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MC2 Stacy M. Atkins Ricks

Adm. Christopher W. Grady, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, presents Information Systems Technician 1st Class Megan Gurtner and her family with a certificate celebrating their selection as the Armed Services YMCA of Hampton Roads 2019 Five Star Military Family during the 25th Anniversary Recognition Luncheon at the Westin Towne Center Hotel in Virginia Beach, Va. The family was selected as the Navy family to receive special honors and recognition due to their exemplary service to the community.

ASYMCA, EAST COAST'S TOP ADMIRAL HONOR LOCAL SERVICE MEMBERS

By MC2 Stacy M. Atkins Ricks
U.S. Fleet Forces Public Affairs

VIRGINIA BEACH

If you live, work or play in Hampton Roads it is likely you know a few service members. As the largest fleet concentration area for the U.S. Navy, Sailors, Marines,

Airman, Soldiers and Coastguardsmen are floating about the "seven cities" in abundance.

On any given day, look left or right, and you will see a few sharp camouflage, blue, tan or green uniforms in traffic on the freeways, roaming the grocery store for a quick

pit stop, or walking through the halls of local schools.

Although maybe less visible, service members are woven into the community fabric: at your kid's soccer game, the local soup kitchen, or cleaning the pews of local churches.

Adm. Christopher W. Grady, the U.S. Fleet Forces commander, partnered with the Hampton Roads Armed Service YMCA (ASYMCA) to recognize the effort local armed service men and women have been putting into making their communities a better place to work, live and play.

ASYMCA hosted the Five Star Military Family Recognition Luncheon Nov. 1 at the Westin Towne Center Hotel in Virginia Beach, Virginia, to express gratitude for service members and their families' com-

» See **ASYMCA** | A9

Navy Service Support Advanced Training Command marks milestone with ribbon cutting

By Vicki Sonnenberg

Navy Service Support Advanced Training Command Public Affairs

VIRGINIA BEACH

Navy Service Support Advanced Training Command (NSSATC) marked a major renovation milestone with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Walker Hall Building, Dam Neck Annex, Oct. 21.

Highlights of the \$570,000 project,

which began in May 2019 and completed last month, included classroom and office modifications to support the command, staff and students.

NSSATC was established earlier this year, along with 14 advanced administration, supply, and logistics courses relocated from Norfolk Naval Base to Dam Neck Annex falling under their supervision. To

support the transition, the building upgrade included standing up and completely outfitting personnel, furniture, IT equipment and support, and facilities requirements for eight electronic classrooms and five office spaces for staff.

The event's speaker, Capt. Milton Troy, III, commanding officer of Center for Service Support (CSS) and NSSATC, highlighted the efforts of those involved in the major move.

"An enormous effort was successfully undertaken to manage all courses from both Norfolk and Dam Neck during the disruptive transition period," said Troy. "Significant coordination was required to locate temporary training locations, notify stu-

dents and ensure minimal disruption in scheduled convenes. From start to finish, the entire project was successfully managed by a high functioning team, which included personnel from CSS, NSSATC and Training Support Center Hampton Roads [TSC-HR]. It is hard to overstate this remarkable accomplishment which was completed in five months with virtually no impact to mission."

Robert J. Walker Hall was the prior home of Operations Specialist "A" School at Fleet Combat Training Center, Atlantic, Dam Neck, and was dedicated on September 21, 1990. The facility is 120,000 square feet,

» See **MILESTONE** | A9

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Local NJROTC cadet receives highest medal

Cadet Petty Officer 2nd Class Alvaro Rivera, a student from Granby High School's Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) program, recently received the Meritorious Achievement Award

» See **A8**



USS Gerald R. Ford completes PSA/SRA

Program Executive Office (PEO) Aircraft Carriers announced the successful completion of the Post-Shakedown Availability/Selected Restricted Availability (PSA/SRA) for USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) Oct. 30 as the ship returned

» See **B1**

U.S. Senate confirms next Navy Surgeon General

The Senate confirmed Rear Adm. Bruce L. Gillingham as the U.S. Navy's next surgeon general on October 31, 2019

» See **B5**

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NEWS FROM NAS OCEANA



Vice President Mike Pence shakes hands with Capt. John Hewitt, commanding officer, on board Naval Air Station Oceana. Pence met with military members and their families at a meet-and-greet on the flight line.

MC3 Mark Mahmod

Vice President Mike Pence visits sailors, families

By MC3 Mark Mahmod

VIRGINIA BEACH

Vice President Mike Pence visited Sailors and their families on board Naval Air Station Oceana after his arrival on Air Force Two before attending various events in Virginia Beach, Nov. 4.

A crowd of over 130 guests attended the

event for a chance to meet, shake hands and take photos with Pence, who spoke with the Sailors and families who were excited to meet him.

Three naval aviators stationed on board Naval Air Station Oceana had the opportunity to show the vice president F/A-18E and F/A-18F Super Hornets on the flight line and give him more information about the

aircraft and the mission of the 17 squadrons on board Naval Air Station Oceana.

Lt. Cmdr. Graham Scarbro, one of the aviators who spoke with Pence, said he was very enthusiastic about the aircraft and mission of the base.

“He asked us about the Super Hornets, and we explained the difference between the F/A-18F and F/A-18E and about what we do at Oceana,” said Scarbro. “His future son-in-law is stationed here as a replacement pilot, so it was neat to see he has a connection with naval aviation.”

Lt. Frank McGurk, a pilot assigned to the “Blue Blasters” of Strike Fighter Squadron

(VFA) 34, said it was an honor to meet the vice president.

“He thanked us all for our service and asked us to thank our families for coming out today and for the sacrifices they make,” said McGurk.

Lt. Steven Shaw, a pilot assigned to the “Gladiators” of VFA-106, was another one of the individuals to speak with Pence.

“It isn’t often that you get to meet someone so high up in our elected government,” said Shaw. “To be able to do so as a representative for naval aviation is an amazing opportunity and an experience I will never forget.”

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TO BIND THEIR WOUNDS

Wednesday, November 13th at 6:00 p.m.



A banner for the upcoming evening panel presentation "To Bind Their Wounds" hosted by the Hampton Roads Naval Museum. The evening panel is scheduled for Nov. 13, 2019 at 6:00 pm and is comprised of U.S. Navy Vietnam Veterans and is moderated.

An evening To Bind Their Wounds: Free moderated panel of U.S. Navy Vietnam veterans

By Max Lonzanida
Hampton Roads Naval Museum Public Information Office

The Hampton Roads Naval Museum will host a free moderated panel of U.S. Navy Veterans who served during the Vietnam War on Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 6:00pm.

The three U.S. Navy Veterans on the panel will be Carmen Adams, who served as a Medical Technician aboard the USS

Repose (AH-16); Danny Lliteras, who served as a Hospital Corpsman with the USMC in the jungles of Vietnam; and Gordon Paulson, who served as a Chaplain at Naval Support Activity Da Nang. The panel focuses on the physical, mental, and spiritual care of soldiers, sailors, and Marines during the Vietnam War.

Jan K. Herman, who served as the Chief Medical Historian of the Navy from 1979-

2012 will moderate the panel. Herman also served as the Editor-in-Chief for Navy Medicine, the journal of the Navy Medical Department, for 30 years and has authored more than 50 articles and monographs, and five books. He has lectured to many audiences across the nation, focusing on military medicine, and is the recipient of the 2015 Forrest C. Pogue Award for significant contributions to oral history.

Attendees to this evening event will have the opportunity to explore the museum's new immersive exhibit The Ten Thousand-Day War at Sea: The U.S. Navy in Vietnam, 1950-1975. This new exhibit encompasses over 4,700 of the museum's gallery and incorporates 130 artifacts; many of which have never been on public display.

The event is free, and open to the public. Heavy hors d'oeuvres will be served prior to the panel discussion. Reservations are requested by Friday, November 8th by contacting Laura.L.Orr@navy.mil or by calling (757) 322-3108.



