



PRE-DRILL CAMP 2026 · LEADERSHIP SEMINARS · DAY 2

Day 2 Close

"Last Out."

Dr. Thomas L. Jones, Jr. and the Captains

All Leaders · Sunday, August 2, 2026

The Hampton University Marching Force

HAMPTON'S HEARTBEAT

Icebreaker

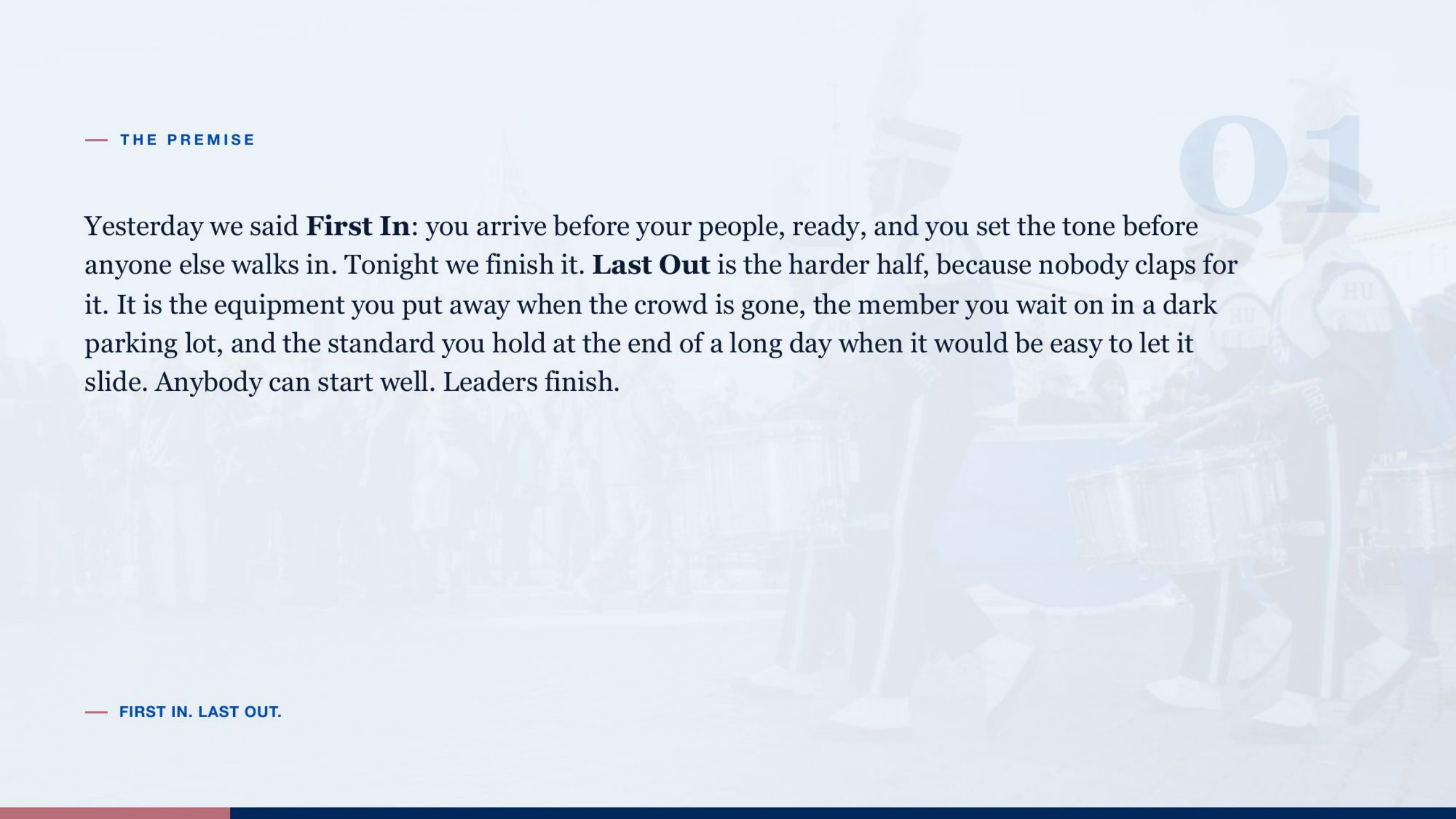
Carl Brashear lost a leg, and the Navy moved to retire him. To stay a diver he had to walk twelve steps in a 290-pound rig, in front of a room that expected him to fall. Watch a man finish something after he has been handed every reason to quit. That is what *Last Out* looks like.



