

## **1LT Wright**

### **2008 NGAUS Conference AAR**

BLUF: Company-Grade officers who do not apply to go to the NGAUS conference in and OPD status are throwing away a valuable opportunity. In fact, any officer who does not attend this conference is missing out on a great experience.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at the 2008 NGAUS Convention in Baltimore, Maryland. Between the multitude of professional development sessions and the activities hosted by the Maryland National Guard, I consider myself fortunate to have been able to attend the conference.

The first of the conference was a company-grade/warrant officer mixer on the *Spirit of Baltimore* which went through Baltimore's Inner Harbor. While the mixer was fun, what was really exciting were the two Military Legislative Assistants that 2LT Kathy Amos invited. An assistant from Congressman Bruce Braley's office and an assistant from Congressman Tom Latham's office spent the evening socializing with us. I really enjoyed hearing about what they do and what it is like working for a member of congress.

The days were filled with really interesting Officer Professional Development sessions. Company Grade officers had question-and-answer sessions with General George Casey, Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum, and Lieutenant General Clyde Vaughn. The fact that these three generals took the time out of their busy schedules to listen to and answer the questions and concerns of company-grade officers was nothing short of awesome. LTG Vaughn shared his experiences as a company commander and explained how that affects the choices and decisions he makes regarding strength maintenance. Since I work in strength maintenance, it was good for me to hear his intent for the field.

The other truly fascinating Professional Development Session was the visit to Gettysburg. Unfortunately, we were only able to spend a few hours there and see only a few stops. Though we were unable to see much of the battlefield, I enjoyed what I did see and cannot wait to return.

I cannot wait for the next NGAUS Conference next year in Nashville, Tennessee. Between all of the speakers I heard and the people that I met, I cannot imagine missing out on this opportunity again. NGAUS does so much good for the Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard. It was fantastic to see the officers from all across the country converge upon Baltimore to keep working for the good of the Guard. This is an event that every National Guard officer should try to attend at least once in their career.