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NAVFAC MID-ATLANTIC ANNOUNCES ITS MILITARY, CIVILIAN ENGINEERS OF THE YEAR FOR 2020

By **Jeffrey C. Doepp**
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Mid-Atlantic Public Affairs
NORFOLK

Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Mid-Atlantic announced its selections for the 2020 military and civilian engineer of the year awards, Oct. 21.

“It is with great pleasure that I announce our two NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic Engineer of the Year winners for 2020. Lt. Tyler Williams, CEC, P.E., assistant public works officer at Public Works Department Crane, was selected as our Military Engineer of the Year; and Linn Lebel, P.E., structural engineer in the Capital Improvements Business Line Core, forward deployed to Maine, was selected as our Civilian Engineer of the Year,” said NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic Commanding Officer Capt. Rich Hayes. “Congratulations to these two dedicated and talented professionals for their achievements and prestigious recognition!”

As an assistant public works officer, Williams spearheaded a unique and critical \$85 million research, development, test, and evaluation project serving a critical Department of Defense program with a compressed military construction timeline. He was selected as the project field lead to coordinate and lead local engineers, technicians, and planners to keep early development critical path items on track including environmental regulations, geotechnical engineering, and local and state laws.

Williams managed a cradle to grave annual project list for Naval Surface Warfare Center Command, which included more than \$30 million in planned and \$6 million in unplanned projects. He provided 100 percent award or completion of all projects during fiscal year 2019. He was hand selected to serve on an improvement team for engineering category III/IV projects, which were limited in design or no design scopes of work, and developing a course of action for these improvements.

While serving as the acting Utility & Energy Management Branch head, filling a critical gap for several months, Williams lead a team of technicians and craftsman to ensure water, wastewater, steam, and electrical distribution were maintained to the

“ It is with great pleasure that I announce our two NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic Engineer of the Year winners for 2020. Lt. Tyler Williams, CEC, P.E., assistant public works officer at Public Works Department Crane, was selected as our Military Engineer of the Year; and Linn Lebel, P.E., structural engineer in the Capital Improvements Business Line Core, forward deployed to Maine, was selected as our Civilian Engineer of the Year. Congratulations to these two dedicated and talented professionals for their achievements and prestigious recognition!

Officer Capt. Rich Hayes

highest levels. He developed a plan to bring 21 lift stations throughout the installation up to standards and ensured all power requirements matched, reducing the need for spare parts.

“Tyler is able to understand the strategic picture and use tactical efforts to bring about that vision,” said PWD Crane Public Works Officer Cmdr. Joel McMillian. “He tackles challenges head-on and is a trusted officer, engineer and leader, able to make wise decisions in a timely manner. His efforts to ensure PWD Crane kept its commitments helped solidify trust from the supported commands.”

Williams, a Princeton, Kentucky native who joined the Navy in 2012, said his being selected is a reflection of all the great people at PWD Crane and NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic who he gets to work alongside every day.

“I am deeply humbled and honored to be selected for this award,” said Williams, who is a member of the National Society of Professional Engineers, Society of American Military Engineers, American Society of Civil Engineers, and Engineers without Borders. “I am privileged and grateful to be

able to work with those who drive us in achieving excellence.”

Lebel provided design management of the nearly \$110 million P-310 Super Flood Basin, which constructs a 150 kilo pound per square foot lock outside an existing dry dock as well as managed the waterfront design of the approximately \$700 million P-381 multi-mission Dry Dock #1. These projects are keystones in the fleet’s plan to address critical submarine maintenance and deployment shortfalls, documented in reports to Congress. The candidate’s expertise, specifically marine-concrete mix design, resulted in substantial cost savings and improved constructability.

She managed the design and resulting successful construction of the \$26 million Dry Dock #3 Caisson Replacement and Concrete Repairs, leading an innovative approach of utilizing a limpet cofferdam to repair the outer seat while allowing the dry dock to be occupied. This saved the fleet significant submarine and crew idle time by allowing continuous utilization of the dry dock during construction, as well as saving the fleet millions of dollars in lost utilization of mission-critical assets.

In addition, Lebel supported the successful construction of the \$7 million Dry Dock #3 Pumpwell Overhaul Project, where she proposed and led the successful implementation of exterior waterproofing techniques, which limited the invasive nature of the project and simplified the environmental permitting. She contributed significant knowledge and expertise of waterfront engineering to address several unforeseen conditions encountered during the project, limiting cost and schedule impacts, and ensuring uninterrupted execution of the fleet’s mission.

“Linn is an exceptionally talented engineer and project manager,” said PWD Maine Public Works Officer Cmdr. Doug Herrin. “She fully comprehends the supported commander’s priorities and works tirelessly to integrate infrastructure projects with the NAVSEA mission. Her dedication in support of the nuclear attack submarine overhaul mission at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine is unsurpassed. She is an integral member of our team and I am extremely proud of her.”

Lebel, a Trumbull, Connecticut native who has been working for NAVFAC since 2015, said that having worked alongside so many talented engineers at NAVFAC, her receiving this recognition is both unexpected and humbling.

“It is an incredible honor to be named NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic’s Civilian Engineer of the Year,” said Lebel, who is a member the Society of American Military Engineers and the American Institute of Steel Construction. “I am proud to be a member of such an amazing, hard-working team.”

Williams and Lebel will now go on to compete for the NAVFAC Engineer of the Year awards and potentially for higher honors in the National Society of Professional Engineer’s Federal Engineer of the Year award program.

NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic is the Systems Command that delivers and maintains quality, sustainable facilities, acquires and manages capabilities for the Navy’s expeditionary combat forces, provides contingency engineering response, and enables energy security and environmental stewardship across an area of responsibility that spans from Georgia to Maine and as far west as Illinois. As an integral member of the Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic team, NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic provides leadership through the Regional Engineer organization to ensure the region’s facilities and infrastructure are managed efficiently and effectively.





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Seaman Imani Daniels
Congratulations are in order for the 2018-19 National Faculty Junior Teacher of the Year Award winner, Maj. Daniel Adams, a pediatric infectious disease physician in Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's (NMCP) Pediatric Department. Adams received the award from the Uniformed Services University (USU) dean and associate dean for Faculty Development, at the Faculty Development Roadshow on Oct. 29.

NMCP staff member wins National Faculty Junior Teacher of the Year

By Seaman Imani Daniels
Naval Medical Center Portsmouth Public Affairs
PORTSMOUTH, VA.
The 2018-19 National Faculty Junior Teacher of the Year Award winner, Maj. Daniel Adams, a pediatric infectious disease physician in Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's (NMCP) Pediatric Department. Adams received the award from the Uniformed Services University (USU) dean and associate dean for Faculty Development, at the Faculty

Development Roadshow, Oct. 29.
"Receiving this award is a high honor," Adams said. "It acknowledges my favorite part of the job, which is teaching medical students and residents medicine and pediatrics. I'm very thankful for faculty development for helping me grow as an educator. My goal is to continue getting better as a teacher and to be able to train new ones so our residency and medicine programs have the best teachers available to them."

The National Faculty Junior Teacher of the Year Award is given to faculty who have a commitment to educating medical students in support of Graduate Medical Education (GME) Programs throughout military training facilities. This award is meant to recognize teaching innovation, teaching ability and relationships with learners.
"Major Adams is one of five teachers who have received this award this year," said Dr. Jessica Servey, associate dean for Faculty De-

velopment. "He was selected third out of 4,200 faculty members nationally. Major Adams will not only get this certificate of award, but as well as his name and picture forever displayed on a monument at the university."
As the U.S. Navy's oldest, continuously-operating military hospital since 1830, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth proudly serves past and present military members and their families. The nationally-acclaimed, state-of-the-art medical center, along with the area's 10 branch health and TRICARE Prime Clinics, provide care for the Hampton Roads area. The medical center also supports premier research and teaching programs designed to prepare new doctors, nurses and hospital corpsman for future roles in healing and wellness.