Men of Honor — “12 Steps”

youtu.be/QhCISxbO7rg

WATCH · 2:42



— THE PREMISE

Yesterday we said **First In:** you arrive before your people, ready, and you set the tone before anyone else walks in. Tonight we finish it. **Last Out** is the harder half, because nobody claps for it. It is the equipment you put away when the crowd is gone, the member you wait on in a dark parking lot, and the standard you hold at the end of a long day when it would be easy to let it slide. Anybody can start well. Leaders finish.

— FIRST IN. LAST OUT.

The Creed, Complete

Two halves of one standard—and you do not get to pick just one.

DAY 1

First In

You are the **first to arrive and the first prepared**. Leaders are on the field thirty minutes early; your section is there fifteen. By the downbeat, everyone is ready.

If you stay ready, you don't have to get ready.

Being first in is about **readiness**. Being last out is about **responsibility**. Together they are the whole job.

DAY 2

Last Out

You are the **last to leave**—accountable for the space, the people, and the standard long after the whistle. What happens when the crowd is gone is the truest measure of who leads here.

Last Out: The Space

Leave every place better than the Force found it.

- ◆ Instruments secured, equipment accounted for, uniforms handled, trash picked up—**before** you think about leaving.
- ◆ The band room, the practice field, the bus, the hotel, and the stadium all carry our name after we walk away.
- ◆ Do the sweep yourself. A leader who supervises the cleanup from the doorway is not last out; he is just last to leave.
- ◆ When people who were not there can tell we were, that is either a compliment or an indictment. **You decide which.**

Last Out: The People

Nobody in your line walks out alone.

- ◆ **Account for every member** before you go. Know who is still on the field, who is waiting on a ride, and who left upset.
- ◆ The freshman struggling with a rep, the member who got corrected hard, the one who went quiet—**those are the ones you stay for.**
- ◆ Walk out together. Nobody crosses a dark campus by themselves, and nobody sits alone in a parking lot waiting.
- ◆ Being last out means the last thing your people feel from you is that **somebody was looking out for them.**

Last Out: The Standard

It holds when nobody is watching, or it never held at all.

- ◆ The standard is not what you announce at the start of rehearsal. It is **what you allow at the end of it**, when everyone is tired.
- ◆ The last rep of a long day is where programs are actually built or quietly lost. **Finish clean.**
- ◆ Hold the line on the small things late: the uniform detail, the phone in the rehearsal, the corner nobody would notice.
- ◆ The director cannot be everywhere. That is exactly why you exist. **You are the standard when he is not in the room.**

The Whole Weekend, Session by Session

Twenty-two sessions. Here is every one of them, and the line to carry out of it.

Two days do not make you a leader. They give you the vocabulary. What follows is the short version—one page per session, one line worth remembering. **Take the ones that convict you.**

DAY 1 • SESSION 1

Welcome and Vision

Who we are, our purpose and mission, the 2026 schedule, and this year's watchword: **OPTIMIZE.**

“We’ve spent so much time learning how to do more with so little that we can do a lot with just a little more.”

DAY 1 • SESSION 2

Know Yourself First

Your personality type, your strengths, and the blind spots you lead people through.

“Learn your way out of your problems.”

DAY 1 • SESSION 3

Emotional Intelligence

Managing your own emotions and reading the room—responding instead of reacting.

“Kindness is paying attention out loud.”

DAY 1 · SESSION 4

Servant-Leadership

Serve first. Meet your people's needs, and understand why it is the documented antidote to hazing.

“Power can either be wielded, or it can be shared.”

DAY 1 · SESSION 5

Command Respect

Respect is earned through competence, character, and consistency—never demanded by rank.

“*You have the most to lose and the most to prove.*”

DAY 1 · SESSION 6

Bonds, Not Fear

Fear buys compliance; bonds build loyalty. Where healthy bonding ends and hazing begins.

“You can go fast alone, but you can go further together.”

DAY 1 • SESSION 7

Why Hazing Happens

The need to belong turned cruel, the mind's traps, and the power of the group—and our non-negotiables.

