

## **Staying Warm (Continued)**

For dinner, I met up with Amira S., who also graduated from my high school (when I was a freshman); she is the older sister of one of my closest friends from high school (in my class). She lives near Davis Square, so I went out there for dinner. We had great Tibetan food and then walked around the Square for a bit before I had to catch the T to catch the train back to New London. Amira showed me some of her favorite restaurants and shops. I can't wait to go back and try them! (Most likely this summer!)

The Sunday of MLK weekend, I went to Harvest Christian Fellowship, a church that a few of my friends attend. It was the first time I attended, and I really enjoyed the service. I'm actually going around to the various churches in and around the New London area so that I know what is out there and can be a better resource for other cadets who are searching for a church home. Later that day, I made a short video with a friend of mine, Ryan O., who is a co-president of the Sustainability Club with me. We were raising awareness about the recycling competition, RecycleMania, in which the Academy will be participating for the next few months. We based our "trailer" on the popular horror films *Paranormal Activity*. The end product turned out really well, although, I'm not sure we got the whole "YOU NEED TO RECYCLE *FOR THIS COMPETITION*" point across as much as "Hey, look at this fun, goofy way to get you to recycle!" But it was fun none the less!

Monday was the least fun of all. Ryan and I stayed up until 2 a.m. editing the video, and then I slept until 11 the next morning. After lunch, it was time to get to work and do the homework I had put off all weekend! I got it done, but it was hard to stay focused after such a ramped-up weekend.

## **Special Speakers**

The Corps of Cadets heard from two special speakers this month. The first was ADM Robert Papp, Commandant of the Coast Guard! I enjoy his "all-hands" meetings—they are informative, especially if cadets ask good questions. It's never dull when the Admiral is onboard the Academy. Besides, getting the whole Corps of Cadets in Leamy Auditorium is fun...for me at least! It's awesome that our entire school is in one room (albeit a big one). Seeing everyone in uniform is inspiring; I'm proud to be serving with these individuals!

The other special speaker we had was the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dempsey. Gen. Dempsey is the highest ranking military official in the country, and he came and gave a lecture to us. His lecture, too, was enlightening; he impressed upon us the importance of looking not only at the Coast Guard's role (which is one of continually rising to the call of service) within the context of the United States military as a whole, but to think about the future of the military. *We* cadets *are* the future of the Coast Guard and the United States military. That's a pretty powerful thought! Yes, sir, this month was a great one for Corps-wide lectures.

## **Sustainability Club Workday**

The last Saturday of the month, the Sustainability Club, in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), hosted a workday down in the power lab of our engineering building. We had approximately 40 cadets (of all classes!) come down to help build chick shelters and boardwalks for the FWS to use at their nature refuges. For a project that was supposed to take six hours, it took us only three, so we were really moving! It was an awesome project, and we've already picked a date for the next one in February. Let's keep this planet green!

### **Another New Church**

In my church travels, I also visited First Baptist Church of Waterford with a few cadets from OCF. Another great church; maybe a little different in style from the OCF worship we have here at the Academy or at Groton Bible Chapel or at Harvest Christian Fellowship, but I really enjoyed the service. There are some awesome churches around here, so I'm glad to be able to experience them all!