourage everyone to try out for Ranger Challenge. Meeting the other teams was really cool — to be able to make new friends from other universities. I definitely want to come back next year and try out for my final year in ROTC before I graduate.”

The members of the UOG ROTC Ranger Challenge team who competed at Camp Rilea include Noel-Brandon Degracia, Louis Randall, Deja Whitt, Gavin Whitt, Dan Ryan Tumaquip, Remoh Nel Sanchez, Brandon Salas, Jeffrey Seo, Brandon Flores, Talia Meno, and Enriquo Nedlic.

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Photo Captions:



2021-uog-rotc-cadets-in-oregon

The University of Guam Army ROTC team displays the Guam flag at the 8th Brigade ROTC Ranger Challenge competition from Oct. 23–24 at Camp Rilea in Oregon.



2021-uog-rotc-cadets-treating-casualty

The University of Guam ROTC team treats a simulated combat wound at the 8th Brigade ROTC Ranger Challenge competition, held from Oct. 23–24 at Camp Rilea in Oregon.



2021-uog-rotc-cadets-plotting-course

The University of Guam ROTC team puts their map reading and land navigation skills to the test at the 8th Brigade ROTC Ranger Challenge competition, held from Oct. 23–24 at Camp Rilea in Oregon.