“People raised on love will do anything for you; people raised on survival will do anything to you.”

— Najee Rayne, quoted in Jones, *Beyond the Bruises*

DAY 1 · SESSION 8

Line Leader Tier

Where the Line Leader fits, and how carrying the basic tasks makes the whole section work.

“*A million dollars is made of a million single dollar bills.*”

DAY 1 · SESSION 9

SOP and MSA Standard

The Minimum Skills Audition and how to run a sectional—attack the tough spots, repeat for proficiency.

“If you don’t have the time to do it right, what makes you think you have the time to do it twice?”

DAY 1 · SESSION 10

The Hampton Sound

Power and precision. Dark, resonant, and balanced—colors that complement instead of compete.

“*Music is my first language.*”

DAY 1 • SESSION 11

Day 1 Close • First In

Readiness is the standard. Leaders thirty minutes early, sections fifteen, ready by the downbeat.

“*The most exciting lives are supported by extremely boring things.*”

DAY 2 · SESSION 12

Teach How to Teach

Break it down, model it, check for understanding, and drill it to mastery.

“The acquisition of knowledge is expensive; the application of knowledge is lucrative.”

DAY 2 • SESSION 13

Drum Majors

Two sides of one job: the craft of conducting, and the showmanship that is HBCU DNA.

“Discipline looks like obsession to someone who doesn’t have any.”

DAY 2 · SESSION 14

Interpreting the Music

Choreograph to the feel and the lyrics—and play music worth interpreting.

“Art should comfort the uncomfortable, and make the comfortable uncomfortable.”

DAY 2 · SESSION 15

Leading Under Pressure

Breathe, read pressure as a challenge, decide, and slow down to move faster.

“In a stressful situation, you will fall to the level of your training.”

DAY 2 · SESSION 16

Know Your People

Read the headspace of those you lead and your own. Meet people where they are.

“Consideration is the highest form of love, because consideration is what someone does when they are thinking of you in your absence.”

DAY 2 • SESSION 17

Conflict Resolution

Handle it early, fairly, and directly. Find the interest under the position.

“Never attribute to malice that which is adequately explained by stupidity.”

DAY 2 • SESSION 18

Difficult Conversations

Care personally and challenge directly. On hazing, silence is complicity.

“If you ever think about doing something you feel might be stupid, remind yourself that you are an adult and will be charged as one.”

DAY 2 · SESSION 19

Supporting the Auxiliary

You are their floor. Hold the tempo, give them room, and hype their moment.

“When you help someone, you help everyone.”

DAY 2 · SESSION 20

Twirler Recruitment

Scout where twirlers actually are, travel to them, and make the pitch in person.

“*A half-assed plan executed well is better than a perfect plan executed poorly.*”

DAY 2 · SESSION 21

Communication and Ambassadors

Move it up the chain, move it down to your line, and represent us out in the world.

