

# NJROTC Cadets Participate in Competition

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Navy News|by Dwayne Rider

NAVAL AIR STATION PENSACOLA, Fla. -- Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) units from across the country participated in the 2011 NJROTC National Academic, Athletic and Drill Championship on Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola April 9.

Twenty-five NJROTC teams, representing 15 states from coast to coast, displayed their military bearing, competed in field events and tested their mental capacity during the two-day competition held at the Naval Air Technical Training Center's (NATTC) Chevalier Hall and on the NAS Pensacola Track and Parade Field.

The events were judged by more than 40 Navy instructors and Marine Corps drill instructors from Officer Training Command, Newport, R.I., and Marine Aviation Training Support Group-21 (MATSG-21), NAS Pensacola.

"I think this competition is great," said Cadet Lt. j.g. Skyla Pearson, a junior at Neshoba Central High School in Philadelphia, Miss. "It's my first competition and I want to come back over and over again! I'm a junior and wish I didn't have to quit. But you know, I still want to come back to support the unit even while I attend 'Ole Miss' (University of Mississippi) working on my nursing degree."

The competition included personnel inspections, color guard and drill competitions, outdoor athletic events and academic testing. The judges recognized the cadets' determination and ability during the armed exhibition.

"They obviously work hard and love this competition," said Marine Master Sgt. Richard Schultz, of MATSG-21. "I would never throw a rifle around like they do."

Approximately 25 of more than 600 NJROTC units qualify for the national competition annually.

"To be one of the top 25 is really an accomplishment on its own," said Rear Adm. David Steindl, commander, Naval Service Training Command (NSTC), who oversees the NJROTC program. "Citizenship, character, core values, that is what NJROTC is all about. Helping young people discover these character traits will help them be better citizens. Judging by the young men and women I've met this weekend, we have the best JROTC program of any service."

The personnel inspections, academic tests, military drill and athletic competitions were each worth points.

Four of last year's top five units returned to the top this year, and the top five teams overall received trophies.

Boca Raton (Fla.) who came in third last year, piled up 5,102 points to finish first to capture this year's national title. Troy High School (Fullerton, Calif.) placed second with 5,029 points. Centennial High School (Las Vegas), the 2009 and 2010 National champion, finished third with 4,971 points; Pine Forest High School (Pensacola, Fla.) was fourth with 4,857; and last year's second-place team Shawnee Mission North High School (Kan.), placed fifth with 4,816 points.

Pensacola's Escambia High School was named the recipient of the prestigious Captain Jim Harvey Award recognizing the NJROTC unit that displays the highest degree of military decorum, personal conduct and spirit throughout the entire competition.

The NJROTC program is a citizenship development program whose goal is to instill service to the United States, personal responsibility and a sense of accomplishment in students in secondary education institutions.

"The cadets who make up the NJROTC program are among the finest young people in this great nation," said retired Navy Cmdr. Mark Watson, NJROTC operations officer for NSTC's Citizenship Development directorate. "All cadets that competed in this year's competition displayed the discipline, determination, and dedication necessary not only to succeed at the highest level of JROTC competition, but also to achieve their future life goals and dreams."

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