

The Military Life

ROTC program is for 'a special kind of person'

By KIMBERLY KLEMAN

We have heard the ads countless times: "The few, the proud, the Marines," "The Navy. It's not just a job, it's an adventure," and "The Air Force. Gateway to a great way of life."

Accompanying these slogans is our conception of the military type: A tall, trim, muscular guy with a crew cut.

Perhaps we should think again. As the increasing enrollment of women in the University's Reserve Officer Training Corps indicates, this "muscular guy" is often a woman.

"Everything is opening up now for women in the service," said Elizabeth Dunne, a senior in the Air Force ROTC program. "We're not just limited to the public affairs department any more."

Colonel Paul Grimmig, professor of aerospace studies in the AFROTC program, agreed. "One reason the

service is so desirable is that it provides equal opportunities. If you can do the job, you get the job. Ability is the key."

Out of 125 enrolled in the AFROTC, 50 cadets, or 40 percent, are women. In the Navy ROTC program, 16 of a total of 156 midshipmen are enrolled. This figure represents a significant increase; in 1978, for instance, two women were in the NROTC program.

The combination of receiving an education while pursuing a career has attracted many women into the ROTC program, sophomore AFROTC cadet Dawn Prichett said. "The program offers a lot more than I'd be able to do on my own," she said. "My education is paid for, I'm training for a job, and I have the feeling that I'm doing something for my country."

Both the Navy and Air Force programs at UNC-CH offer full, four-year scholarships to select students. Tuition and fees are paid for, and a \$100 monthly stipend is provided. In addition, these scholarship stu-

dents participate in a month-long summer program for four summers.

In the college program, a non-scholarship plan, books and uniforms are supplied during the first two years, while the \$100 stipend and summer programs are offered during the junior and senior years. Completion of both program or of the general ROTC program leads to a commission in the Corps Reserve of the Navy, Air Force or Marines, provided the student completes the core courses required.

Under the NROTC scholarship plan, this includes four navy courses, two math courses, two physics courses, and two other science or math courses, and four courses in the Peace, War and Defense curriculum. For non-scholarship students only the courses in naval studies and Peace, War and Defense are required.

The Air Force requirement includes an hour course each semester for the first two years, a three-hour course and an hour-long course junior year and two three-hour courses senior year.

"Since the required courses are so few, the ROTC program enables students to major in just about any area," said Capt. Al Koster, professor of Naval Science.

Women in the ROTC said their friends and families are supportive of their decision to participate in the ROTC program.

"At first, before they fully understood about the program, my friends were very curious as to why I am going into the Marine Corp," said senior Suzanne Wolf, operations officer in the NROTC. "But once they saw all the program was offering me, they were very supportive."

Among Air Force cadets, there is a camaraderie too, Dunne said. "The men are very supportive of us, and the attitude is friendly. We are a close unit."

To gain this acceptance, Wolf said women in the program have to prove themselves.

"You have twice as much to do for half the credit," she said. "You have to be really good at what you do. It's naturally expected that some guy would get the position. For a woman to receive it, she has to be especially good."

Koster said this sense of competition and the responsibility the service entails has possibly kept more women from enlisting.

