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ROTC cadets meet high ranking army officers in D.C.

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Seniors David Haas, David Laubert, Gino Lamantia and Matt Comiskey, cadets in the ROTC program, recently took a trip to Washington D.C. for the annual AUSA conference. Each year, the Association of the United States Army hosts the AUSA Annual meeting and exposition, which celebrates top leadership in the army. At the exposition, leaders in the military met to discuss the status of the military and current issues.

General Carter Ham, a John Carroll alumnus, retired four-star general and commander of U.S. AFRICOM (all American forces on the African continent), is the current president and CEO of AUSA. For a number of years, he has sponsored students of the ROTC program to attend the conference.

Lt. Col. Matthew Johnson accompanied the cadets to the nation's capital. Johnson said that there were workshops and roundtables where leaders spoke about certain topics pertaining to the military.

Industry companies came in and shared their new technology and products with the military as well as foreign militaries.

"The whole conference floor is set up with everything from helicopters to different weapon systems, to ammunition, to different lotions for fighting poison ivy, to clothing, to backrubs. Anything you can think about, it's all there. The purpose of that is to connect with the military," Johnson said.

One of the evenings of the conference included a meet and greet with the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of the Army. Cadets were able to meet the top general, General Milley and the Sargent Major of the Army, General Ham, the highest enlisted person in the army, as well as the AUSA CEO president.

Haas, one of the seniors who attended the exposition, spoke highly of the conference. "We had the opportunity to meet the Secretary of the Army, The Honorable Eric K. Fanning, Under Secretary of the Army, The Honorable Patrick Murphy, Chief of Staff of the Army, the highest-ranking officer, General Mark A. Milley and the Sergeant Major of the Army, the highest-ranking non-commissioned officer, Sergeant Major of the Army Daniel A. Dailey," Haas said.

In addition to meetings, the cadets were able to experience D.C. in their spare time through a morning jog around the mall, Capitol and monuments.

Johnson and the cadets also participated in a tour of the Pentagon followed by a lunch with all of the senior leaders of the army.

In addition to meeting military officials, they also had lunch with several Olympians. "There were



Photo courtesy of David Haas

From left to right: Cadets Comiskey, Haas, Under Secretary of the Army the Honorable Patrick Murphy, Cadets Laubert and Lamantia.

three tables of Olympic [athletes]. The army has a world-class athlete program, and we send people to the Olympics so we had an exchange with them," Johnson said.

"The conference lasted throughout the week but some of the notable programs we participated in were the welcoming ceremony featuring the U.S. Army Fife and Drum Corps, the ROTC Luncheon and the Dwight D. Eisenhower Luncheon featuring the Army Chief of Staff General Mark Milley," said Haas.

"We all gained a greater understanding of the many dimensions the Army operates in, from fighting terrorists in Afghanistan to helping with natural disaster relief at home. We also learned about the current and upcoming threats and how the Army is preparing to meet them," Haas said.