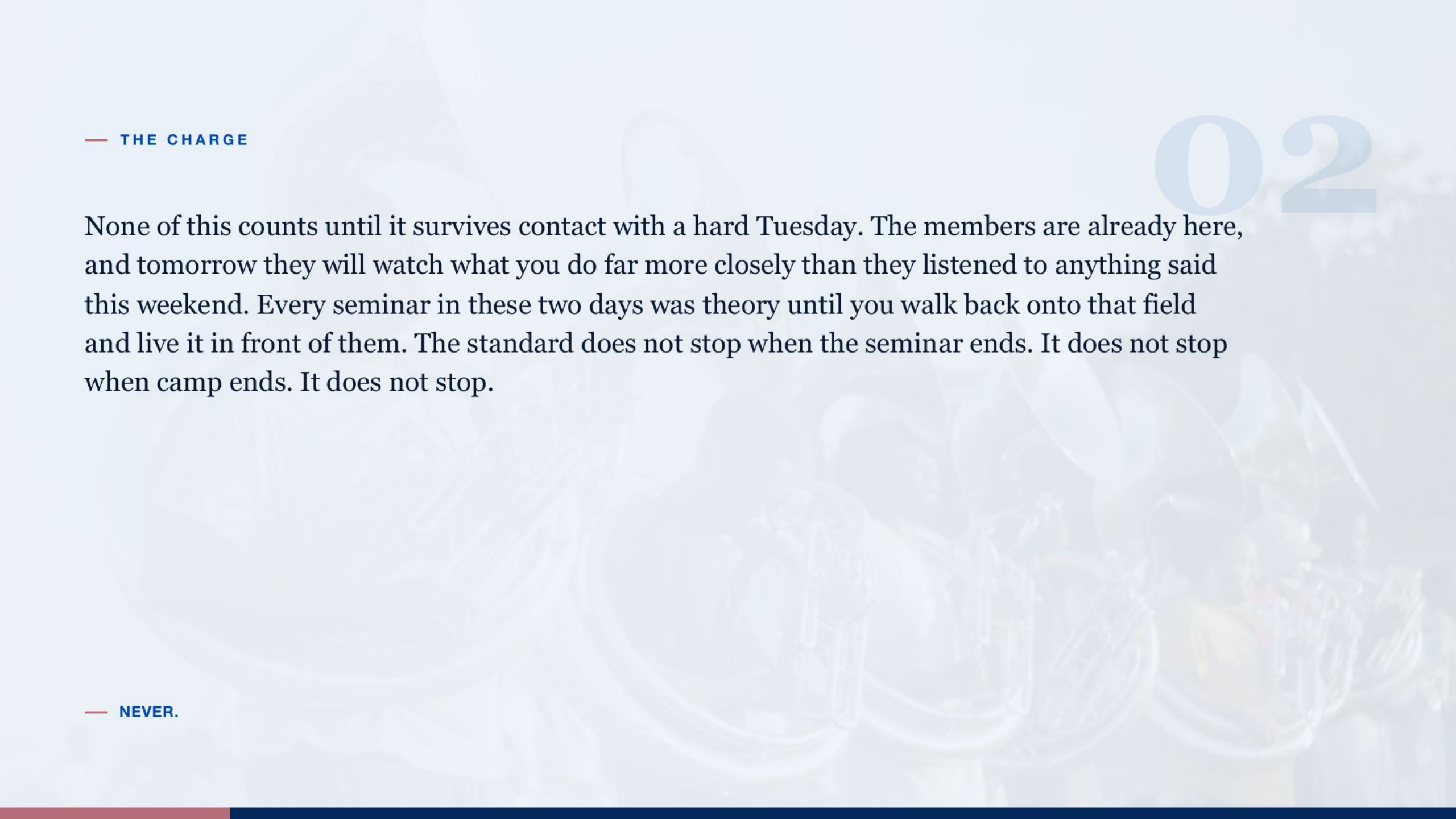
“*Good habits come with a price. Bad habits come with a cost.*”

DAY 2 • SESSION 22

Day 2 Close • Last Out

Accountable for the space, the people, and the standard long after the whistle.

“*I will die FOR you. Not BECAUSE of you.*”



— THE CHARGE

None of this counts until it survives contact with a hard Tuesday. The members are already here, and tomorrow they will watch what you do far more closely than they listened to anything said this weekend. Every seminar in these two days was theory until you walk back onto that field and live it in front of them. The standard does not stop when the seminar ends. It does not stop when camp ends. It does not stop.

— NEVER.

Your Commitments

Before you leave this room tonight, name them out loud.

- ◆ **One thing you will start.** A habit, a check-in, a rep you will run with your line beginning tomorrow.
- ◆ **One thing you will stop.** Be honest about the behavior that does not belong in a leader on this staff.
- ◆ **One person you will pour into.** Pick the member who needs you most and decide to be their reason for staying.
- ◆ **One standard you will not let slip**—especially at the end of a long day, when it costs you something to hold it.

Say it to the leader next to you. A commitment spoken out loud to a peer is the one that survives the week.

The Creed in Practice

What First In, Last Out looks like every single day.

1 Arrive Ready

Thirty minutes for leaders, fifteen for your section. Warm, prepared, and set before the downbeat.

