



*Graduation and
Commissioning*

CEREMONY FOR

PLATOON LEADERS CLASS –
SENIORS, 1ST INCREMENT 2026
COMPANY L



*Officer Candidates
School*

TRAINING COMMAND
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA

27 JUNE 2026



Sequence of Events

*Invocation**

Staff Introductions

Staff Awards

Sound Off

March On

Receive the Report

Publish the Order

Officers Center

Honors to General Christopher J. Mahoney

*National Anthem**

Presentation of Awards

Remarks by Colonel M. Michelle Melendez

Oath of Office

Remarks by General Christopher J. Mahoney

*Benediction**

Pass in Review

Exchange Guidon

*Anchors Aweigh**

*Marine's Hymn**

**Please Stand*



GENERAL CHRISTOPHER J. MAHONEY 13TH VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

General Mahoney was born in South Weymouth, Massachusetts and graduated from Holy Cross in June 1987. He completed The Basic School (TBS) and Infantry Officer Course (IOC) at Quantico, Virginia in 1988.

After earning his qualification as an A-6E Intruder pilot, General Mahoney deployed to the Indo-Pacific with VMA(AW)-224, The Bengals. He completed transition training to the F/A-18 at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) El Toro and made multiple

deployments with VMFA(AW)- 224, VMFA-122, The Crusaders, and VMFA(AW)-242, The Bats, to the Indo-Pacific, Italy, and Iraq.

He has held command at the squadron, group, and wing levels. He completed a Joint Force tour as Chief of Staff of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California, and he served as the Executive Assistant to the Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps (HQMC).

His General Officer duties include 37th Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps; Deputy Commander, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific; Director of Strategy and Plans at HQMC; Deputy Commander, U.S. Forces, Japan; Commanding General, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing; and Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources, HQMC.

General Mahoney was sworn in as the 13th Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 1, 2025. In this capacity, he is a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the nation's second highest-ranking military officer.

General Mahoney is a graduate of the IOC, Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course (WTI), the Marine Division Tactics Course (MDTC), and the Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN). He served as an instructor at the Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron-1 (MAWTS-1) at MCAS Yuma, Arizona and has over 5,000 hours of flight time in the A-6E, F-5, F/A-18, and the F-35B/C. He is also a qualified Forward Air Controller and parachutist. General Mahoney holds Master's Degrees from University of Canberra, Australia and the Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base with the highest academic distinction.





COLONEL M. MICHELLE MELENDEZ
COMMANDING OFFICER
OFFICER CANDIDATES SCHOOL

Michelle hails from Grapevine, Texas and was commissioned in May of 2000.

A Logistics Officer by trade, she served in a variety of operational assignments and executed multiple deployments throughout the South Pacific while assigned in III Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa, Japan from 2001-2004. Subsequently she served in Marine Wing Aviation Support Group 37 and Marine Wing Support Squadron 373, under 3d Marine Aircraft Wing from 2004-2007,

and deployed as a Company Commander in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Michelle then served within 1st Marine Logistics Group as a Regimental Operations Officer and Battalion Operations Officer, deploying as part of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit supporting operations in INDOPACOM and CENTCOM. From 2020-2022, she served as the Commanding Officer of I Marine Expeditionary Force Support Battalion, I Marine Information Group.

Her staff assignments include Tactical Logistics Instructor, Tactical Training and Exercise Support Group; Plans Officer, Special Projects Directorate under Director Marine Corps Staff; Inspector General, 1st Marine Logistics Group; and G4 Operations Officer, I Marine Expeditionary Force.

Michelle graduated from the Naval Academy with a BS in English. She is a graduate of Logistics Officer Course, Tactical Logistics Officer Course, Maritime Prepositioning Forces Course, Marine Aviation Tactics and Weapons Aviation Ground Support Course, Expeditionary Warfare School, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, and holds a Masters degree in Military Studies and served as the senior Marine fellow at the Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security in Washington DC.

She most recently served as Director, Marine House Legislative Liaison, Office of Legislative Affairs.



SERGEANT MAJOR CARL J. JACOBSEN
SERGEANT MAJOR
OFFICER CANDIDATES SCHOOL

Sergeant Major Jacobsen reported to MCRD Parris Island SC on 4 September 2002, to 1st Recruit Training Battalion, Company A, Platoon 1102. Upon graduation in late November 2002, he was ordered to report to Marine Combat Training East, Camp Geiger, NC, in January 2003. Graduating in February 2003, Sergeant Major Jacobsen received orders to Aberdeen, Maryland where he went through Small Arms repairman School until he received orders in May 2003.