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Naval Air Station Jacksonville Commissary shoppers find their way around the new store on opening day. The store features a new Living Well section with organic and natural food products, larger bakery and seafood section and many new items. MCI Charles Panter

Approved veterans and caregivers to access base facilities, shops

By Coleen R. San Nicolas-Perez,
Commander, Navy Installations Command Public Affairs

WASHINGTON

Navy installations are ready to support authorized veterans and their caregivers who will soon be able to enjoy certain Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) programs and shop at base commissaries and exchanges.

Effective Jan. 1 2020, veterans awarded the Purple Heart or Medal of Honor, who are former prisoners of war, or have service-connected disability along with their caregivers will be permitted to use the commissary, military exchange and many MWR facilities per the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act.

“We are excited and looking forward to serving this new patron group at our MWR facilities throughout the shore enterprise,”

said James Baker, director of Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) fleet readiness division, which oversees all MWR programs at Navy bases.

Qualifying veterans and caregivers will have access to MWR golf courses, bowling alleys, movie theaters, food and beverage facilities, campgrounds, lodging facilities, marinas, recreational cottages and cabins as well as tickets and travel offices. Access to auto skills and outdoor recreation facilities as well as special events will be at the discretion of the installation commanding officers based on capacity.

The patronage expansion does not include access to fitness centers, swimming pools, libraries, Single Sailor Programs, and Child and Youth Programs (Child Development Centers, School Age Care, Youth Programs and

Child Development Homes).

“To our veterans and their families, welcome back,” Baker said. “Our MWR teams are committed to offering you a great experience with every visit.”

Navy installations are also ready to assist qualifying veterans and caregivers with obtaining base access.

“As we continue to focus on our number one priority of ensuring the safety of our people and the security of our installations, we are dedicated to providing top-notch customer service to our veterans as they come into the Visitors Control Centers (VCC) to process their base access,” said William Holdren, deputy director for CNIC’s force protection program.

Patrons are advised of the following:

- Veterans in possession of a Veterans

Health Identification Card (VHIC) by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will be required to enroll their VHIC in the Defense Biometric Identification System (DBIDS) at their local VCC for installation access.

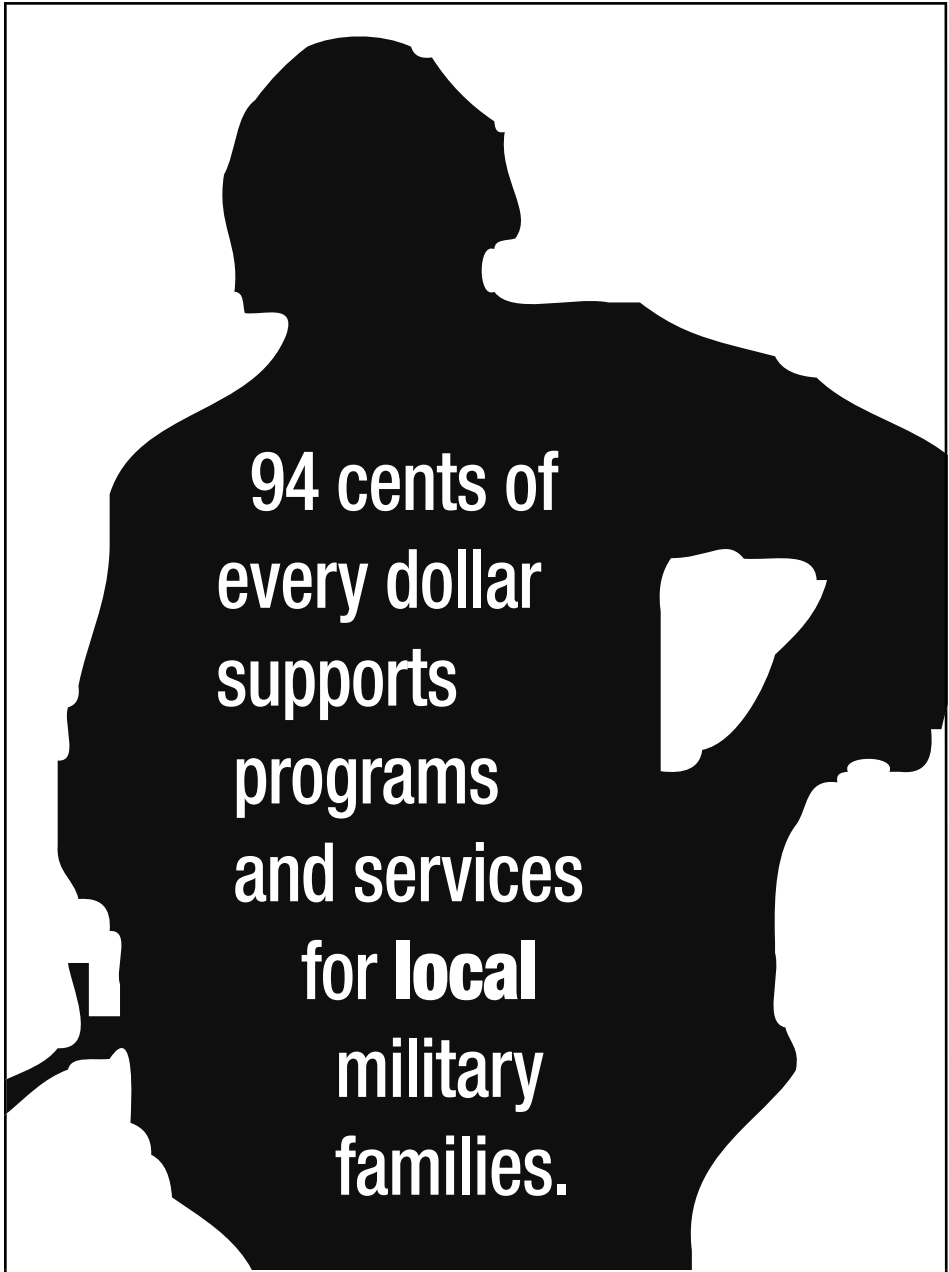
- Veterans who are not eligible for a VHIC will require a letter issued from the VA indicating eligibility for access to DoD installations. Those with a letter from the VA must enroll their Real ID driver’s license in DBIDS.

- Caregivers can present their letter of eligibility from the VA at their local VCC and enroll their Real ID driver’s license in DBIDS for installation access.

- A DBIDS credential will be issued in cases when a Real ID compliant driver’s license is not available.

For more information about obtaining a VHIC or a letter from Veterans Affairs, visit your local VA medical facility or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.

To learn more about base access requirements, contact or visit the nearest Navy Visitors Control Center.



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Cadet Petty Officer 2nd Class Alvaro Rivera

Granby High School

LOCAL NJROTC CADET RECEIVES HIGHEST MEDAL

BY RILEY MALONE
Granby High School NJROTC

NORFOLK

Cadet Petty Officer 2nd Class Alvaro Rivera, a student and cadet from Granby High School’s Navy Junior Reserve Officer Train-

ing Corps (NJROTC) program, in Norfolk recently received the Meritorious Achievement Award for rendering aide to a fellow student this past September who he observed suffering in extreme pain. This is one of the highest awards a cadet can receive. Rivera immediately took action and lo-

cated a teacher who then called 911. During the emergency, Rivera kept the student calm and alert until the paramedics arrived. While the student began falling in and out of consciousness, Rivera translated and provided valuable information to the paramedics as the student was transported to a local emergency room. Once there, he continued to translate for hospital staff so they could treat the student.

“Cadet Rivera is an outstanding example of what NJROTC is all about,” said retired Master Chief Michael Dyer, Granby’s Naval Science Instructor. “Doing the right thing,

even when no one is looking and never seeking the limelight for doing so. Cadet Rivera is a smart, ambitious, and humble young man with a great future ahead of him. Well deserved!”

Rivera’s quick thinking and heroic actions helped save the student from a potentially life-threatening illness. Retired Navy Capt. James Daniels, Area 5 NJROTC manager, who personally awarded the medal to Rivera, Oct. 8.

