



## DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDANT OF MIDSHIPMEN  
U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY  
101 BUCHANAN ROAD  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21402-5100

November 26, 2008

Dear Parents, Relatives and Friends,

This semester has continued to be a very positive and productive year for the Brigade. You should all be exceptionally proud of the tremendous job your young men and women have been doing. In that context, however, we also experienced some incredible sadness with the recent loss of one of our Family members. As most of you are aware, MIDN 4/C Frederick Eissler passed away last Monday evening (17 November) after fighting a valiant battle against Bacterial Meningitis. We honored his life this past Friday during a funeral service in the Naval Academy Chapel, followed by interment at the Naval Academy cemetery. I ask that you please keep MIDN Eissler's family, friends, classmates and company mates in your thoughts and prayers as we mourn the loss of this brilliant Midshipman.

Fall semester of 2008 is winding down and just 3 short weeks remain. It has been an extremely busy Fall on the Yard with numerous class reunions and parades, two statue dedications, a superb Navy Birthday/USNA Founder's Day celebration and various other special events. The Midshipmen continue to impress me with their professionalism in support of these events and their overall performance. The Brigade is definitely looking forward to the Thanksgiving Holiday after these busy couple of months on the Yard.

I usually like to take a few moments to highlight some of the significant accomplishments within the various Classes. The Class of 2009 recently completed interviews to fill top Brigade leadership positions for next semester. Last week they also received their service assignments and we are all very excited for their future service in the Navy and Marine Corps. The Class of 2010 has consistently displayed great confidence in their roles as squad leaders and there has been a lot of positive feedback on their performance as leaders and mentors. The Class of 2011 has begun taking a much more active role in making our Saturday Morning Training events relevant and interesting, and the Plebes continue to make me proud on a daily basis with their displays of enthusiasm and professionalism.

Upon the Brigade's return after Thanksgiving break, we will quickly gear up to Beat Army on 6 December and shortly after will begin preparing for final exams. With that in mind, I want to address the future date change of the Army/Navy game. Starting next year, the Army/Navy game, final exams and the start of spring semester will move to the right by one week. This change will still maintain the traditional holiday leave opportunities and it will not impact Commissioning Week events or dates. Highlighting another important administrative note, I want to congratulate the entire USNA family and the football team for securing our 6<sup>th</sup> straight bowl game selection, the Eagle Bank Bowl. This Bowl will take place on 20 December at RFK Stadium in Washington, DC, but we currently do not know our opponent. I realize that this event follows closely on the heels of exams, and we have therefore attempted to make the holiday travel plans as convenient and cost effective as possible for the Brigade. Specifically, we have offered the Midshipmen a sizeable travel allotment to significantly defray any costs they may incur by attending. There are other numerous ways in which we are supporting with free tickets, tailgaters, and prizes (exact details have been given to the Midshipmen). We are

encouraging our Midshipmen to bring a friend, a relative, or a sponsor and certainly hope that anyone that lives nearby will come out to support the team and the Brigade!

The following are important dates for planning and scheduling purposes. Please note that the leave expiration for 04 January has been changed since my last letter from 1800 to 2200:

Thanksgiving Break	30 November	Leave expires (all classes) at 1800
	11-18 December	Examination Period (MIDN may depart on leave following their last exam/military obligation)
End-of-Semester Leave	04 January	Leave expires (all classes) at 2200

I plan on talking to you again after the end of the Fall semester, but in the meantime would like to wish you and your families a happy and safe Thanksgiving Holiday. We truly have so much to be thankful for as a Naval Academy Family and your support has always been one of the absolute foundations of our great institution. I want to thank you again and ask that you continue to keep our young men and women in your thoughts and prayers. Best of Health!

NAVY BLUE & GOLD FOREVER!



Matt Klunder  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Commandant of Midshipmen