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CYSE600

During the time that has transpired between my graduation from Old Dominion University with a Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity, and the end of the first semester of my graduate program, many swift changes have occurred within both my life and my professional skill set. In the time immediately following my graduation, I enlisted in the United States Army as a National Guard SMP Cadet, while at the same time being accepted as a student at Old Dominion University's Graduate school of Cybersecurity. This contractually obligated me to pursue a position as an officer in the United States Army through the Army ROTC program at ODU. Following this, I used my accrued Credit Hours from Old Dominion University to renew my CompTIA Security+ Certification for another 3 years. The following summer, I was ordered to report to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, for Basic Combat Training (BCT).

In BCT, I was tested in my physical fitness, mental fortitude, and further developed my problem-solving and leadership skills. On numerous occasions, I was assigned to carry out an order that required me to complete a set of detailed tasks in a specific manner to a desired standard within a strict time frame. Despite all odds and possible points of failure, I refused to ever accept defeat or to quit, and pushed myself to excel in all tasks, seeking any opportunity to push past what I thought were my limits. In cases of teamwork and problem solving requirements, I sought to offer any assistance or advice to my platoon's leadership that could help increase efficiency or complete assigned tasks more effectively. Additionally, I regularly assisted and instructed other trainees on how to better accomplish their own assigned tasks, such

as providing ample assistance in learning effective operation and maintenance of the M4A1 assault rifle under stress and in all individual stances and drills, learning proper commands for drill and ceremonies in marching order, learning the basics of military land navigation and map reading, and learning effective marksmanship under strict conditions.

In addition to leadership development within BCT, I also experienced significant personal development and growth within my own skill set and qualifications. During the zeroing phase of my company's training with our issued rifles, I was personally commended for my technique in rifle fundamentals. Additionally, I scored a significant deviation higher than the majority of my company on the Army Combat Fitness Test. During marksmanship qualifications, I achieved a score of 30 hits in 40 shots fired at various ranges, and in various positions, earning the US Army's Sharpshooter qualification. Later, I assisted other trainees in properly servicing, equipping, and wearing their issued gear as intended. In the final phase of training, I advanced on a simulated enemy bunker under simulated oppositional conditions at the UTM/CCMK Range, repeated under live-fire conditions at the Omaha Course, and assaulted a simulated defensive fighting position under incoming machine-gun fire during the Night Infiltration Course (NIC).

Following graduation from BCT at Fort Jackson, I returned to my AROTC unit at ODU, and began my studies for a Masters in Cybersecurity. I immediately began to pursue both academic and athletic betterment in the process, trying out for ODU AROTC's Ranger Challenge athletic team, representative football team, and joined the Black and Gold society. I was later accepted into the representative football team, and participated in multiple charity and community-outreach events through the Black and Gold society, including POW-MIA awareness events, and leadership training coordinated to direct ODU AROTC's direction in the future.

Additionally, I attended multiple training events, while simultaneously completing my assigned work within my civilian training, my first semester mostly consisting of review of material I had completed during my tenure as an Undergraduate student at both Old Dominion University's Bachelor program and Tidewater Community College's Applied Associate program of Cybersecurity. These topics included advanced security management in numerous form-factors, such as enterprise-scale local-area-networks, cloud security, and physical-intrusion-prevention, penetration-testing of various possible vulnerabilities, such as wireless, bluetooth, and hardware-level and software-level attack-surfaces, and incident response planning and execution. This period of review has helped me not only reinforce my prior knowledge, but also assisted me in revising my preconceptions, and pointing out potential weaknesses I may have developed along the way.

Achieving a notable grade in all my courses, including CYSE600 and CYSE625, I completed this semester in a satisfactory manner, maintaining not only the standards required of me by the United States Army as a contracted Officer Cadet, but also my own personal standards as a professional in the field of Cybersecurity. In my military studies, I also felt that I personally excelled, pushing myself to complete several more rappel-jumps than required of myself during a training exercise, achieving a score of 4-out-of-4 during a military land navigation exercise, and scoring 33 hits in 40 shots on an Engagement Skills Trainer (EST) range.

In final retrospect, I feel that my achievements within this past semester have greatly reinforced my understanding of fundamental concepts within cybersecurity and network administration and development. I feel that my own personal pursuit of development beyond what is required of me exemplifies the values that both I hold as a professional and a student, and what the United States Army values within its soldiers, both enlisted, and within Commissioned

Officers. As a final thought, I eagerly look forward to the next semester, and thereby the next phase of my training as a Cybersecurity Professional, and as a Military Professional.