

27 September, 2013. Under stormy skies, dozens gathered outside to witness the ribbon cutting ceremony at the new home for the University of Utah ROTC's (Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps) battalion headquarters located on historical Fort Douglas. The University of Utah serves as the host for Army cadets from the University as well as Westminster College and Salt Lake Community College that are, in addition to being students, training to become future Army officers.

The program was moved into a building that once served as the Army Post Exchange (PX) as well as a gymnasium and relocating to this part of campus was a homecoming of sorts for the Ute Warriors who called Fort Douglas home in the 1940s. Before the move could take place, there was a lot of work to be done in order to transform a building with only its exterior walls, floors and roof remaining, into a state-of-the-art facility. The University, their planning experts and construction team partnered with the Battalion leaders to design a facility that would meet the training and instructional needs of the Army ROTC Program. This included classrooms, offices for Department leadership and instructors, a cadet library, a secure supply room for equipment and uniforms, a kitchen as well as male and female locker rooms which help cadets transition from their military training to academic classrooms. Planning and reconstruction took place from April 2012 until completion in the summer of 2013.

Guests attending the event included key leaders from the Army and the University; The U.S. Army Cadet Command's 5th Brigade Commander, Colonel James Dodson from Fort Sam Houston, TX along with the State of Utah's Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, Mr. John Edwards represented the Army in the ribbon-cutting, while the University was represented by its Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Mr. Fred Esplin, and Interim Associate Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Science, Dean Richard Forster. In addition to University and military leaders, the grand opening was attended by cadets and their families, friends of the ROTC program, and those involved with the planning, design, and construction of the building. The Ute Warriors welcomed everyone to tour the facility, join them in a barbeque lunch and in true Army fashion, the inclement weather did not keep this historic, long awaited event from taking place.

To learn more about the Ute Warrior Battalion, check them out at <http://milsci.utah.edu> and to follow them, check Facebook at the "University of Utah Army ROTC"