**Kellogg's purpose is to educate, equip and inspire brave leaders who create lasting value. Provide a recent example where you have demonstrated leadership and created value. What challenges did you face and what did you learn? (450 words)**

In January 2019, I was assigned as a unit executive officer at a brand new, 450-person short-range air defense battalion in Germany, my second duty station in the US Army. I didn’t receive a handoff from my predecessor, because there was no predecessor. I was solely responsible for our growing team of green, 18-year-old Soldiers. Weeks later, my unit received a mission: in May, drive across Germany, certify 12 crews, then participate in a large NATO exercise. My team received little guidance from our superiors and lacked equipment with which to train–we didn’t even have computers. Typical preparation for these exercises follows a year-long, crawl-walk-run approach. This was an aggressive 4-month crawl-sprint. The entire operation intimidated me, but it was the initial drive, not the NATO exercise, that kept me up at night.

My first priority was maintenance and safety. We would be convoying 26 vehicles single-file on the highway–already an inherently risky undertaking. Mechanically constrained to low speeds and prone to malfunctions, military trucks break down often. Our vehicles arrived in March, degraded by decades of disuse. In 2017 in Korea, a Soldier was fatally struck by highway traffic after his Humvee broke down. I could not let that happen to my team. After consulting our on-site maintenance expert and enrolling in a bootcamp to master maintenance software, I established our unit’s maintenance program. By May, we had fully restored all our vehicles.

The second priority was training. Our three-day trip would span 460 miles on the autobahn’s long stretches of high-speed traffic and narrow construction zones. None of my Soldiers had driven slow, oversized military vehicles before. I screened every Soldier to find the most responsible individuals and put them through extensive driving training. In addition to our other preparations, I ensured all Soldiers rehearsed breakdown and recovery drills until they became second nature.

As a result of my emphasis on preparation, we successfully completed the convoy and flawlessly recovered our single broken-down truck with no other accidents. We began with nothing but became the first certified short-range air defense unit in Europe since the Cold War. Following my promotion to a new role, I proudly conducted the handoff I never had: I passed to my successor a certified unit with multinational experience from several exercises, 65 seasoned military drivers, and the best maintenance program in the battalion.

Kellogg instills an entrepreneurial spirit in its students and encourages them to lead bravely. Brave leaders embrace the challenges before them and care for their teams. This job challenged me, but I learned that “where there’s a will, there’s a way.” While at Kellogg, I look forward to developing my leadership skills and learning from other future leaders.