

Meghan Connor, USNA Class of 2014, Greystone Class of 2010



MIDN 1/C
Meghan Connor, USNA
receives her billet
for Flight School

When I was a high school student, every decision I made regarding classes, athletics, and other extra-curriculars depended on one question, “Will this help me get into the Naval Academy?” If the answer was no, I would leave whatever it was and continue working on those things that I knew would get me one step closer to an appointment. I was an honor student, captain of the varsity track and field team, and a very active member of the Key Club. In my own mind, I was a great candidate and I never imagined that I would be one to receive the “TWE” or Thin White Envelope.

The day that it arrived in the mail was incredibly difficult. Although the words were a little different on the page, the letter said to me “sorry, but you’re not good enough.” Even though I knew that wasn’t true, it wasn’t until I received another letter, this time from the USNA Foundation Office, that I felt like my dream to attend the United States Naval Academy could still be a reality.

The Foundation gave me a list of academy prep schools to choose from and Greystone immediately jumped out at me. It was the only program offered that was associated with a fully accredited, 4-year university. I was graduating from an academically-challenging high school, so it was important to me that I was also challenged while in prep school.

My year at Greystone definitely lived up to that challenge. The classes were tough, but it was the addition of early morning PT, late nights of Study Hall, and countless hours of community service that taught me the importance of time management and prioritization. Learning these skills through Greystone allowed me to be

successful during my prep year and even now at the academy. As a chemistry (pre-med) major and member of the Navy Marathon Team I would not have survived without the lessons I learned at Greystone.

Greystone also gave me the chance to develop friendships that I will have for the rest of my life. My friends in high school supported me, but never quite understood my ambitions to serve in the military. When I arrived at Greystone, it was comforting to know that everyone had the same goals and desires that I had. Our similar goals and the challenges we faced together allowed us to bond faster and at a deeper level than any other friendship I had ever made. Going forward through the academy and in our military careers, I know that my Greystone classmates will be there for me whenever I need them and vice versa.

Now, as I'm about to graduate from USNA with a billet to Flight School, I'm grateful for my TWE. It forced me to take a different path that prepared me for life at the academy and in the military. If I had known then, what I know now, receiving the TWE wouldn't have been as devastating because my experiences and my options for the future are greater than I ever expected. If you find yourself holding a thin white envelope this year, don't be discouraged. It may not be the route that you want to take, but it will be one that you won't regret.