“I am honored to have received this award, I was just doing what any other person would have done.” said Rivera.

First Warrant Officer 1s in decades graduate LDO/CWO academy

By Darwin Lam
Naval Service Training Command

NEWPORT, R.I.

The first eight Navy warrant officer 1 (WO1) Sailors in decades graduated from the Limited Duty Officer/Chief Warrant Officer (LDO/CWO) Academy at Officer Training Command, Newport (OTCN), Nov. 1.

The new warrant officers are Benjamin Nichols, Jonathon Wynn, Brent Gray, Ryan Snyder, Devan Sorenson, Nicholas Drenning, Kevin Koller, and Brian Ruzin.

“I’m enthusiastic for this new program because we can pave the way for the future of the Navy’s cyberwarfare efforts,” said Warrant Officer Devan T. Sorenson, from Bozeman, Montana. “The unique world of this career field is modeled like a meritocracy where it is a collaborative environment to be effective. The evolution of technology outpaces the training so it is important to stay current.”

“Our expertise comes from the enlisted ranks and we can better assist officers to make those necessary decisions through our experience,” said Warrant Officer Ryan C. Snyder, from Hollis, New Hampshire. “It is essential to be innovative and always strive to be the subject matter experts in this fast-paced field of cyberwarfare.”

The LDO/CWO Academy is a four-week



New cyberwarfare chief warrant officers pose for a photo after graduating from the Limited Duty Officer/Warrant Officer Academy (LDO/CWO) program at Officer Training Command in Newport, Rhode Island, Nov. 1. The LDO/CWO community supports the warfighting capability and readiness of naval forces through leadership, technical proficiency and experience.

course designed to prepare these prior enlisted Sailors for their new roles in the war-room per the Navy’s Officer Professional Core Competencies. The class officers at the schoolhouse develop these newly commissioned officers morally, mentally, and physically, and imbue them with the highest ideals of honor, courage, and commitment in order to prepare them for the Fleet. Addi-

tionally, the academy will prepare these officers to become effective leaders by developing fundamental skills in leadership, written and oral communication, career management and administration.

“The new WO1 program opens up more advancement and designator opportunities,” said Cmdr. Zeverick L. Butts, the Director of the LDO/CWO Academy. “These

new students bring unique skillsets and perspectives, increasing the dynamic interaction in the classroom for problem solving.”

The eight WO1s along with the 45 LDOs and CWOs of class 20010 graduated during a ceremony on Nov. 1, 2019. Graduates of this academy, nicknamed “Mustang University,” will join the LDO/CWO community to support the war-fighting capability and readiness of Naval Forces through leadership, technical proficiency and experience.

NAVADMIN 140/18 announced the implementation of the WO1 pay grade (W-1) for cyber warrant officers, and solicited applications for the FY-19 and FY-20 WO1 Cyber Warrant Selection Boards, the first since 1975. The rank was reinstated through the Cyber Warrant Officer In-Service Procurement Selection Board as the result of increasing threat of cyberwarfare on the modern battlefield. To be eligible, E5 and above applicants must be in the Cryptologic Technician Networks (CTN) rating, possess at least one of the following Interactive On-Net (ION) Operator naval enlisted classifications (NEC): H13A, H14A, H15A, or H16A, and meet time-in-service requirements.

Officers appointed as cyber WO1 incur a six-year service obligation from the date of appointment, shall serve a minimum time in grade of 12 years and must complete a minimum of 3 years of time in service prior to promotion and commissioning to Chief Warrant Officer 2.

The distinctive insignia worn on the WO1 cover of two cross-fouled anchors makes them easily recognizable in place of the traditional officer badge worn by other Naval Officers.



MC2 Stacy M. Atkins Ricks

Adm. Christopher W. Grady, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, poses with the 2019 Five Star Military Family honorees during the Armed Services YMCA of Hampton Roads 25th Anniversary of the Five Star Military Family Recognition Luncheon at the Westin Towne Center Hotel in Virginia Beach, Va. Each of these junior service members are masters of their trade and contributed substantially to their command's mission, while their family built a strong bond in their community through their volunteer service.

ASYMCA | Five Star Military Family Recognition Luncheon hosts families

Continued from A1

mitment to military service and volunteerism.

Grady served as the keynote speaker for the event and presented awards and certificates to each of the honoree families alongside ASYMCA president retired Vice Adm. William French, and the event's title sponsor representative, retired Lt. Cmdr. Joel Vargas of USAA.

"Each of the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen here are masters of their trade. Each contributes substantially to their command and the military's mission. Each of these families serves our community, our family, in equally noteworthy ways," said Grady. "I feel proud and privileged to serve alongside you."

This year ASYMCA celebrated their silver anniversary marking 25 years of honoring armed service families. For a quarter of a century, the organization has been recognizing military families that enrich the local community.

Each year junior enlisted families from each of the service branches are invited to the luncheon, where they are lauded for their efforts in volunteerism. One family from each branch is then selected to receive special honors and recognition due to exemplary service to the community.

Information Systems Technician 1st Class Megan Gurtner, assigned to Naval Ocean Processing Facility Dam Neck, along with her husband and two sons were selected as the Navy family to be honored.

"I think this is awesome; it's an amazing event. All of our volunteer efforts have never been about being recognized like this, but it's amazing that there is this kind of recognition out here," said Gurtner as she sat bouncing a baby boy on her knee and humoring another with photography on her cell phone. "It's truly an honor to be here. My husband couldn't be here today, but I know he truly appreciates this."

In addition to being parents, she and her husband, a fellow active duty Sailor, are a dual military team that manages to volunteer more than 250 hours annually with more than seven organizations. From beach cleanups to providing respite care to nearly 40 autistic children, the family stays engaged year-round.

The Coleman family of the U.S. Army



MC2 Stacy M. Atkins Ricks

Adm. Christopher W. Grady, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, presents Staff Sgt. Mark Carson II and his family with a certificate celebrating their selection as the Armed Services YMCA of Hampton Roads 2019 Five Star Military Family during the 25th Anniversary Recognition Luncheon at the Westin Towne Center Hotel in Virginia Beach, Va. The family was selected as the Marine Corps family to receive special honors and recognition due to their exemplary service to the community.

was honored for their collective work as youth sports coaches, Family Readiness Group leaders and helping numerous spouses and children of deployed service members.

Staff Sgt. Mark Carson, a U.S. Marine Corps safety officer, and his family received honors for their service to the Victory Church in Yorktown, Care Net Peninsula and the United Service Organizations.

Coast Guard Yeoman 2nd Class Edgar Tapia and his family established a youth summer soccer camp serving more than 120 children and volunteered with the Big Brother program, as well as Meals on Wheels earning them high honors.

Airman First Class Marina Volynets, stationed at Langley Air Force Base with the 633rd Contracting Squadron, and her husband, Joe, gained honors for works with

Columbia City Ballet and the Team UP mentorship program.

All of these works illustrate that active duty families can volunteer and yet still perform their daily military requirements, thus embodying the concept of service before self.

"A stronger bond with our community – our larger family – makes our military more resilient and able to carry out our mission, even in times of conflict," said Grady. "In my eyes, giving back to the community is like taking care of your family, and ultimately makes us stronger together."

Gurtner stated her focus when relocating to a new community was making it a home.

"Originally I'm from Wisconsin, but this is home for us now," said Gurtner. "I truly believe any act, no matter how small, can

have a big impact. We are trying to teach our two boys this as well. Do good things for others and good things will come back to you."

Laura Baxter, executive director of ASYMCA of Hampton Roads, delivered a closing call to service to those in attendance.

"I humbly ask the audience to please spread the word about what we do. To our military families being recognized today, pay it forward. Those who volunteer also know others who are committed to the same. Take the time to nominate them next year."

