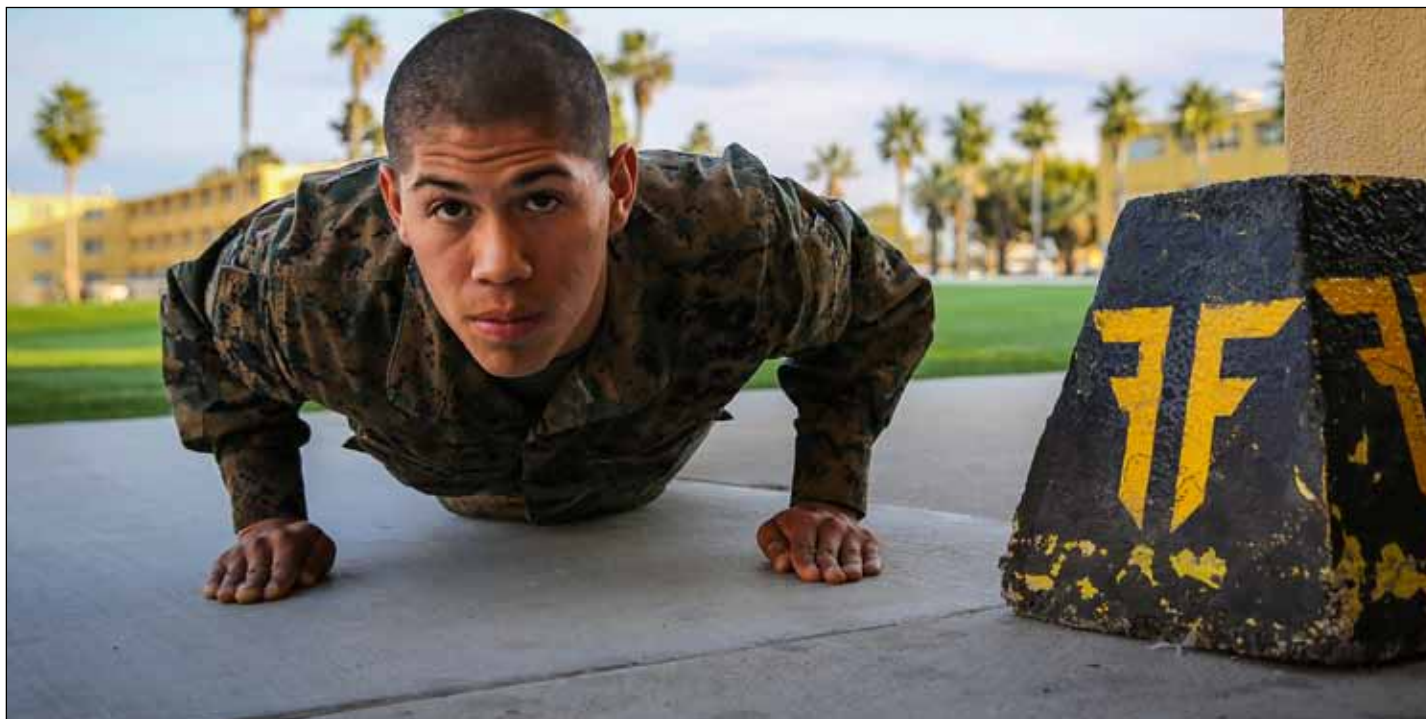




# CHEVRON

AND THE WESTERN RECRUITING REGION



Private First Class Angel S. Ortiz, Platoon 2121, Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, performs push-ups at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Jan. 8. Ortiz took on the difficult task of squad leader and held on to the position throughout recruit training. His senior drill instructor rewarded his efforts by meritoriously promoting him to the rank of private first class.

## Leader's journey to earning title, Marine

STORY & PHOTOS BY  
SGT. BENJAMIN E. WOODLE  
*Chevron staff*

Some say leaders are born. Those in the Corps know they are forged through adversity, chaos and the underlining willingness to sacrifice for the betterment of others.

Private First Class Angel S. Ortiz, Platoon 2121, Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, took on the difficult task of squad leader throughout recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, and experienced firsthand the sacrifices many before him had to make.