In May 2003, he reported to Marine Corps Security Company, Bahrain, where he was assigned as the

Armory Chief, Headquarters and Service Company. Once promoted to the rank of corporal meritoriously, he received orders to report to Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools Camp Johnson, NC. He was assigned as the Armory Chief, Headquarters and Service Company. In 2004, he was meritoriously promoted to the rank of sergeant, where he submitted an SDA package to become a Drill Instructor and was then given orders to report to MCRD Parris Island, SC Drill Instructor School.

In June 2006 he graduated from DI School and was assigned to 1st Recruit Training Battalion, Company A. He was meritoriously promoted to Staff Sergeant in July 2008. After a successful tour on Drill Instructor duty, he requested orders to 3d Battalion 8th Marines, Camp Lejeune, NC.

In 2010 he deployed with the 24th MEU ending his deployment in Helmand province, Afghanistan as the battalion Armory Chief. After his meritorious promotion to GySgt, he once again deployed in 2012 as the S4 Chief to Camp Geronimo, Afghanistan in support of the Battalion combat operations. Soon after completing the deployment in 2013, he requested orders to the Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Camp Johnson, NC. During his time with the Academy, Sergeant Major Jacobsen became the Chief faculty Advisor for the Advance Course and the SNCOIC for the Corporals Course. At the end of his time with the Academy he was selected to First Sergeant and requested orders to 3D Battalion 6TH Marines.

Sergeant Major Jacobsen received PCS orders in March 2016 to 3d Battalion, 6th Marines where he served as the Company First Sergeant for Company K. In 2017 he deployed in support of the 26 MEU aboard the USS Carter Hall. Upon his return he received orders to 4th Marine Division, Delta Company Inspector Instructor First Sergeant in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In February of 2021 he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant Major and served as the Command Senior Enlisted Leader for 2d Radio Battalion II Marine Information Group and Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 461, Marine Aircraft Group 29. In August of 2024, he was selected for assignment as the Command Senior Enlisted Leader of Officer Candidates School, Quantico, VA.

His personal awards include: The Meritorious Service Medal w/2 Gold stars in lieu of third award, Navy Commendation Medal w/1 Gold star in lieu of second award, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal w/2 Gold star's in lieu of third award.

OFFICIAL PARTY

Reviewing Officer
Commanding Officer
Sergeant Major
Chaplain

General Christopher J. Mahoney
Colonel M. Michelle Melendez
Sergeant Major Carl J. Jacobsen
Lieutenant Joseph Del Valle Jr.

COMMAND STAFF

Executive Officer
Coordinator of Student Activities
S-1 Officer
S-3 Officer
S-3 Chief
Physical Training Advisor
Drill Master
S-4 Officer
Academics Officer
Academics Chief
Senior Medical Officer
OCS Medical Platoon Chief

Lieutenant Colonel Phillip A. Skillman
Captain Brandon T. Arnold
Captain Bailey M. Timby
Major Jerome J. Lademan
Master Sergeant Dachel Avalo
Colour Sergeant David Groom
Gunnery Sergeant Shane R. Carter
Captain Mikayla R. Schmidt
Major Jolyon M. Gidari
Master Sergeant Mario M. Wilson
Commander Cesar R. Mojicavazquez
Senior Chief Petty Officer Daniel J. Holmberg

HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY

Company Commander
Company First Sergeant
Company Gunnery Sergeant

Captain Michael L. Smith Jr.
First Sergeant Michael E. Wilson
Gunnery Sergeant Jeffrey A. Belko



COMPANY L STAFF

Company Commander
Company First Sergeant
Company Executive Officer
Company Gunnery Sergeant
Police Sergeant
Company Clerk

Major J. A. Rittenhouse
Gunnery Sergeant Z. J. Smith
Captain J. M. Bennett
Gunnery Sergeant F. J. Johnson
Sergeant N. J. Leatherwood
Corporal G. Zayasfernandez

FIRST PLATOON

Platoon Commander
Platoon Sergeant
Sergeant Instructor
Sergeant Instructor

Captain T. N. Shellman
Gunnery Sergeant R. C. Calvar
Staff Sergeant Y. R. Castellon
Staff Sergeant C. Arzate

SECOND PLATOON

Platoon Commander
Platoon Sergeant
Sergeant Instructor
Sergeant Instructor
Sergeant Instructor

Captain B. C. Krulak
Gunnery Sergeant J. C. Tullock
Gunnery Sergeant A. D. Escalante
Gunnery Sergeant K. S. Ray
Staff Sergeant M. S. Terry Jr.

