



Building Core Skills

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Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) programs are designed to equip young cadets with a wide variety of skills that extend beyond the classroom. These skills not only prepare cadets for potential military careers but also provide them with the tools needed to succeed in any professional or personal endeavor. JROTC has taught me three critical skills and have found a very important place in shaping a successful and fulfilling high school career for myself. Among the many skills taught, problem solving and critical thinking, teamwork, and leadership stand out as particularly valuable.

JROTC encourages critical thinking and problem solving skills. Cadets learn to analyze situations, consider different perspectives, and develop effective solutions, which is essential for tackling challenges in life. An example of this skill being used in my own life occurred a few weeks ago. I participated in an honor guard ceremony for the girls basketball team. Our goal was to form an all female honor guard team for the first home girls basketball game. Originally, we had our usual five man honor guard team, then the day of the event two cadets had to drop the honor guard because of sickness. We had no alternate for this honor guard because of unique situations, but ultimately, we ended up doing a three person honor guard: one U.S. flag and two rifles. Although this wasn't the ideal situation we managed to resolve it. In

hindsight, we learned that even if we want to do an all female honor guard we can have a male alternate to help prevent this from happening again. This is just one example of a situation in JROTC where we had to use problem solving, but also teamwork to achieve success.

JROTC fosters a strong sense of teamwork by encouraging cadets to work collaboratively towards common goals. Teamwork skills are vital for building strong relationships, improving communication, and achieving success in group settings. As a corp we run an event called Desert Medic every year, other units attend to participate. Half of the day is spent learning basic medical skills, while the other half we spend applying what we learned to "casualties" in the field. In the afternoon cadets work as teams to run through different obstacles where they have to apply what they learned in the classroom. I have participated in this event each year I've been in JROTC. I have had three different perspectives of this event and every time I have had to use teamwork to build relationships, communicate, and problem solve. Each time I have been involved in this event, I have encountered different challenges and had to use teamwork to overcome them. For example, my freshman year one of the cadets on my team had to fall out of the obstacle due to medical circumstances, as a result we had to carry a weighted sandbag for the rest of the obstacles. We had to

work as a team to get through the obstacles with the sandbag. During this event, we used problem solving skills and teamwork but we also had to use leadership.

JROTC emphasizes leadership skills, which are crucial for guiding and influencing others positively. Leadership training helps cadets develop confidence, decision making abilities, and the capacity to motivate and manage teams effectively. Leadership is taking charge and inspiring others to reach their full potential while setting a positive example and guiding a team to a common goal. Being involved in JROTC has shown me that through leadership opportunities I can build my confidence, accountability, and provide me with the ability to motivate others. The corps proves how important it is to embody leadership skills by providing hands-on experience to develop and enhance cadets leadership skills. JROTC instills more than the “normal” student experience by providing in-state and out of state trips. JROTC offers the opportunity to attend WILD, a leadership course that includes participants from various JROTC programs. We also have chances to travel to California and other in-state trips, such as visiting different military bases and museums or historical sites. The corps provides opportunities to hold leadership positions at the flight, squadron, and corps levels. For instance, I am currently a Flight Commander and have visited California to see SpaceX, air museums, and other significant landmarks. Part of this experience involved working with other cadets

to plan meals that suited everyone’s needs. We also learned about President Reagan at his presidential library and visited the Getty Villa, a car museum, and many more important sites. Through these experiences, I built strong relationships with the cadets I shared a hotel room with and all those on the trip. All while learning about leadership and applying what I learned.

In summary, problem solving, teamwork, and leadership are interconnected within JROTC. These three essential skills have significantly influenced my high school career and will continue to be extremely valuable throughout my life. They have not only prepared me for the future challenges but also instilled a sense of responsibility and confidence that I will carry forward in all my future endeavors.

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