Ortiz was born in Upland, Calif., and raised in San Bernardino, Calif., where he lived with his mother and older brother. He and his brother enjoyed playing baseball as children and it became an activity they bonded over. Ortiz continued playing during high school and when he became the co-captain of the team, he started developing his leadership skills.

His Marine Corps journey began one day during his senior year of high school when a recruiter came to his school and talked to him about his interest in joining the Corps.

“My friend, who was two years older, joined the Corps and was

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A Department of Defense employee in the Executive Leadership Development Program navigates through concertina wire during the Bayonet Assault Course at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Jan. 6. The event was one of two physical training events the ELDP group performed at the depot to get a better understanding of what it takes to become a Marine.

## ELDP tours depot, experiences recruit life

STORY & PHOTOS BY  
SGT. BENJAMIN E. WOODLE  
*Chevron staff*

DoD employees in the Executive Leadership Development Program spent the day as a recruit at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Jan. 6.

“The purpose of the ELDP is to give leadership experience and a better understanding to DoD employees who may one

day be deciding on doctrine that will affect training or functionality in a service branch,” said John Norton, lead facilitator, Executive Leadership Development Program Class 2015. “The class is made up of a very selective group of middle management leaders who are being groomed for potential senior executive positions within the DoD.”

Norton explained that over the year, the ELDP Class 2015 will tour various military

installations around the world to help gain experience and build a better foundation of all of the facets that encompass the DoD.

“As we go on tour, we like to talk to people and figure out how things work and take those experiences back to our organizations,” said Shon Farley, staff officer, Geospatial Intelligence. “As we move up the chain, we’ll be able to make the best

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### BRIEFS

#### VITA MCRD Tax Center

The VITA MCRD Tax Center will open Jan. 26, with walk-ins from 8 to 11 a.m. and appointments from 1 to 4 p.m. The MCRD Tax Center is located at Bldg. 12. Service is free for service members, dependents and retirees.

Bring two forms of ID, social security cards for self and dependents and the prior year's tax returns.

To make an appointment call (619) 524-8643 or (619) 524-8713.

#### Father-Daughter Dance

The depot's Marine Corps Community Services is sponsoring an “Under the Sea” Father-Daughter Dance Jan. 30, from 5 to 8 p.m., at the Field House, Building 690.

The evening includes dancing and activities such as games and treasure hunts. Appetizers and a special cake will be served and a commercial photographer will be available.

Tickets are available at Building 6 East, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. starting Monday. Tickets are \$15 per person. The dance is open to all active duty military, reservists, retirees and DoD eligible patrons. Mothers are not allowed.

For information contact Allison Santiago at (619) 718-3764 or via e-mail at allison.m.santiago@usmc-mccs.org.

#### MCRD Museum Foundation

The MCRD Museum Foundation will host its quarterly breakfast at the depot's Duncan Hall Jan. 27 at 7 a.m.

Guest of honor and speaker at the event is Brig. Gen. Daniel D. Yoo, commanding general, Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward).

Breakfast is compliments of the foundation.

The event is a forum that invites senior military and civilian guest speakers to address relevant and current issues affecting the United States Marine Corps.

#### Boots to Business training

The Personal & Professional Development team is scheduled to host a Boots to Business class from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 27 and 28, in the P&PD classroom, Building 14.

The intent of the class is to enhance future business planning.

For information or to register, call Mina Threat at (619) 524-1283 or 8440.

#### Super Bowl party

MCRD is sponsoring a Super Bowl party as a troop appreciation event, Feb. 1 in the recreation center. Doors will open at 10 a.m.

The first 100 patrons (age 18 and older) to arrive will receive a free T-shirt and automatic entry into the Squares Game. Pizza, wings and drink specials will be available and the game will be viewed on 25 large flat screen TVs and on a 200 inch projection screen television.

#### Send briefs to:

rdsd\_pao@usmc.mil. The Chevron staff reserves the right to publish only those briefs that comply with Department of Defense regulations and the standards of the U.S. Government.



Private First Class Angel S. Ortiz, Platoon 2121, Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, performs uniform maintenance in the squad bay with his platoon at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Jan. 8. Ortiz took on the difficult task of being squad leader and held on to it throughout recruit training. His senior drill instructor rewarded his efforts by meritoriously promoting him to private first class.