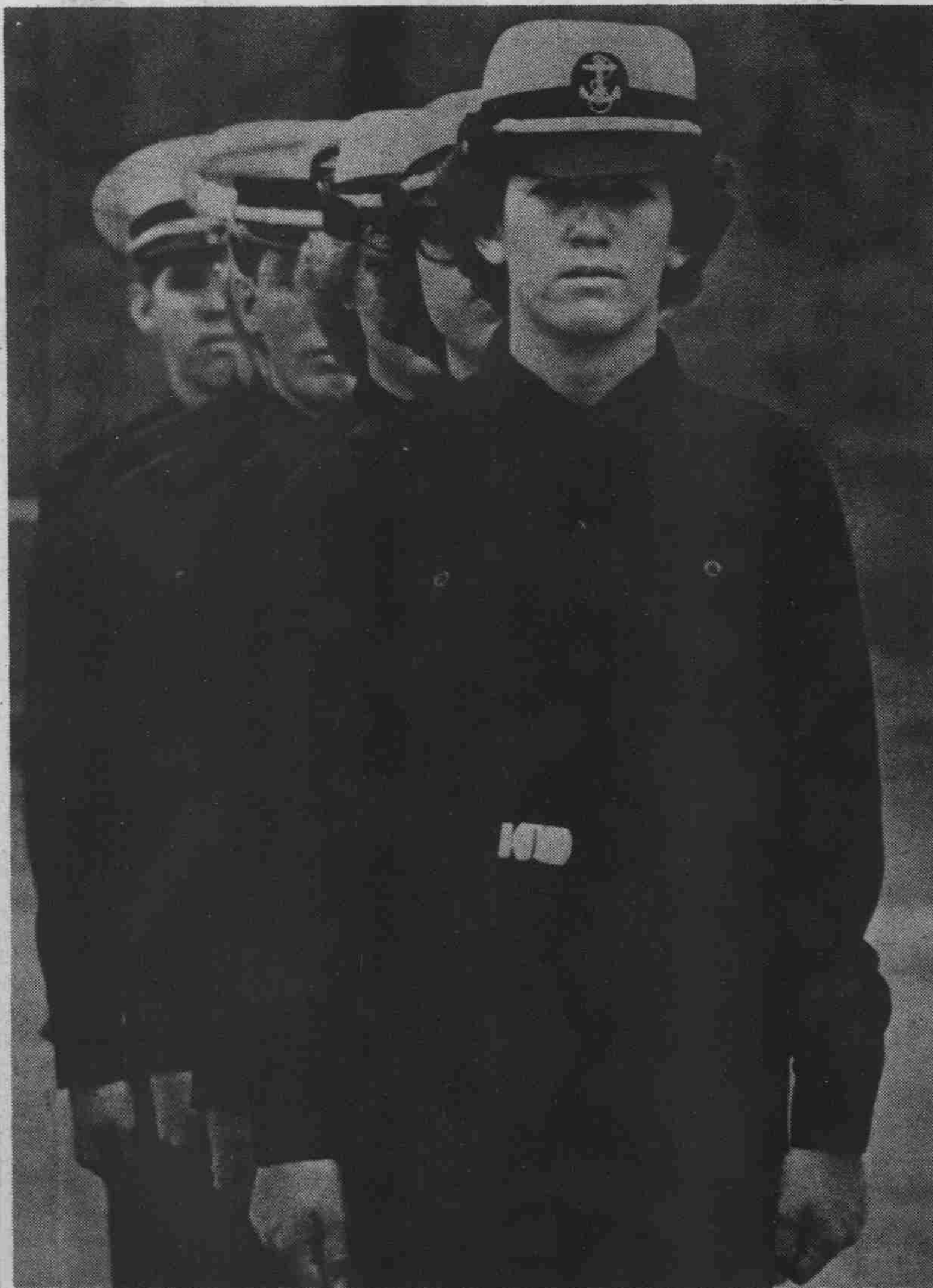
"It takes a special kind of woman — a special kind of person — to select the military," he said. "It requires responsibility and accountability of everything you do. It takes a person who doesn't mind traveling and who is enthused about leadership. People start out in leadership positions when they are commissioned from this program. Most people who graduate from college would much rather ease into a leadership position after a few years."

The limitations established by Congress concerning women in the military also have dissuaded some women from joining the service. The law states women cannot fight in combat situations. As interpreted by the military, this means they may not ride on certain combat ships, or fly in fighter or bomber planes.

"The law by Congress definitely poses limitations to military women," Dunne said. "If war were declared, I don't see any difference between my brother being in the front line and me being out there."

Prichett also said women are just as capable as men to engage in combat. "Women have just as much responsibility as men in the Air Force. If they are capable to fly planes like the F-16, I don't see why they shouldn't be allowed to."

Koster agreed. "There is a natural frustration among women that they are excluded from combat. Our philosophy is that we need capable people in all positions, whether this is a man or a woman. In combat



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DTW/Jay Hyman