For more information on the Armed Service YMCA of Hampton Roads 5 Star Military Family Recognition Program please visit: <https://www.asymca.org/five-star-military-family>

MILESTONE | Highlights of the \$570K project, included classroom and office modifications to support the command, staff and students

Continued from A1

and had 36 classrooms, 20 laboratories and 15 offices, making it the largest school at Dam Neck. Today, Walker Hall has eight tenant commands to include Naval Educa-

tion Training Command N7, TSC-HR, NSSATC, Naval Leadership and Ethics Center and Information Warfare Training Command, with 30 classrooms, eight labs, and 46 offices. TSC-HR Student Management Office handles 228 courses for Dam

Neck Annex, of which, 25 are located at Walker Hall and processes in excess of 16,500 students annually.

NSSATC is responsible for the Advanced Administration courses, Advanced Supply and Logistics courses, Navy Instructor Training Course, Command Career Counselor, Command Managed Equal Opportunity Manager, Drug and Alcohol Program Advisor, and Alcohol and Drug Abuse for Managers and Supervisors.

The command also oversees the curriculum and program management for

LifeSkills, which is delivered at "A" school locations to all Sailors between graduation from Recruit Training Command and the start of their technical training pipeline. Furthermore, NSSATC develops content for Navy general military training (GMT) topics and hosts all approved GMT lessons on the MyNavy Portal and Navy eLearning websites.

NSSATC plays a vital role in today's fleet, and its graduates go on to become subject matter expert instructors on ships and commands throughout the world.

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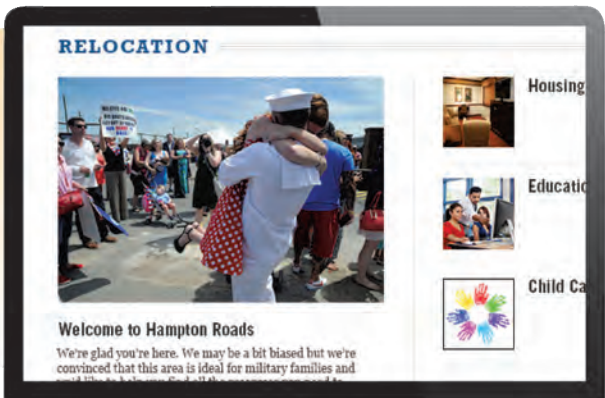


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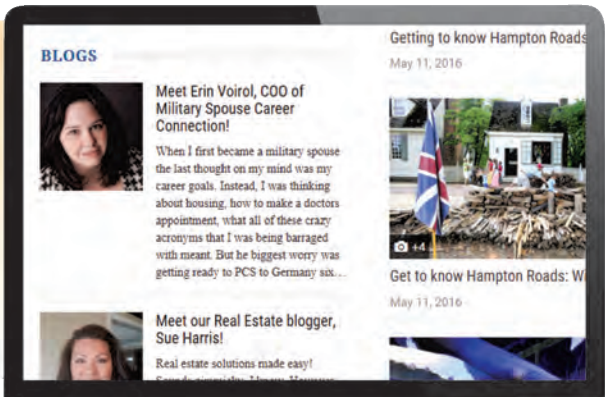
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Bataan, 26th MEU conduct integrated live fire exercise

The exercise, in which both Navy and Marine Corps weapons systems were fully integrated, is designed to demonstrate the agility of the ARG's surface and defense capabilities.

See B3

USS GERALD R. FORD COMPLETES POST-SHAKEDOWN AVAILABILITY



MC3 Connor Loessin

The aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) conducts high-speed turns in the Atlantic Ocean, Oct. 29. Gerald R. Ford is at sea conducting sea trials following the in port portion of its 15-month post-shakedown availability.

From Program Executive Office Aircraft Carriers Public Affairs

WASHINGTON

Program Executive Office (PEO) Aircraft Carriers announced the successful completion of the Post-Shakedown Availability/Selected Restricted Availability (PSA/SRA) for USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) Oct. 30 as the ship returned to its home port at Naval Station Norfolk.

PSA completion marks a significant shipbuilding milestone for USS Gerald R. Ford, the first ship in a next-generation class that will serve for 50 years as the centerpiece of national defense in an increasingly complex security environment.

"This is a warship like none other, and the process of returning her to fleet service reflects the great technical skill, professionalism and tenacity of the government/industry team," said Rear Adm. James Downey, program execu-

tive officer for Aircraft Carriers. "USS Gerald R. Ford is the most technologically advanced, most lethal combat platform in the world. Everyone, from the highest levels of government to the crew working the deck plates, is laser focused on this aircraft carrier being ready to enter fleet service."

A PSA is a typical period of construction availability in the early life of a ship during which the Navy and shipbuilder resolve issues that arise during initial at-sea periods and make any needed changes and upgrades. The CVN 78 PSA began on July 15, 2018, and included work on Advanced Weapons Elevators (AWEs), repairs to the ship's main reduction gear, improvements to the throttle control system, upgrades to the Advanced Arresting Gear, and numerous other maintenance tasks.

During the PSA, most individual discrepancies, known as "trial cards," that

See FORD | B7

Comfort strengthens partnership with Jamaica

By MCSN Brendan Fitzgerald
U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command / U.S. 4th Fleet Public Affairs

KINGSTON, JAMAICA

Kathryn Wheelbarger, acting assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, visited the hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) and was a guest speaker at the closing ceremony in Jamaica following the completion of the ship's 11th medical mission in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, Nov. 1.

"I want to highlight some of the senior leaders in the Department of Defense perspective and the reasons on how important Jamaica is to our security interests," said Wheelbarger. "It's very important for us to be here today to not only celebrate and honor the great mission that the Comfort has done in the last few days but also to again acknowledge and represent the strength and partnership between the U.S. and Jamaica."



MCSN Jordan Bair

Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Kathryn Wheelbarger, speaks to a local reporter after a closing ceremony in Kingston, Jamaica, Nov. 1. The hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) is working with health and government partners in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean to provide care on the ship and at land-based medical sites, helping to relieve pressure on national medical systems, including those strained by an increase in cross-border migrants.

See COMFORT | B7



Navy Office of Community Outreach

Newport News resident embodies Veterans Day values as a member of U.S. Navy Reserve

By MC2 Theodore Quintana
Navy Office of Community Outreach

MILLINGTON, TENN.

As Americans reflect on the service of military men and women this Veterans Day, some may not realize that they are fellow residents with those who serve in the U.S. Navy Reserve. Petty Officer 1st Class Johnathan Fries, a resident of Newport News, Va., supports and defends freedom around the world, as a Navy boatswain's mate, who is responsible for being a regional weapons maintenance coordinator for the Mid-Atlantic region. Fries is a 2002 Elizabethton High School graduate and native of Elizabethton, Tenn. Reservists seamlessly support and actively aid military missions while continuing to lead their own independent lives in the civilian world, according to Navy officials.

"The Navy Reserve is a 100K strong team of sailors embedded across the fabric of society, loyal and dedicated patriots, serving both in uniform and civilian jobs, ready to defend the homeland and deploy across the world in a moment's notice," said Vice Adm. Luke McCollum, Chief of Navy Reserve. The Navy Reserve provides strategic depth to America's Navy as it protects the American homeland and advances economic prosperity by preserving freedom of the seas. Fries works full-term serving as a Navy reservist.