#### MARINE ◀ 1

doing well, so I wanted to see what the Marine Corps had to offer me," said 18-year-old Ortiz. "I filled out the form, which led to the next step and further down the process. I learned more about what the Marine Corps had done for other people and thought it was great and something that I wanted to try out."

Ortiz decided to enlist in the Marine Corps and was ready to take the next step in his life.

"I didn't have the greatest job after high school and didn't have money for college, so I thought it was a great way to help get me to where I wanted to be," said Ortiz, who was recruited out of Recruiting Station Los Angeles. "My mom was working a lot of hours to support us, so I didn't want her to have that burden anymore either."

As he sat on the bus and waited to get off and step onto the yellow footprints, Ortiz had one last moment to prepare himself for the long road ahead.

Ortiz remembers thinking to himself, "all right, here we go; this is it; there's no turning back now."

"I've been determined my whole life," said Ortiz. "Once I commit to something, there is no stopping me."

In his platoon, Ortiz asserted himself and stood out from the rest of the recruits. His drill instructors took notice and selected him to be one of their squad leaders. Quickly, Ortiz was accomplishing what he set out to do.

"I wanted to come in and be a leader," said Ortiz. "At my re-

cruiting substation, they told us about being a squad leader and a guide, and how they were the most difficult positions. They said 'if you don't accept any challenges higher than general population, then why be in a program that trains leaders?'"

Ortiz stated that being the squad leader was like being a co-captain for his baseball team, because the guide is the captain and his co-captains are his squad leaders. He came in wanting to have the most responsibility he could, and squad leader was one of the positions that fit him well.

Ortiz had the difficult task of not only trying to learn and navigate his way through the chaos of recruit training, but he also had the difficult task of leading others through it as well.

"I was overwhelmed at first," said Ortiz. "None of us are used to this environment of constantly being yelled at because of the mistakes or corrections that first phase recruits make."

Ortiz recalled struggling in the beginning with how many recruits he was in charge of.

"Having to be the leader of the squad was difficult because you're not used to being in charge of so many people," said Ortiz.

"I have 18 recruits including myself, so being in charge of 17 others was pretty difficult with trying to make sure their mission was accomplished while at the same time trying to accomplish my own. Their mission being accomplished is my mission being accomplished. Being on a baseball team, you're in charge of the other eight starters on the

field, but in here, there are no bench players. You have to pay great attention to detail, which is what will end up catching you off guard. One slip up can mess up the entire platoon, even though it was just from one squad."

Surviving the gauntlet of the first phase of training, Ortiz and his squad made their way up to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., for the next obstacles of training.

"Being up north at Camp Pendleton during the second phase got easier, yet harder at the same time," said Ortiz. "It was easier because I got used to the squad, and they got used to me."

We also had started to bond as a platoon as well, so it became easier to communicate. My squad listened well and paid attention to detail, so it made things easier for me. They knew what they had to do."

Second phase focuses on rifle and field training, something most recruits didn't have any experience with, including all of the gear they would need and utilize along the way.

"It was difficult because you're not used to the new surroundings and had to re-adjust," said Ortiz. "For the hikes, we weren't used to having so much gear accountability, so I had to make sure each recruit had all their items and knew what they needed. I had to go through all the packs and make sure each was prepared for the next day every night. Doing all of this took away time for me to make sure I had all of my gear accounted for and ready for the hikes."

Coming back down to MCRD San Diego as rifle qualified and with basic field training, Ortiz and his squad could start to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Ortiz, however, made sure his squad was ready for the challenges that laid ahead of them.

"The one thing I wanted to focus on for my squad was for us to not get complacent," said Ortiz. "Everybody in the Marine Corps says it, but complacency kills. It will get you injured and possibly dropped."

Ortiz had his mind set on preparing and overcoming the final recruit training challenge, the Crucible.

"If you fail to prepare then you're preparing to fail," said Ortiz. "My baseball coach told us that, and I've tried to live my life utilizing it. I keep making sure they're prepared. The Crucible will be our biggest challenge. It's the last obstacle in our way of becoming a Marine."

Ortiz reflected on what made him a successful squad leader and gave advice as to what others should try to emulate.