THIRD PLATOON

Platoon Commander
Platoon Sergeant
Sergeant Instructor
Sergeant Instructor
Sergeant Instructor

Captain J. L. Swenson
Gunnery Sergeant H. A. Ashong
Gunnery Sergeant E. Arteaga
Gunnery Sergeant J. B. Veggian
Staff Sergeant T. R. Laughlin

FOURTH PLATOON

Platoon Commander
Platoon Sergeant
Sergeant Instructor
Sergeant Instructor
Sergeant Instructor

Captain J. D. Marshall-Sowa
Gunnery Sergeant G. O. Edwards
Gunnery Sergeant J. W. Gutierrez
Gunnery Sergeant C. B. Fike
Staff Sergeant G. W. Schwend

FIFTH PLATOON

Platoon Commander
Platoon Sergeant
Sergeant Instructor
Sergeant Instructor
Sergeant Instructor

Captain S. E. Hart
Gunnery Sergeant H. Polito
Gunnery Sergeant B. J. Parkhill
Gunnery Sergeant C. J. Peterson
Staff Sergeant J. A. Del Haro

The History of Officer Candidates School

The origins of the first officer's training school began in 1891 when Marine Corps General Order No. 1 established the first formal resident school for Marine officers, the School of Application at Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. To meet the need for officers to serve with the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I, a decision was made to move the instructional effort to Quantico where individual replacements and new units were being formed for the war. Quantico was where all new officers went and the Officers Camp of Instruction, organized at Quantico in July 1917, was the place they received their training. Its original location was near Barnett Avenue, approximately one-half mile south of what is now the town of Quantico. In April of 1918, the school was formalized and titled the Officers Training Camp.

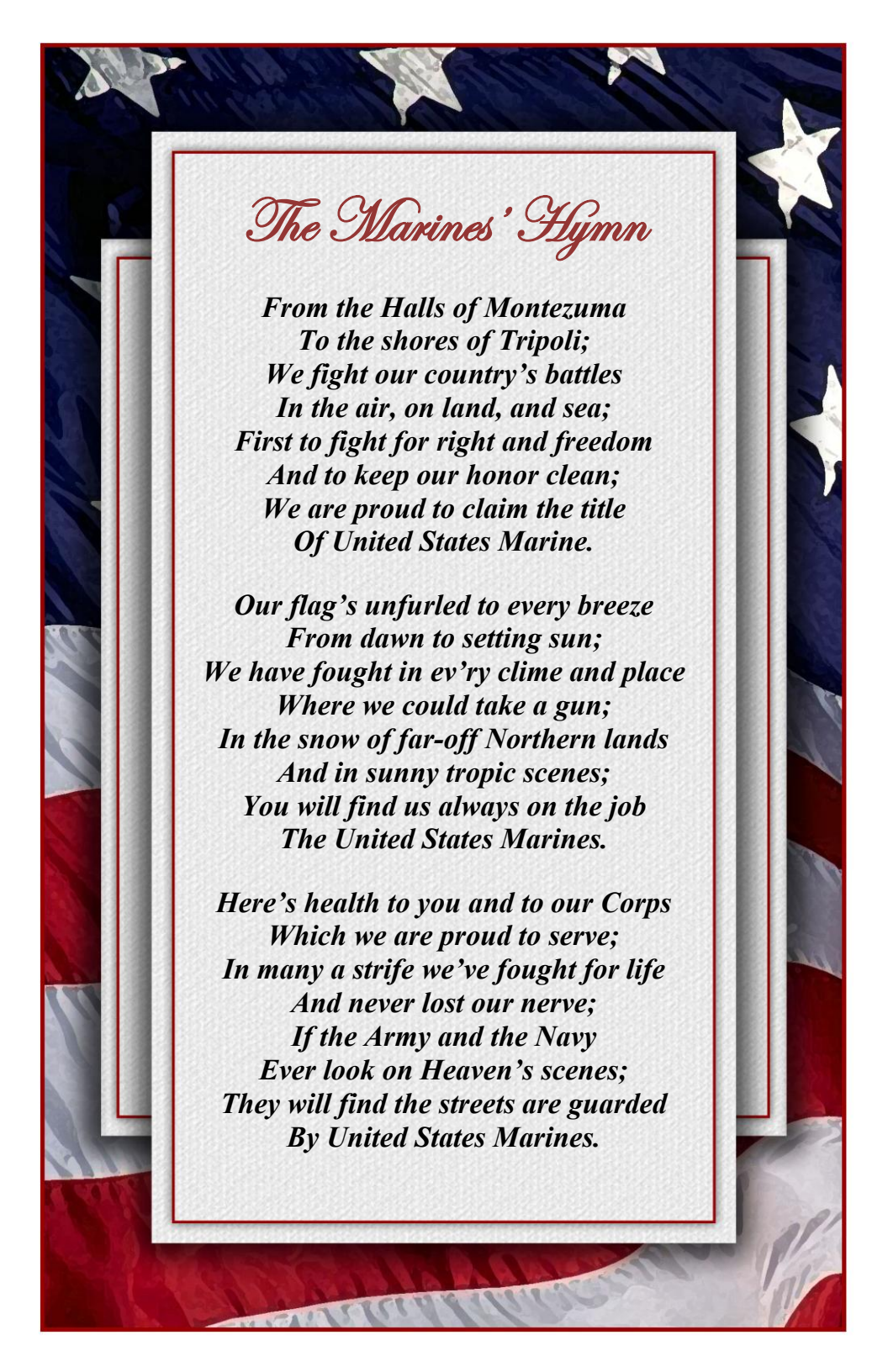
In 1919, the Commanding General of Marine Base Quantico, Major General John A. Lejeune, established the Marine Corps Officers Training School and the Marine Officers Infantry School. These two schools were subsequently combined in 1920 to become the Marine Officers Training School. By 1922, this school had further evolved into the Field Officers Course (modeled after the Army's Command and General Staff School) and the Company Officers Course, both designed to teach tactics, topography, law, administration, and engineering, among other subjects. A third course, called The Basic School (TBS) was designed to indoctrinate new Marine Lieutenants in the duties of infantry leaders.

