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2018 ROTC Commissioning Ceremony

Kent Syverud
Syracuse University

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Syracuse University

Remarks by Chancellor Kent Syverud

Delivered on Friday, May 11, 2018

Location: Hendricks Chapel

Remarks: 2018 ROTC Commissioning Ceremony

The Chancellor was introduced by Captain Dallas Rainey

Thank you Major General Fantini for your message today and thank you Brigadier General Hussey for administering the oath of office to our Army ROTC cadets.

Both Major General Fantini and Brigadier General Hussey are here today, as leaders, and as proud fathers. Each of them has a daughter commissioned at today's ceremony. Major General Fantini administered the oath to his daughter Elizabeth and Brigadier General Hussey administered the oath to his daughter Erin. These extraordinary women are carrying on their families' legacy and commitment to service. This is a frequent story today among families who serve. Would everyone present today who comes from a family with two or more generations who have served please rise? We salute all of you.

I would like to thank the people who were instrumental in supporting and organizing this event.

- Vice Chancellor Mike Haynie
- Ron Novack, Executive Director of the Office of Veteran and Military Affairs
- Lieutenant Colonel Jason Warner
- Lieutenant Colonel Tim Kimbrough
- The Staff of the Office of Veteran and Military Affairs, including Lauren Pyland, Laura Bates, and Virginia O'Connor

Today, we celebrate and commission 27 Army and Air Force Second Lieutenants.

They are graduating from five schools: Syracuse University, SUNY Oswego, LeMoyne College, Utica College, and Cazenovia College.

To the families of today's graduates: I have watched your sons and daughters in ROTC since I arrived here four years ago.

- I have seen them hard at work - in class, on campus and in the community.
- I have watched as they pushed themselves to the physical limit on icy winter mornings.
- I have seen them serve as honor guards at events throughout our region.
- I have witnessed them step up and offer service – over and over again – not only to our country but also to our campus and local communities.

Even when your sons and daughters are in civilian clothes on campus, I always know who they are. It is not just that they carry themselves well. It is also that they are still some of the only students on campus who call me “sir.”

To the parents and families here today: in humility I have to acknowledge this – I don't know how you did it. I don't know how you raised a child in today's world to get up earlier; to work harder; to grin and bear it and do the job; to serve others and our country.

But you did do it and I owe you my highest compliment as a parent – if I were ever in trouble or in need, if ever my country were in trouble or in need, there are no people I would rather have around me than these second lieutenants.

Thank you for raising them. Thank you for sharing them with Syracuse University, and with our country.

To our second lieutenants, this weekend, you should know – many people, your families and friends included, are so proud of you and wonder what your future will bring.

I can make some predictions for them, based on our shared history.

Today, you become part of that history – a great history of both this place and of the Army and Air Force.

ROTC started here, more than 100 years ago. ROTC has continued here, without interruption, longer than at any other school in America.

ROTC has remained an integral part of our community. And today you each also become an integral part of the officer corps of our Army and Air Force. From all I have seen of you here, I am confident the Army and Air Force will be in good hands.

You will thrive in the years ahead. Whatever color uniform you wear, for us you will always be part orange. And wherever you go, please know that the University you leave behind will remain committed to ROTC. ROTC is part of our legacy. You are too.

ROTC is not something we remember when convenient and forget when popular culture shifts. Through each of these lieutenants, ROTC is a major way this university contributes and always will contribute to our democracy, and to our country.

Congratulations; thank you; and Godspeed.

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