

A Brief History of ROTC
At the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
(November 1998)

A formal contract between the Department of the Army and the University established "the Indian Battalion" in January 1971. The fall semester, school year 1971-72 was the first time Military Science courses were offered. Seventy-one Cadets made up the battalion. The first two officers to graduate from the program were 2LT Thomas Bond and 2LT Ronald Arnold. Both were commissioned in December 1972.

Over time the ROTC program at La Crosse has changed and expanded. During school year 1989-90, the unit was redesignated "the Eagle Battalion." Partnership school agreements currently exist with Viterbo College, also in La Crosse (1991), Winona State University, Winona, MN (1991) and Saint Mary's University, also in Winona (1996). Student numbers vary from year to year, with an average enrollment of about one hundred fifty cadets.

Officer production at UW-L has remained consistent throughout the program's history. The nine Cadets commissioned in school year '97-'98 brought our program total to four hundred sixteen Lieutenants, fifty of which are Army Nurses. That represents an average of sixteen Second Lieutenants commissioned every year.

Army Nursing is an integral part of the Eagle Battalion. In March of 1996, Viterbo College was selected by the U.S. Army Cadet Command as one of only forty-one schools nationwide to participate in the Partnership in Nursing Education Program. Under provisions of this program four-year Army Nurse Scholarship winners must attend one of the designated schools. Schools were selected based on the quality of their education and historical Army Nurse production. For school year 1998-99, six nurse scholarship cadets are involved in the program.

The Eagle Battalion continues to generate high quality officers for our Army, while providing cadets with leadership skills, adventure training opportunities (such as Airborne and Air Assault School), and scholarship benefits. This year alone, twenty-eight of our Cadets are receiving combined scholarship dollars in excess of \$311,000.

"EAGLES FLY HIGH"