3 Account for Everyone

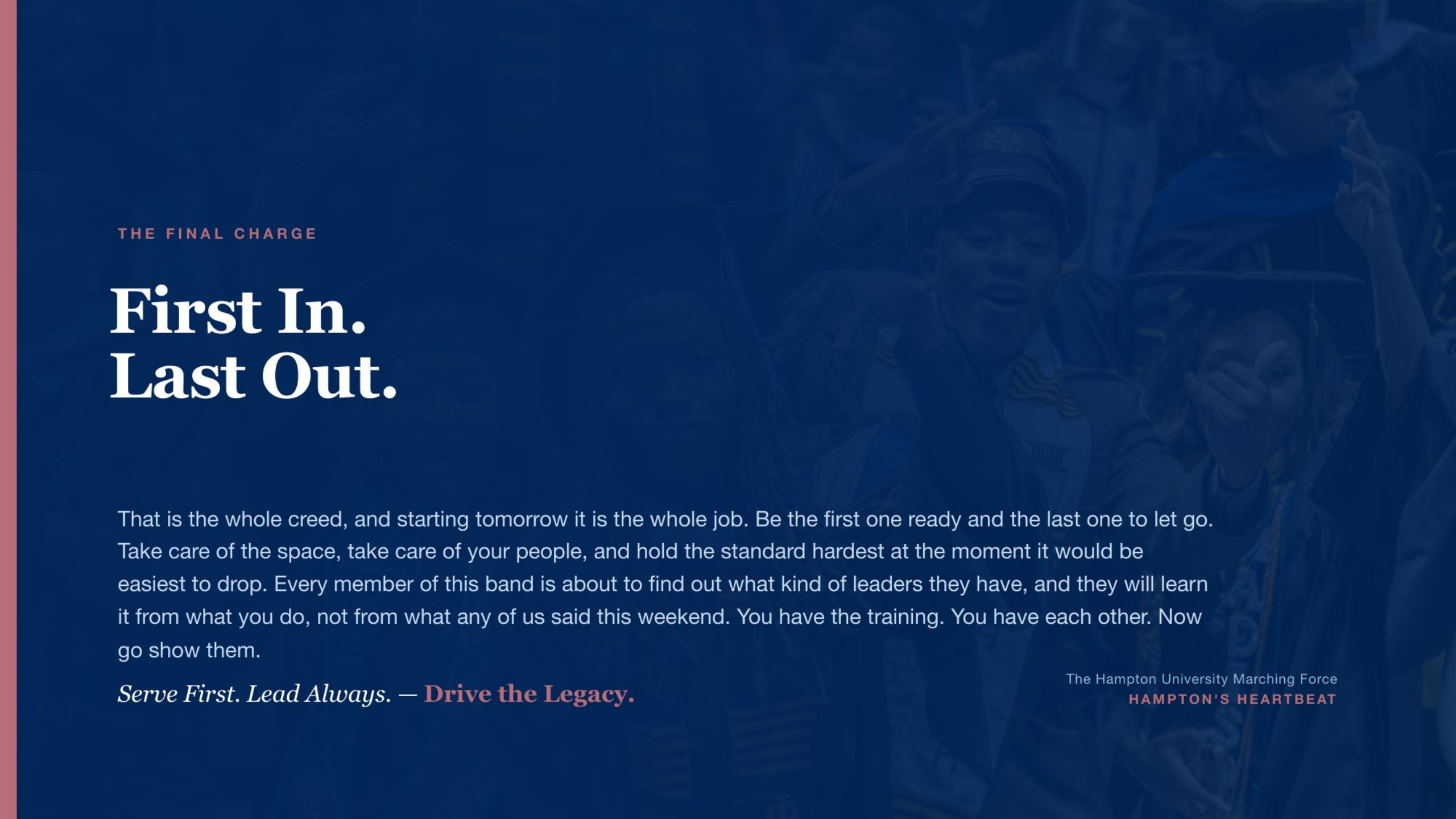
Know where your people are, and walk out together. Nobody is left behind or left alone.

2 Hold the Room

Set the tone early and keep it late. The standard is what you allow when everyone is tired.

4 Close It Out

Space clean, gear secured, loop closed with the rung above you. Then you leave.



THE FINAL CHARGE

First In. Last Out.

That is the whole creed, and starting tomorrow it is the whole job. Be the first one ready and the last one to let go. Take care of the space, take care of your people, and hold the standard hardest at the moment it would be easiest to drop. Every member of this band is about to find out what kind of leaders they have, and they will learn it from what you do, not from what any of us said this weekend. You have the training. You have each other. Now go show them.

Serve First. Lead Always. — **Drive the Legacy.**

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