"Have a positive mental attitude, don't be complacent, practice your drill, know your squad and maintain your squad before you maintain yourself," said Ortiz. "The squad comes first. If you only have one (Meal-Ready-to-Eat) and one person in your squad doesn't have one, then you're going to give yours up. That's what being a leader is."

Early in recruit training, drill instructors look for those eager to lead, and along the way, push their boundaries to try and mold

and prepare them for the difficult task of leading Marines.

"My first impression was that he was going to be a good recruit," said Gunnery Sgt. Bruno M. Nascimento, senior drill instructor, Plt. 2121. "As the training progressed, he stayed hard on the other recruits, but also took the time to get to know them personally. He was one of the recruits that I relied on and leaned on to assist with getting the task and missions accomplished within the platoon."

Even though he is a recruit, Nascimento saw qualities in Ortiz that mimicked those of seasoned Marine Corps leaders.

"Despite us being in a recruit training environment, he still managed to be able to conduct himself in a professional manner and I would take him as one of my Marines right now in the Fleet Marine Force as is," said Nascimento.

"Unaltered, right now, I would put him in my platoon in the fleet, and I would have all the faith in him that he'd be able to help task all the other Marines."

Ortiz charged into the Crucible, leading the way for his squad, earning the title Marine. He will continue his training at Camp Pendleton in the School of Infantry and then on to his military occupational specialty, though he is currently open contract.

"If you know how to lead you've got a slight advantage, but being in a leadership position in the Marine Corps is difficult, no matter what," said Ortiz. "You have to care about your troop welfare."

**CHEVRON**

ESTABLISHED 1942

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**Platoon 2122** COMPANY HONOR MAN Lance Cpl. P. M. Oshea Mission Viejo, Calif. Recruited by Staff Sgt. C. K. Yazzie  
**Platoon 2127** SERIES HONOR MAN Lance Cpl. D. L. Russel Oklahoma City Recruited by Staff Sgt. J. T. Phelps  
**Platoon 2121** PLATOON HONOR MAN Pfc. Z. Almosawy North Las Vegas, Nev. Recruited by Staff Sgt. L. C. Jason  
**Platoon 2123** PLATOON HONOR MAN Pfc. M. A. Jankowski Juliet, Ill. Recruited by Staff Sgt. J. Osornio Jr.  
**Platoon 2125** PLATOON HONOR MAN Pfc. J. C. Flores Santa Rosa, Calif. Recruited by Sgt. M. A. Morales  
**Platoon 2126** PLATOON HONOR MAN Pfc. J. A. Ramos Santa Ana, Calif. Recruited by Sgt. J. A. Morales  
**Platoon 2127** HIGH SHOOTER (335) Pvt. N. J. Johnson Ellensburg, Wash. Marksman Instructor Cpl. A. L. Vega Jr.  
**Platoon 2125** HIGH PFT (300) Pfc. M. A. Dafalla Lenexa, Kan. Recruited by Staff Sgt. P. G. Zachary



# FOX COMPANY

2nd RECRUIT TRAINING BATTALION

Commanding Officer  
 Sergeant Major  
 Battalion Drill Master

Lt. Col. W. Doctor  
 Sgt. Maj. A. O. Osinowo  
 Staff Sgt. J.W. Flesher



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\* Indicates Meritorious Promotion

