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The U.S. Department of Transportation Broadcast News Service for Friday, June 8 has a story on new women Coast Guard Officers.

The first five women since World War II to go through the Reserve Officer Candidate Program of the U.S. Coast Guard were commissioned Ensigns Friday in Yorktown, Virginia. The women, the first to go through the program with male candidates were required to have college degrees and pass the same entrance qualifications as the men. Ensign Lynn Smith from California told us about the things they learned as officer candidates.

"We took the same classes that the male officer candidates took. These included courses of instruction about navigation -- both piloting and celestial navigation; seamanship-readiness, which included besides seamanship, gunnery and damage control; Coast Guard orientation, to understand the roles and missions, and now also the Military Code of Justice and some of the collateral duties that we have to assume; a course in operations which entails learning about search and rescue, maneuvering board and communications in the Coast Guard. We had classes in leadership and PE."

Training also included a two week cruise aboard the CG Cutter Unimak, where Ensign Sue Jennings from Texas reported that women officer candidates were certainly a new experience.

"The officers really didn't know what to expect from us, and I feel like we impressed them. We did our job at our best ability and I think it was comparable to the men."

Ensign Smith, who is married to a Coast Guard officer will be assigned to the San Francisco District in the Office of Auxiliary, and Ensign Jennings will take on Environmental Protection duty in Juneau, Alaska.

This has been the Transportation News Report.

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