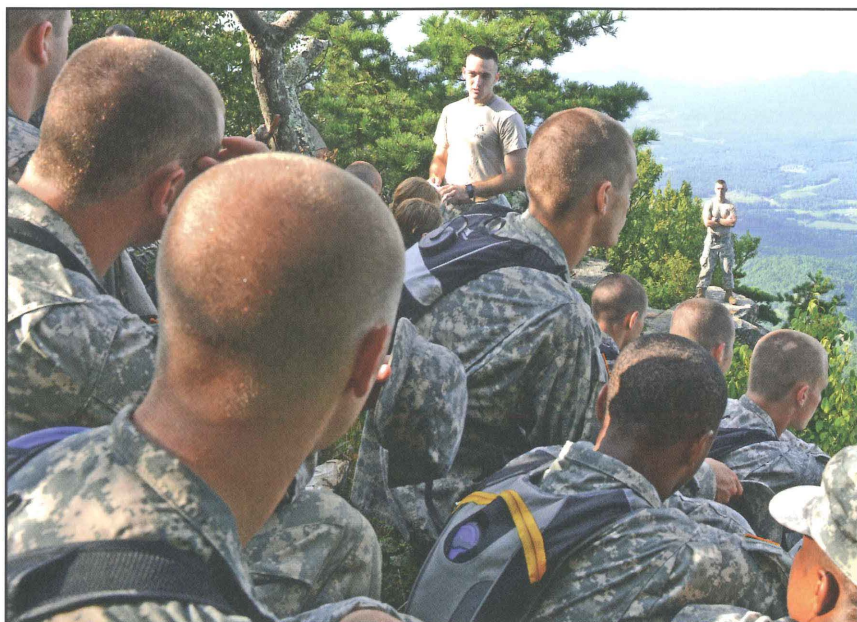




# INSTITUTE REPORT

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## House Mountain Assault

New cadets enjoy the view after the House Mountain Assault activity during Matriculation Week. Among the 502 new cadets who matriculated Aug. 17 as the Class of 2017 were a record 61 women, or 12.2 percent. Also a record was the number of cadets in barracks – more than 1,700 – as the Old Corps returned the following week. For more photos of Matriculation Week, see page 7. – VMI Photo by John Robertson IV.

## SURI and Other Projects Span the Disciplines

BY MARY PRICE

The new head of the VMI Center for Undergraduate Research – VCUR – says that this summer was definitely a season of success for the Summer Undergraduate Research Institute and related programs. This is approximately the 13th year for SURI, which allows cadets to do independent research over the summer months under the guidance of a faculty mentor.

Maj. Megan Newman, who is continuing in her duties as sponsored programs administrator, became director of VCUR in May. She’s been working at VMI since 2004, when she arrived as interlibrary loan manager.

Next year, said Newman, she’d like to build on the strong reputation of the SURI program by making faculty and cadets more aware of other, non-SURI opportunities that fall under VCUR’s umbrella.

Those include Applied and Industrial Mathematics (AIM), Mathematics Education and Resource Center programs, and a cooperative agreement in engineering between VMI and Virginia Commonwealth University, as well as the Dr. Fred C. Swope Summer Scholars Program in biology and the Summer Undergraduate Research Program in chemistry.

Newman added that she would be open to adding new summer opportunities for cadets through VCUR, and also expanding the Wednesday afternoon forum series.

The forum series, a longtime feature of the SURI program, brings all SURI cadets on post together for one hour each week. Some weeks, cadets



Maj. Megan Newman

use that hour to learn about each other’s research; other weeks, they’ll hear from an alumnus who talks about how he or she uses skills learned in the SURI program in the real world.

The entire SURI program, including the forum series, is sponsored by the Jackson-Hope Fund. Newman explained that the forum series, which lets cadets from disparate disciplines learn from one another, is a vital part of the cadets’ summer learning experience.

“The objective of the Jackson-Hope Fund program is to contribute to the development of the whole student,” said Newman. “[The cadets] really like hearing about each other’s research.”

This year’s summer programs – SURI and others related to it – included 61 cadets and 31 faculty members. The 42 projects conducted this summer came from 11 academic departments, ranging from the sciences to history to engineering.

VMI’s summer programs offer a mix of disciplines and backgrounds that Newman would very much like to see continued and expanded in the summer of 2014.

“The great attitudes, positive energy, and creative spirit among this year’s participants really served to engage students in their work, make them excited about sharing it with each other and look forward to doing it again,” said Newman.