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|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
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W. Nafe<br/>                 Pvt. A. G. Nevarez-Keist<br/>                 Pvt. S. S. Newsom<br/>                 Pvt. P. Q. Pham<br/>                 Pvt. C. R. Pitt<br/>                 Pvt. W. J. Portis<br/>                 Pfc. B. A. Priller<br/>                 *Pfc. J. W. Pryor<br/>                 Pvt. J. E. Wallace</p> <p><b>PLATOON 2125</b><br/>                 Pvt. A. A. Adams III<br/>                 Pvt. A. T. Albert<br/>                 Pvt. M. A. Alvarez<br/>                 Pfc. I. L. Angeli<br/>                 Pvt. I. J Arnold II<br/>                 Pvt. C. A. Araya<br/>                 Pvt. D. B. Babb<br/>                 Pvt. W. K. Beasley<br/>                 Pvt. C. J. Blais<br/>                 Pfc. A. L. Boomer<br/>                 Pvt. A. J. Bradley<br/>                 Pvt. J. L. Breceda Jr.<br/>                 Pfc. J. K. Bryan<br/>                 *Pfc. S. M. Burge<br/>                 Pvt. S. D. Calandrino II<br/>                 Pvt. A. Calderon<br/>                 Pvt. J. D. Cazares<br/>                 Pfc. W. N. Chaides<br/>                 Pvt. E. R. Christiansen<br/>                 Pfc. A. J. Clark Jr.<br/>                 Pfc. M. M. Coad<br/>                 Pvt. A. R. Cole<br/>                 *Pfc. C. J. Cooper<br/>                 Pvt. B. C. Correa<br/>                 *Pfc. M. A. Dafalla<br/>                 Pfc. A. N. Driver<br/>                 Pvt. L. D. Dulaney<br/>                 Pvt. A. J. Ebert</p> | <p>Pvt. V. J. Egedahl-Sudsberry<br/>                 Pvt. J. B. Elrod<br/>                 Pvt. E. O. Ernevad<br/>                 Pfc. R. A. Figueroa-Abarca<br/>                 Pvt. J. P. Fleming<br/>                 *Pfc. J. C. Flores<br/>                 Pvt. J. J. Francki<br/>                 Pvt. A. J. Gadberry<br/>                 Pvt. C. B. Ginther<br/>                 Pvt. T. J. Golden<br/>                 Pvt. J. J. Graak<br/>                 Pvt. T. W. Hartmann<br/>                 Pvt. J. T. Hogue<br/>                 Pfc. J. C. Hull<br/>                 Pvt. Z. I. Humphrey<br/>                 Pvt. K. D. Jackson<br/>                 Pfc. C. E. James<br/>                 Pfc. C. S. Merritt<br/>                 Pvt. J. C. Johnson<br/>                 Pvt. K. V. Keele<br/>                 Pfc. C. A. Kidd<br/>                 Pvt. K. E. Kiley<br/>                 Pfc. D. L. Laereman<br/>                 Pvt. D. B. Lau<br/>                 Pvt. T. R. Longie<br/>                 Pfc. G. Lopez<br/>                 Pvt. J. A. Lopez<br/>                 *Pfc. T. MacKinnon<br/>                 Pfc. T. A. Malm<br/>                 Pvt. S. A. Marcha<br/>                 Pfc. D. R. Martin<br/>                 Pvt. N. J. Martinez<br/>                 Pvt. J. Martinez Jr<br/>                 Pvt. B. L. McGruder Jr.<br/>                 Pfc. J. A. Medina<br/>                 Pvt. U. E. Menou<br/>                 Pvt. O. C. Miramontes<br/>                 Pvt. A. Neaves</p> <p><b>PLATOON 2126</b><br/>                 Pvt. A. D. Adams<br/>                 Pvt. A. Arellano<br/>                 Pvt. M. J. Arndt<br/>                 Pvt. R. Arteaga-Sanchez<br/>                 Pvt. C. P. Ast<br/>                 Pfc. E. R. Benedict<br/>                 Pvt. C. J. Blegg<br/>                 Pvt. D. S. Bueno<br/>                 Pvt. D. B. Carbajal<br/>                 Pvt. N. Castro-Ramirez<br/>                 Pfc. C. R. Curry III<br/>                 Pvt. P. M. Cyr<br/>                 Pfc. D. M. Drabek<br/>                 Pvt. N. E. Escamilla<br/>                 Pvt. O. Figueroa<br/>                 Pfc. B. B. Garthua<br/>                 Pfc. M. A. Gomez<br/>                 Pvt. R. J. Guinn<br/>                 Pfc. M. Iribe</p> | <p>Pvt. T. J. Johnson<br/>                 Pfc. B. J. Kraus<br/>                 Pvt. J. Lara<br/>                 Pvt. K. M. Leon<br/>                 Pvt. J. Lim<br/>                 Pvt. J. P. Lopez-Isiordia<br/>                 Pvt. J. R. McCaffrey<br/>                 Pfc. D. J. Miller<br/>                 Pfc. E. B. Mitrano<br/>                 Pfc. A. M. Murillo<br/>                 Pvt. C. L. Murphy<br/>                 Pfc. A. S. Nedlic<br/>                 Pfc. J. C. Nepomuceno<br/>                 Pvt. N. T. Orso<br/>                 Pvt. J. G. Peraza<br/>                 Pvt. R. V. Pulido<br/>                 Pvt. R. C. Ramirez Jr.