As a Navy reservist, Fries serves with Navy Regional Mid-Atlantic Reserve Component Command Norfolk responsible for maintaining over 144 weapons to support force protection for Naval Reserve Centers. Fries is playing an important part in America's focus on rebuilding military readiness, strengthening alliances and reforming business practices in support of the National Defense Strategy. A key element of the Navy the Nation needs is tied to the fact that America is a maritime nation, according to Navy officials, and that the nation's prosperity is tied to the ability to operate freely on the world's oceans. More than 70 percent of the Earth's surface is covered by water; 80 percent of the world's population lives close to a coast; and 90 percent of all global trade by volume travels by sea. "Our priorities center on people, capabilities and processes, and will be achieved by our focus on speed, value, results and partnerships," said Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer. "Readiness, lethality and modernization are the requirements driving these priorities." Though there are many ways for sailors to earn distinction in their command, community and career, Fries is most proud of completing a tour in Iraq in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, as well as, receiving three Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals for exemplary service at

past commands. "I'm most proud of completing my tour in Iraq because it gave me a sense of empowerment and that I was actually doing something that directly reflected the war on terrorism and to stop it," said Fries. "It was hard and I worked over 13 hours a day but the self-satisfaction that I was doing something for the greater good of this country was beyond anything that I can even try to explain." Serving in the Navy is a continuing tradition of military service for Fries, who has military ties with family members who have previously served. Fries is honored to carry on that family tradition. "I came from a military family with all branches of the service represented so going into the military was always my path," said Fries. "At one point when I was in Iraq, I had the chance to meet up with one of my cousins that was over there but was in the Army. Seeing him and just knowing that we were doing this together was a very accomplishing and wonderful feeling." As a member of one of the U.S. Navy's most relied upon assets, Fries and other sailors know they are part of a legacy that will last beyond their lifetimes providing the Navy the nation needs. "Serving in the Navy is something that I love to do and has afforded me the opportunity to not only travel the world but to also open my self up to other people's beliefs and to experience what the world has to offer," said Fries. "The cultural diversity that makes up the Navy or military in general is beyond words. All walks of life, religion and backgrounds cross to benefit the greater good of this country and the world. That's something that not everyone gets to experience all the time and I get to every day that I serve this country through the Navy and I absolutely love it."

Veteran suicide rate is complicated, but solution shouldn't be

By Lisa Smith Molinari

Last month, another U.S. military veteran took his own life on a Veteran's Administration campus. This is the sixth veteran suicide in the public areas of Florida's Bay Pines VA facility in the last six years. This latest incident is also part of the ever-growing rate of veteran suicides each year, and part of a nationwide increase in suicides among all adults. Is the increase in veteran suicides a direct result of the surge in the US's overall adult suicide rate? Unfortunately, it's not that simple. The suicide rates announced in the latest Veterans' Administration report are the result of a complex evaluation of age, gender, finances, US population increase, veteran population decrease, military duty status, treatment status, changes in study criteria, and other variables. The rising veteran suicide rates must be analyzed in context with so many other factors, it's almost impossible to draw meaningful conclusions from the data. Despite sincere efforts to address the crisis — Trump signed an executive order in 2018 allowing all veterans to receive mental health care during the high-risk first year after separation, and an interagency task force was established in March to tackle the issue — the fact remains that 17 "Title 38 Veterans" and four active duty, reserve and guard members

kill themselves every day. That's one death every minute and eight seconds. In news stories about the rash of veteran suicides on VA campuses across the US, experts postulated that suicide victims blame the VA. Eric Caine, director of the Injury Control Research Center for Suicide Prevention at the University of Rochester, told the Washington Post after a series of VA parking lot suicides last year, "These suicides are sentinel events. It's very important for the VA to recognize that the place of a suicide can have great meaning. There is a real moral imperative and invitation here to take a close inspection of the quality of services at the facility level." Caine's theory might be a desperate shot at simplifying the veteran suicide conundrum; however, veterans themselves pointed fingers at the VA before pointing weapons at themselves. "I dared to dream again. Then you showed me the door faster than last night's garbage," posted Army veteran John Toombs in 2016 before hanging himself outside the Murfreesboro, Tenn. VA hospital, where he had been kicked out of treatment for not following instructions. Two years later, investigators found a suicide note near the uniformed body of Marine Colonel Jim Tuner outside Florida's Bay Pines VA facility. "I bet if you look at the 22 suicides a day you will see VA screwed up in 90%," Turner wrote before turning a rifle on

himself. The following April, three more veterans killed themselves at VA campuses. One victim shot himself in the crowded lobby of a Texas VA outpatient clinic, which was seen by most as an obvious message. Despite the blame some have placed squarely on the VA, there are no easy answers. In fact, figures show that the rate of suicide in VA medical centers is lower than the private sector. After the VA made prevention its top clinical priority, the rate of suicide in VA hospitals has dropped more than 80 percent and 419 of 466 suicide attempts in 2019 on VA campuses were stopped. However, of the 17 veterans who kill themselves every day, 10.4 don't use VHA services at all. So far, promising improvements in VA care have not resulted in real progress in the overall crisis. No matter how many experts weigh in, no matter how many task forces are created, no matter how many variables are studied, no matter how many veterans kill themselves on VA campuses, no one can make any sense of this complex trend. Instead of putting any more resources toward unraveling the impossible tangle of causes and variables, perhaps the government should fund simple, common-sense preventative measures: Standardize VA quality control and bring low-rated facilities up to par. Institute more outreach to at-risk veterans who do not use VHA. Give VA staff better training in suicide prevention strategies. It may not be that simple, but it's time to stop trying, and simply start doing. www.themeatandpotatoesoflife.com



Q: Are Retired Disabled Veterans allowed to live in on-base housing?
A: Housing is privatized in most CONUS locations. Based on occupancy and business agreements for each area, they may allow retired military to live in privatized housing. You can find contact information for the privatized housing at each installation online at: www.militaryhomestoday.com.

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MC1 Kathryn Macdonald
Naval Aircrewman 1st Class Brent Blackwell assigned to the Dragon Whales of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 28, mans a .50 caliber door rifle in an MH-60S Sea Hawk while preparing to land on the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), after an integrated live fire exercise, Oct. 24. Bataan is underway conducting a composite training unit exercise (COMPTUEX) with the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group and 26th MEU.

Bataan ARG, 26th MEU conduct integrated live fire exercise

By MC1 Kathryn Macdonald
USS Bataan (LHD 5) Public Affairs

ATLANTIC OCEAN

The Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and embarked 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit participated in an integrated live fire exercise, Oct. 24.

The exercise, in which both Navy and Marine Corps weapons systems were fully integrated, is designed to demonstrate the agility of the ARG's surface and defense capabilities.

The ARG includes the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), the am-

phibious transport dock ship USS New York (LPD 21), and the dock landing ship USS Oak Hill (LSD 51), among other embarked units.

The live fire exercise tested defense and weapon systems such as the portable Marine Corps FGM-148 Javelin missile and small arm weapons. The Bataan tested the MK 38 25mm machine gun, Phalanx Close-In Weapons System (CIWS), and the .50-caliber machine gun.

The ARG's aviation assets, including MH-60S Sea Hawks from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 28 – as well as

UH-1H Hueys, AH-1 SuperCobras and AV-8B Harriers from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 365 – coordinated and deconflicted surface and air assets for weapon systems firing.

"The end goal is a proof of concept for all platforms [within the ARG]," said Lt. Chris Burns, assistant officer in charge of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 28, Detachment 4. "Having accurate fires from all aircraft and accurate fires from the ship for this exercise is really preparing ourselves for any threats we may experience on deployment."

Chief Aviation Ordnanceman Krystal Peck, one Bataan's lead live fire coordinators, expressed how this exercise is one of the exciting aspects in preparing for deployment.

"We fight like we train and train like we fight, so being as responsive and lethal as possible is our end goal," said Peck.

This naval integration live fire exercise will be pivotal in carrying out the nation's naval strategy and defending the ARG if faced with threats.

"This is a varsity level event," said U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Christopher Lowe, 2nd Low Altitude Air Defense Battalion officer in charge, Marine Air Control Group 28 Detachment (VMM) 365 (Reinforced), 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit. "Showing that through all these months of workups, that we can successfully integrate blue and green."



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MC2 Christopher R. Jahnke
Retail Service Specialist 2nd Class Liza Pangborn makes a cup of coffee on board the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68). Nimitz is currently in port preparing for future operations.

New Retail Services Specialist rating supports Sailor 2025 rating modernization

From Naval Supply Systems Command Public Affairs

MECHANICSBURG, PA.

