

To the Marines of 4th Recruit Training Battalion-

I wanted to tell you it has been the greatest honor and privilege of my life to stand shoulder to shoulder with you over the past 12 months. I have always said that I am responsible for everything we do or fail to do, and my accountability begins and ends with my obligation to lead, mentor, and guide you. It is my responsibility, therefore, to inform you that I was relieved by BGen Williams as your commander due to his loss of trust and confidence in my ability to lead you effectively. While this decision greatly saddens me, my sole concern at this point is for your health and welfare and that of the battalion. I have one final request for you, and that is that you pull together as a cohesive team and move forward as a battalion, for that is the true sign of resilience.

Despite considerable active and passive resistance throughout all echelons of the Recruit Depot and the Marine Corps, we each worked incredibly hard to improve the performance of our recruits to make them stronger, faster, smarter, and better shots- all to better the Institution. We achieved unprecedented and historic results in just a short period of time, and regardless of the controversy caused by our goal to improve the caliber of our graduates, I ask that you remain steadfast and committed to this objective. Together, we redefined the perceived physical and mental limits of female recruits and Marines, which will have a lasting and positive impact on the Institution. Regardless of my departure, you must never, ever give up trying to change the status quo. You are so much better than the Marine Corps knows and it is the right thing to do for not only the Institution, but also our nation. You deserve a seat at the table with your counterparts, but you must continue to earn it every day and never take it for granted.

Know that my year with you was precious to me, in spite of the personal and professional difficulties I encountered as your commander. I will forever value the funny and interesting conversations and laughs we shared, and I am immensely proud of each of you. I have full confidence that you and the recruits will continue to make history by improving the caliber of Marine we send to the operating forces, and I am extremely proud of all that we achieved. You and the battalion will remain in my heart and thoughts.

Thank you for giving me the best year any commander could ever have.

Sincerely,

LtCol Germano