<br/>                 Pvt. C. P. Ramon<br/>                 *Pfc. J. A. Ramos<br/>                 Pvt. C. A. Richey<br/>                 Pvt. T. W. Riley<br/>                 Pfc. M. K. Roberts<br/>                 Pvt. G. J. Rodriguez<br/>                 Pvt. B. H. Root<br/>                 *Pfc. J. P. Salas<br/>                 Pvt. V. Santillan<br/>                 *Pfc. M. A. Saxelby<br/>                 Pvt. B. T. Sekas<br/>                 Pvt. M. S. Shane<br/>                 Pvt. A. P. Smith<br/>                 Pvt. B. A. Soto-Cervantes<br/>                 Pvt. G. G. Souza<br/>                 Pfc. C. D. Spicer<br/>                 Pvt. K. T. St. George<br/>                 Pvt. R. J. Strecker Jr.<br/>                 Pvt. B. J. Sullivan<br/>                 Pvt. J. D. Sullivan<br/>                 Pvt. T. Tabor<br/>                 Pfc. N. D. Taylor<br/>                 *Pfc. S. F. Taylor<br/>                 Pvt. K. R. Thelen<br/>                 Pfc. J. R. Trevino<br/>                 Pvt. C. W. Tucker<br/>                 Pvt. J. Valdovinos Jr.<br/>                 Pfc. B. G. Valiente<br/>                 Pfc. N. L. Vassion<br/>                 Pvt. K. A. Vega<br/>                 Pfc. J. G. Venegas III<br/>                 Pvt. B. L. Walker</p> <p><b>PLATOON 2127</b><br/>                 Pfc. T. S. Beachy<br/>                 Pvt. J. W. Burgess<br/>                 Pvt. V. S. Burnop<br/>                 Pvt. J. R. Callahan<br/>                 Pvt. B. C. Carreiro<br/>                 Pfc. C. D. Chung<br/>                 Pvt. A. A. Clemente<br/>                 Pvt. A. J. Duke<br/>                 *Pfc. A. M. Doyle<br/>                 Pvt. D. Escalante</p> | <p>Pfc. K. S. Hooper<br/>                 Pvt. M. S. Housman<br/>                 Pvt. B. J. Hudson<br/>                 Pfc. B. E. Johnson<br/>                 Pfc. N. J. Johnson<br/>                 Pfc. R. L. Johnson<br/>                 Pfc. M. S. Jojola<br/>                 Pvt. T. W. Jones<br/>                 Pvt. N. D. Klostermann<br/>                 Pvt. D. R. Knapp<br/>                 Pfc. B. A. Krauter<br/>                 Pvt. J. M. Milstead<br/>                 Pvt. C. G. Offret<br/>                 *Pfc. B. R. Owens<br/>                 Pvt. J. G. Peraza<br/>                 Pfc. T. L. Padin<br/>                 Pvt. C. R. Parker<br/>                 Pvt. S. J. Patterson<br/>                 Pfc. E. A. Perez<br/>                 Pvt. J. Perez-Lopez<br/>                 *Pfc. A. M. Peters<br/>                 Pfc. N. J. Peterson<br/>                 Pvt. G. A. Placencia<br/>                 Pvt. K. R. Price<br/>                 Pfc. T. R. Ramkowsky<br/>                 Pvt. S. Ramo-Savila<br/>                 Pfc. D. J. Reinert<br/>                 Pvt. J. A. Rich<br/>                 *Pfc. A. S. Robledo<br/>                 Pvt. A. G. Robles-Padilla<br/>                 Pvt. B. R. Rodriguez<br/>                 Pvt. C. J. Roeszler<br/>                 Pvt. C. A. Ruiz<br/>                 *Lance Cpl. D. L. Russel<br/>                 Pvt. N. J. Sahagun<br/>                 Pvt. J. Salazar<br/>                 Pvt. A. A. Salcido-Soto<br/>                 Pvt. M. A. Sandoval<br/>                 Pvt. T. G. Schneider<br/>                 Pvt. T. J. Schneider<br/>                 Pvt. A. M. Serujo<br/>                 Pvt. C. S. Shrode<br/>                 Pvt. B. J. Simon<br/>                 Pfc. C. R. Sims<br/>                 Pfc. J. J. Smalley<br/>                 Pfc. T. R. Stephenson<br/>                 Pvt. D. W. Stinson<br/>                 Pvt. R. Tew<br/>                 Pvt. K. M. Thomas<br/>                 Pvt. E. Torres<br/>                 Pvt. J. M. Tupuola<br/>                 Pvt. L. L. Valadez<br/>                 Pvt. T. J. Vedrode<br/>                 Pfc. M. C. Vickers<br/>                 Pvt. E. J. Wagner<br/>                 Pvt. D. J. Waters<br/>                 Pvt. T. N. Willoughby<br/>                 *Pfc. J. J. Woo</p> |
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Andrea Stauffer, marketing chief, Family and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation, United States Army Garrison, crawls through a tunnel during the Bayonet Assault Course.