The new Retail Services Specialist (RS) rating, which replaced the Ship’s Serviceman (SH) rating Oct. 1, is “a great example of Sailor 2025 and rating modernization” said Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Command Master Chief (CMDCM) (SW/AW) Thaddeus T. Wright. Sailor 2025 is the Navy’s program to improve and modernize personnel management and training systems to more effectively recruit, develop, manage, reward and retain the force of tomorrow. This change aligns with rating modernization, which

aims to provide greater choices for Sailors with respect to detailing and training. “Our Navy is an evolving organization, and with the Sailor 2025 initiative, this was the perfect time to transition the SH rating to RS, which also better aligns the work they perform to the civilian retail and services industry,” said CMDCM (SW/IW) Don Myrick, Office of the Naval Inspector General. “Of my 33 years of active service, I served 21 as a Ship’s Serviceman. There was nothing more important than knowing our motto as Ship’s Serviceman, ‘service to others before self,’ was critical in supporting morale and mission effectiveness.” Established in 1885 as the Tailor rating, the name was changed to Ship’s Serv-

iceman in 1943 to include additional duties. The SH rating initially identified four specialty areas: barber, laundryman, tailor and cobbler. Subsequently, store clerk was included as one of the specialty areas. Today, RSs develop marketing strategies for Ship’s stores, oversee sales and service operations, and provide funding to morale, welfare and recreation programs. “With the new RS rating, we’ll be highlighting retail and services and expanding their roles from traditional functions such as ships stores, barbering and laundry. Newer additions to the RS portfolio include specialty kiosks, audit and inventory management. On aircraft carriers, RSs are now managing hotel services in addition to their primary duties. The USS Zumwalt (DDG-1000) has added postal services to the RS portfolio,” Wright said. Commander, NAVSUP and Chief of Supply Corps Rear Adm. Michelle C. Skubic said, “The change provides a title that more closely reflects the important work these Sailors perform on a daily basis. I am cer-

tain that our new Retail Services Specialists will continue to provide superior quality-of-life services and support.” “The rating change from SH to RS represents the biggest change we’ve had in our rating in a very long time,” said NAVSUP’s Fleet RS Rating Advisor RSC Shornette Allison. “I am beyond proud to be an RS. Our rate is about 2,000 strong and this change means a lot to us because our responsibilities have expanded significantly. Additionally, leadership is considering additional opportunities to further increase our portfolio afloat and ashore.” “The rating progression from four specialty ratings of Barber, Laundryman, Cobbler, and Tailor to SH and now RS is a natural one. This name change is in keeping with the tradition in the Navy of defining the occupation of a Sailor in contemporary terms that better define the tasks to be performed and the skills needed to perform them,” said Commander, Navy Personnel Command Vice Adm. John B. Nowell Jr. in a Sept. 29 NAVADMIN message.

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Navy Medicine West
Rear Adm. Bruce Gillingham, director, medical resources, plans and policy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, and other senior leaders speak at the general officer round-table discussion during the 2018 Military Health System Research Symposium.

Senate confirms Rear Adm. Gillingham as next Navy Surgeon General

By Cmdr. Denver Applehans
U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Public Affairs

FALLS CHURCH, VA.

The U.S. Senate confirmed Rear Adm. Bruce L. Gillingham as the U.S. Navy’s next surgeon general on October 31, 2019.

“I am honored and privileged to represent Navy Medicine as the 39th Surgeon General of the Navy,” said Gillingham. “We are now engaged in a great power competition where our dominance is not assured, we must adapt and respond with urgency. The duty of every member of the Navy Medicine team is to pro-

vide a ready medical force and operational medical capabilities to save lives in the battlespace.”

Gillingham is the 39th Surgeon General of the Navy and the 43rd person to hold the title of Chief of Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. He is also the first orthopedic surgeon ever to serve as U.S. Navy Surgeon General.

The new Navy Surgeon General said he plans to use four priorities to guide Navy Medicine in the future fight.

PEOPLE – Our military and civilian workforce is our greatest strength.

PLATFORMS – Our equipment and capa-

bility sets required by our warfighters.

PERFORMANCE – Our performance is measured by our support to our warfighters.

POWER – Medical power projection will increase survivability.

“Focusing on these four ‘Ps’ will drive us to mission success by increasing lethality through warfighter preparation and survivability. To ensure continuity of care to our beneficiaries, Navy Medicine will continue to support the Defense Health Agency in transition, but our direction and focus must be on the 4 ‘Ps’,” said Gillingham.

Gillingham is a graduate of the F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine at the Uniformed Services of the Health Sciences. He has served in various positions throughout his career to include director of Pediatric Orthopedic and Scoliosis Surgery; Associate Orthopedic Residency Program director; and director of Surgical Services. While assigned to Naval Medical Center San Diego, he was instrumental in establishing the Comprehensive Combat and

Complex Casualty Care Center (C5). Operationally, he served aboard the hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH-19) as staff orthopedic surgeon and as director of surgical services. He deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II as battalion chief of Professional Services (Forward) for the 1st Force Service Support Group and officer in charge of the Surgical Shock Trauma Platoon, achieving a 98 percent combat casualty survival rate while providing echelon II surgical care during Operation Phantom Fury. Gillingham also served as commander, Navy Medicine West; commander, Naval Medical Center San Diego; deputy commander, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth; commanding officer, Naval Hospital Jacksonville, Florida; Pacific Fleet surgeon, and Fleet surgeon and director, Health Services, U.S. Fleet Forces. In 2011, he served as the Joint Support Force-Japan Surgeon in the aftermath of the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster, ensuring the safety of over 200,000 U.S. citizens, service members and families.

THANK YOU TO OUR VETERANS

“To be of service to my country is honestly an unexplainable feeling. The greatest feeling is being part of the greater good.”

Alicia Hunt, U.S. Air Force
UMGC Graduate Student
Gen. John W. Vessey Jr. Student Veteran of the Year, 2017

This Veterans Day, University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) salutes our military veterans, like Alicia Hunt, for their unwavering commitment, selflessness and service. We wish to extend our gratitude to all who have served in the U.S armed forces. We thank you for your dedication, and we are honored to serve you as you strive to achieve your higher education goals.

Share your message of thanks this Veterans Day. Use **#thanksvets** or visit **umgc.edu/thanksvets.**

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New simulator at GSE "C" school offers right training at the right time

By Brian Walsh
Training Support Center Public Affairs

GREAT LAKES, ILL.

Students attending Gas Turbine Systems Technician Electrical (GSE) "C" School now have the latest in high-tech virtual technology to provide them with the right training at the right time in the right way. Surface Warfare Officers School Unit (SWOSU) Great Lakes has incorporated an interactive simulator, called the 19H6 trainer, to enhance instructor-led training for its new Landing Helicopter Assault and Landing Helicopter Dock ship course. The "C" school prepares GSEs to operate, repair and perform maintenance on electrical components of gas turbine engines, main propulsion machinery, auxiliary equipment, propulsion control systems, and electronic circuitry.

"Students with orders to amphibious assault ships will come through this course and have the opportunity to learn about the ship's equipment through virtual simulation," said Gas Turbine Systems Technician Electrical 2nd Class Jacob Parker, a GSE "C" School instructor. "The simulator allows you to navigate main spaces as if in real time. Students are able to start/stop equipment, perform corrective maintenance, and go through various casualty scenarios."

Included in the simulations are planned maintenance system and engineering operation sequencing system procedures. So detailed are the steps that the simulator takes students through that safety precautions such as tag outs, live work chits, grounding straps, and any other safety features that must be performed before they can continue with the evolution they are working on.

"Having the students adhere to safety precautions now will give them a better insight on how important it is," Parker said. "With a generation who spends most of their day on electronics, the motivation to learn in more interesting ways will increase not only retention but also a better under-



Surface Warfare Officer School Unit Great Lakes Gas Turbine Systems Technician Electrical (GSE) "C" School Leading Petty Officer GSE1 Sherie Owens takes a question from a student attending the new 19H6 trainer course Oct. 29. The 19H6 trainer serves as an example of how the Navy's Ready Relevant Learning initiative is changing traditional classroom instruction as modernized delivery of training offers measurable improvements to a Sailor's ability to learn and retain the knowledge and skills required to be successful at a given point in his or her career.

standing of what they can look forward to on the ship."