Having proved itself on the battlefields of France, a still growing Marine Corps began recruiting potential officers from colleges and universities through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) program. Second Lieutenants commissioned from the U.S. Naval Academy, NROTC units, and qualified enlisted Marines who had been commissioned reported to TBS for instruction. Officer training continued to expand and, in 1924, TBS moved to Philadelphia due to a shortage of suitable classrooms and officers billeting in Quantico.

In 1934, the Marine Corps introduced the Platoon Leaders Class (PLC), selecting students from certain colleges that did not have a ROTC. In the spring of 1935, PLC was organized at Quantico and San Diego. Under this new program, college graduates were appointed Second Lieutenants in the Marine Corps Reserve after two six-week training periods. Lieutenant Colonel Clifton B. Cates, commanded the first 200 candidates at Quantico in July 1935. In July of 1940, Colonel Lemuel Shepard Jr. headed a special unit tasked with training additional officer candidates. On 1 November 1940, Officer Candidates Class-1 became the first class to graduate in Quantico.

The wartime demands of 1943 prompted the Commandant to establish temporary candidate detachments at Camp Elliot, California and Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The PLC was reestablished in 1944 and except for a temporary move to Parris Island, South Carolina in 1951, it has remained at Quantico. The addition of the PLC program to officer candidate training led to another reorganization, and in 1944, the Officer Candidates Class was renamed Officer Candidates School. TBS reopened in September 1945, and by 1947, through various reorganizations, had assumed responsibility for training all officer candidates, including those of the PLC and NROTC. Coincident with these reorganizations, TBS moved from its first home on Barnett Avenue to Brown Field at the site of the old Airfield No. 1.

TBS headquarters left Brown Field in early 1955 and relocated to Camp Upshur where it could be closer to its training activities. A newly formed unit, the Training and Test Regiment, took over the training activities remaining at Brown Field, and became the unit responsible for training officer candidates of the various officer procurement programs. On 1 June 1963, the regiment was re-designated the Officer Candidates School.



The Marines' Hymn

*From the Halls of Montezuma
To the shores of Tripoli;
We fight our country's battles
In the air, on land, and sea;
First to fight for right and freedom
And to keep our honor clean;
We are proud to claim the title
Of United States Marine.*

*Our flag's unfurled to every breeze
From dawn to setting sun;
We have fought in ev'ry clime and place
Where we could take a gun;
In the snow of far-off Northern lands
And in sunny tropic scenes;
You will find us always on the job
The United States Marines.*

*Here's health to you and to our Corps
Which we are proud to serve;
In many a strife we've fought for life
And never lost our nerve;
If the Army and the Navy
Ever look on Heaven's scenes;
They will find the streets are guarded
By United States Marines.*