Drill instructors tell Department of Defense employees in the Executive Leadership Development Program to move with speed and intensity in a squad bay at Edson Range, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 6. Drill instructors created a chaotic environment and expected the ELDP employees to accomplish their mission exactly as they expect it done by recruits.



Department of Defense employees in the Executive Leadership Development Program perform log squats during the Log Drill event at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Jan. 6. Drill instructors gave the class no slack in their performance of the event, making some groups perform extra repetitions if they failed to follow directions.

#### ELDP ◀ 1

decisions to guide the force.”

Their tour stopped at the depot to show steps in the process of transformation from civilian to Marine.

“Since none of us (in the class) work for Marines, it was a real highlight to be able to understand how we can help (Marines), what they need, how they function and what their structure is,” said Farley. “I think we all have a profound respect for the physical fitness Marines have to remain in, their weapons training and how they lead, because this is a leadership development program. One of the key things is learning how other leaders lead, from the lowest level to the highest level. How the Marine Corps does things is really important to us.”

To get a true idea of the transformation process, the class received a first-hand experience of what it’s like to be a real Marine Corps recruit. Drill instructors were introduced, took charge and caused havoc and chaos, holding each class member to the highest expectations just like they would a recruit.

“I have an appreciation for what the drill instructors do and understand they’re trying to instill that shock and awe so they can mold and shape you into a better person,” said Farley, a prior enlisted Air Force service member.

“Coming from a different service, it’s given me more of a respect for the Marine Corps. When you say Marines you always think of hardened, tough people, but you never really know what goes into

the process of making that. Here, we got to see first-hand how that process really works, which made me think my Air Force boot camp wasn’t that bad!”

During their time on the depot, the ELDP class toured various facilities and performed the log drill event and bayonet assault course. Drill instructors gave the class no slack in their performance of the events, making some groups perform extra exercises if they failed to follow directions.

“It was physically challenging,” said Farley. “Even as a team, it allowed us to work on our leadership skills because we don’t want to leave anybody behind. It was helping us to bond and grow as a team. It was good conflict management as well. When you’re getting yelled at you

need to think ‘how am I going to respond, how am I going to turn this situation into something positive?’ What’s inside of me that I can stand on and say ‘no matter what, I’m going to make it through this; I’m going to help others get through this.’ It was an awesome experience.”

After concluding the events, the class moved to Edson Range, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., where they slept in the squad bays, just as recruits do. They were issued gear and prepared for their next day activities at the School of Infantry. The following week, the ELDP class returned to the depot, this time slightly timid, and saw the product of this transformation at the recruit training graduation ceremony.

“It was good to see young men

transform from what they were to what they are now,” said Farley. “It’s a coming of age, rite of passage, and I can really see the difference from when they got their heads shaved to now. They’re all really sharp and on cue and are better men for going through that process.”

The class left the depot with a new outlook to help them lead the future of the DoD. Their experiences will help one day shape the course and decisions that will affect service members from the bottom up.

“The experience we had was awesome,” said Farley. “The people who worked with us were awesome. The Marine Corps is a very classy organization. Hopefully the class next year will get the same experience.”