

News

New AFROTC Commander is on Duty

by John Gagnon, promotional writer

Welcome Lt. Col. Michael Brothers to campus. He is the new commander of the Air Force ROTC detachment. He is true-blue Air Force. His father and grandfather were in the service and following in their footsteps "was the normal thing to do." He has treasured his many assignments, each of which has entailed "new responsibilities, new people, new opportunity." He adds, "Every job has been more fun than the last."

He comes to Michigan Tech from the US Air Force Academy, where he earned a bachelor's in biology in 1994 and where he returned to teach and do research, which he calls "a coveted assignment." He received two awards there: outstanding researcher and outstanding instructor. He also oversaw the alumni program.

He loves teaching and working with students. "That's why this job is such a nice fit," he says of Michigan Tech. Scheduled for redeployment, Tech was on his wish list, he volunteered for the posting, and he was glad to get it.

One draw was the outdoor opportunities. Lean and fit, he keeps his bicycle parked outside of his office, for he routinely heads to the Tech Trails for a lunch-hour workout. Fitness has always been a strong drive. He has been a member of the US Armed Forces' biathlon team; he ranked seventh in the US at the Military World Ski Championships in 2000-02; and he was the coach and officer-in-charge of the academy's Nordic ski team.

Brothers is a military man with a mindful bent. He earned a master's in exercise science and physiology from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in 2000, and a PhD in integrative physiology from the University of Colorado-Boulder in 2006.

He is a member of the American College of Sports Medicine and is a reviewer for both the "International Journal of Sports Medicine" and "Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise."

He has worked on numerous research projects, has been published widely, and has made many conference presentations. He is the Air Force expert on the physical effects of altitude on the human body. The immediate purpose: give troops deployed in the mountains of Afghanistan "better preparation and an edge." He has demonstrated flaws--and effected improvements--in the Air Force's aerobic training and testing.

Meanwhile, his goal at Tech is simple: "help students get commissioned and do great things."

Currently, about 70 cadets are enrolled. He anticipates another 40 to 60 freshmen. Enrollment remains strong, despite a national decline in financial aid and "officer ascension opportunities."

"The supply is a lot higher than the demand," he says--this despite two wars. The reality: "In this day and age, it has become a very competitive scenario." Two measures: the national average GPA for cadets in all officer training programs has gone from just over 3.0 to 3.8; and the number of cadets at the academy has been reduced by 15 percent, with more cuts expected.

He avows that Tech has been able to buck this national trend because of its exceptionally strong cadets; the rigorous and highly acclaimed academic programs; support from the institution; and excellent staff. As well, he notes, Michigan Tech, which has one of the original AFROTC detachments in the country, has the advantage of "deep roots" in the community.

Brothers enjoys the camaraderie in the service, the close-knit atmosphere, and working with people who are "first and foremost united in purpose behind the job--to protect and defend."

He is married and lives in west Houghton, purposely on a flat street that will allow safe bicycling for his three children (a daughter, age 7, and twin boys, age 5). His posting at Tech is for two years. It could be extended. "You never know with the Air Force," he says, his only uncertainty about the job.

Entertainment and Enrichment

Industrial Archaeology Program Cosponsors Events

The Industrial Archaeology Program, of the Department of Social Sciences, is cosponsoring events that are part of the Isle Royale and Keweenaw Parks Association's annual meeting this weekend, July 23 and 24.

Associate Professors Tim Scarlett and Susan Martin (both of SS), with Red Jacket Trolley's Wil Shapton, will be leading a guided trolley tour centering on copper mining in Isle Royale and in the Keweenaw. The trip will run from 1 to 4 p.m., Sunday, July 24, starting at Calumet and then moving on to the Cliff Mine. The cost is \$10; space is limited and advance registration is required.

Other events include a stereoscopic tour of Lake Superior, Isle Royale, and the Keweenaw in the 1860s and early 1900s, and a book signing. For more information on these events, visit parks.

For more information call 482-3627 or email irkpa@irkpa.org .