

Graduation Speech Officer Training Academy 2016

Major general Bowers, Col. Bottorff, staff of the IGR Training academy, fellow graduates, visitors and friends...

The Pursuit of excellence in all we do summarizes the ethos of the IGR training academy.

Training Academy develops leaders by instilling qualities of physical, mental and spiritual strength.

I humbly stand here today on behalf of the graduating class of 2016 training academy officer graduates, in thanking the staff and command for their devotion to our training.

לא לנו יְהוָה, לא-לְנוּ: כִּי-לְשִׁמְךָ, תֵּן כְּבוֹד
Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us,
but to thy name give the glory.

Non nobis, Domine, non nobis,
sed nominituo da gloriam.

This the motto of the Knights Templar, but taken from Psalm 115 of the Hebrew Bible and used according to legend by Henry V after the successful battle of Agincourt. From Shakespeare to Rudyard Kipling these words have inspired the very notion that human success must at some level be referred back to the Almighty One. And we follow this tradition today. Non nobis domine non nobis....this is the foundation of our spiritual strength.

Since the founding of the United States of America, local militias have played an important role in its defense and security. Bolstered by the Founding Father's concerns about maintaining a large standing army and preserved within the Constitution, the concept of the citizen soldier has since become ingrained in American culture and government.

Today's Indiana state defense force, the IGR, focuses on serving Hoosiers by assisting the National Guard and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security in their domestic missions as well as providing instruction to emergency management teams regarding the National Incident Management System (NIMS), designing and evaluating training exercises, and executing community support missions and events.

The IGR Training Academy has been vital in teaching us the importance of leadership in fulfilling the mission of the IGR in its service to the state. Training Academy provided us the professional development and military training we will need to serve the mission and goals of the IGR as officers. Tomorrow the IGR will be needed more than ever in recent history as we face the new threat of home grown terror.

I was recruited to the IGR by Col. Griffith, and his vision for MEDCOM has inspired me ever since. This vision was amplified during the months spent here at the training academy. MEDCOM provides highly trained medical personnel for the health and medical welfare of our soldiers as well as first responder medical support to large scale disasters when activated and requested.

Training Academy has also taught me the concept of camaraderie and fellowship. In my medical academic life as well as in private practice the ethos remains a lonely one. We advance professionally as individuals to excel in a highly competitive field for choice academic positions and private sector markets. We do as individuals seeking personal gain and recognition. Yet here the ethos was different.

In Shakespeare's albeit fictional account, King Henry V begins his speech in response to [Westmoreland's](#) expressions of dismay at the English army's lack of troop strength. Henry rouses his men by expressing his confidence that they would triumph, and that the "band of brothers" fighting that day would be able to boast each year on [St. Crispin's Day](#) of their glorious battle against the French. I learned what the meaning of "band of brothers" meant here at training academy. It is the common good of the IGR and the honor we bring it, alone, that motivates us to excel.

This ethos of "THROUGH THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE" expresses itself by furthering the physical mental and spiritual qualities within each of us as part of the larger corps, whereby we learn to set aside personal gain for that of the group, for that of the IGR.

We hope not to let you down
We hope to fulfil our mission as you have demanded of us
We hope you will be proud of our future achievements.

Finally: thanks to the faculty for their devotion.

Col. Bottorff you were welcoming and supportive throughout our course with your sense of humor and your dignity. You always approached us with grace and made us feel at ease.

Major Smith you inspired us with your quiet determinism and charity of spirit, your humility was inspirational.

Major Jackson, your presence at the academy although only on 3 occasions, was heartily felt. Your charisma and military bearing inspired us all. As president of a leading university, even flying in on your own plane, your presence lent academic validation to academy.

Captain Reddick you taught us what military bearing was, by example, and the dignity and self-respect an officer requires. You inspired us as to the delicate balance between Christian values and the need to protect the mission.

Captain Weiss, you reminded us that we are ethical beings as well as soldiers, and that the struggle between duty, mission and personal codes is an ongoing one.

Captain Tankisley you were an inspiration with your anecdotes and pointers as to our role as officers in the IGR. Your experience added a dimension of reality as to our need to learn "conduct becoming of an officer"

Captain Millen, sitting quietly at the back of each class you helped us understand the technicalities of difficult concepts when the time came, and supported the class fully in your own understated manner, when each of us needed help.

Lt Summerlot, as course director you held our hands throughout the course and told us not to sweat the small stuff...you taught us what was important, you were able to demonstrate in real time what it meant to adapt when conditions on the ground changed from month to month depending on outside circumstances beyond your control. Your experience in emergency management was precious. We thank you for your tireless devotion to us.

To my fellow candidates

It has been a privilege to study with you here. We all come from such different walks of life yet the passion and spirit by which you each made your briefing presentations was humbling.

When Capt. Tankisley discussed our briefing presentations with Capt. Millen it was reported that he stated “although their presentations did not fit the “military briefing format” they both agreed that “they were so passionate about their presentations...how could we stifle that enthusiasm by interrupting!” Our teachers saw our commitment and enthusiasm in both our presentations as well as in our purpose.

I hope we will all progress in the IGR and help each other as we serve the state with our own individual unique talents.

Non nobis, Domine, non nobis,
sed nomini tuo da gloriam.