Before the addition of the simulator, students learned as part of a three-person team to complete tasks on actual physical equipment that they dismantled. That equipment then had to be put back together before another team could begin. The simulator more effectively uses training time by simultaneously allowing up to 18 students to perform required tasks at their own stations with direct one-on-one interaction with instructors as needed.

According to SWOSU Great Lakes Commanding Officer Cmdr. Terrance Patterson, the virtual task trainers enable Sailors to practice and test troubleshooting and corrective maintenance skillsets in a virtual shipboard world that mimics specific platform engineering spaces and equipment.

"The trainer is an outstanding delivery method, where troubleshooting and corrective maintenance reps and sets are accom-

plished by Sailors, without damaging real equipment," Patterson said. "The required footprint is small by comparison when looking to build a full-size mock-up lab. Our 19H6 trainer reinforces engineering compliance and the basic six-steps in troubleshooting, and our instructors can tailor modules by selecting scenarios using a drop-down menu function to introduce new scenarios to continue to grow and mature Sailor skillsets."

The implementation of state-of-the-art training equipment at SWOSU Great Lakes "C" School is part of the MyNavy HR Sailor 2025 initiative to improve and modernize personnel management and training systems to more effectively recruit, develop, manage, reward, and retain the force of tomorrow.

A pillar of Sailor 2025, Ready, Relevant Learning (RRL) delivers a modernized learning continuum that aligns training with fleet requirements and warfighter

needs. The 19H6 trainer serves as an example of how traditional classroom instruction is changing as modernized delivery offers measurable improvements to a Sailor's ability to learn and to retain the knowledge and skills required to be successful at a given point in his or her career. The long-term vision of RRL is to take that kind of modernized training to the point of need in the fleet at the waterfront.

"Currently, the technology is available locally only in our classrooms, but it could definitely be exported via an external terabyte hard drive and employed on a training standalone CPU aboard our warships, which is clearly aligned to RRL concepts," Patterson said. "I can say with certainty, that after visiting fleet concentration areas and talking with Naval Sea Systems Command Regional Maintenance Center tech codes and ship's commanding officers that the GSE skillsets coming out of our 19H6 trainer are definitely needed now."

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MC3 Connor Loessin
The aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) conducts high-speed turns in the Atlantic Ocean, Oct. 29. Gerald R. Ford is at sea conducting sea trials following the in port portion of its 15-month post-shakedown availability.

FORD | *First ship in next-generation class that will serve for 50 years as the centerpiece of national defense in complex security environment*

Continued from B1

had been identified during previous work-ups were successfully addressed, with very few remaining to address in future maintenance availabilities. As a first-of-class ship, such discrepancies are not unexpected, and the Navy is incorporating lessons learned from CVN 78 to inform design and actively improve oversight of future ships of the class.

Program manager for USS Gerald R. Ford, Capt. Ron Rutan, acknowledged that unique challenges accompany technological advances.

“The design and execution challenge in delivering a first-of-class warfighting platform is not only to make CVN 78 better, but

also to enhance production on the next ships in the class – the future USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) and future USS Enterprise (CVN 80),” said Rutan. “The Gerald R. Ford class will set the competitive standard for afloat performance and power projection well into the second half of the 21st century.”

In an emerging era of Great Power Competition, USS Gerald R. Ford will serve as the most agile and lethal combat platform in the world. The Gerald R. Ford class incorporates 23 new technologies, comprising dramatic advances in propulsion, power generation, ordnance handling and aircraft launch systems. These innovations will support a 30 percent higher sortie generation rate, executed with a 20 percent reduction

in crew, at a significant cost savings, when compared to Nimitz-class ships. The Gerald R. Ford-class carrier offers a 17 percent reduction – approximately \$4 billion per ship – in life cycle operations and support costs compared to the earlier Nimitz class.

Rutan praised the perseverance of thousands of designers, planners and technicians from PEO Aircraft Carriers, Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Air Systems Command, Naval Information Warfare Systems Command, Naval Air Force Atlantic and the shipbuilder in methodically navigating through technical setbacks.

“As the first new aircraft carrier design in more than 40 years, this ship is a test bed for the warfighting technology essential for air

“ The Gerald R. Ford class will set the competitive standard for afloat performance and power projection well into the second half of the 21st century.”

Capt. Ron Rutan

dominance in the 21st century,” Rutan said. “It takes some patience on the front end to give the Navy a ship with the flexibility and resilience it will need during the next 50 years to rapidly adapt to emerging threats across maritime domains in support of overall Navy shipbuilding priorities.”

COMFORT | *Dawkins-Wright: Many Jamaicans who were able to have surgical procedures completed are happier and in a better position because of this mission.*

Continued from B1

During the Comfort’s six-day mission in Kingston, 800 medical professionals of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army, and U.S. Public Health Service alongside five partner nations, provided care for 6,511 patients at two separate shore-based medical sites and performed 100 surgeries aboard the ship.

“The medical mission represents one of the largest and most sophisticated medical missions to come to Jamaica,” said Dr. Nicole Dawkins-Wright, director of emergency disaster management and special services. “Many Jamaicans who were able to have surgical procedures completed are happier and in a better position because of this mission.”

The Comfort’s mission is accomplished through the efforts of medical and non-medical personnel. The entire Comfort team is comprised of military and civilian personnel from the United States and partner nations, including Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, and Peru, as well as several non-government organizations creating a dynamic team capable of delivering a variety of services.

“We discussed the whole process about what was going to take place during the procedure and the risks that were involved, so that way I could understand everything,” said Steve McKrieth, who came to Comfort for surgical repair of torn ligaments and a broken foot. “I almost feel like I want to join the U.S. Navy and be a doctor myself! Everyone is so jovial and friendly and smiling. I feel like [Comfort] has saved the day.”

This marks the Comfort’s third visit to Jamaica and the seventh to the region since 2007. At each of the missions, the embarked medical teams will provide care aboard the Comfort and at land-based medical sites, helping to relieve pressure on national medical systems, including those strained by an increase in cross-border migrants.

This deployment is a part of the U.S. Southern Command’s Enduring Promise initiative and reflects the United States’ ongoing commitment to friendship, partnership, and solidarity with partner nations in the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.



Veterans Day

Ceremony

NOVEMBER 11, 2019

2:00 P.M.

MACARTHUR MEMORIAL

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STILL SERVING

2019 Military Retiree
& Veteran Awards



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INNOVATOR



CONTINUING TO SERVE OUR NATION

This edition of The Flagship highlights and honors 10 veterans who continue to serve our nation and our community through their philanthropic endeavors. They are a microcosm of the thousands of Hampton Roads veterans from all branches of service who continue to volunteer their time, energy, passion and experience to enhance the quality of lives of others.

This issue is special because it recognizes the heroes who continue to uphold their civic responsibility and are still serving locally. While they may not do these deeds to bring attention to themselves, it is our honor to highlight their stories and contributions that make Hampton Roads a great place to live, work and play.

There is no better time to recognize these selfless servants. Nov. 11 is Veterans Day. In November of 1919. This day, reserved by President Woodrow Wilson, honors the sacrifices of our veterans and reminds all Americans of the tragedies of war. The holiday, first dubbed as “Armistice Day,” because many people believed that the “Great War” was over. The actions of gallant and unbreakable American veterans is why we continue to observe this day annually to honor loyal devotion to service.

This centennial is the perfect time to honor veterans by recognizing their service. If you can, ask a veteran to stand at school football games, at church service or in whatever group you find yourself. While Hampton Roads is known affectionately as “America’s Navy Town,” it is blessed to have a robust veteran population from all five branches. We are fortunate and grateful that after years spent serving their country, so many veterans and military retirees now serve Hampton Roads, providing innumerable positive effects on the region.

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2019 Honorees

Carla Moss	Greg Selby	Kevin Petersen
Chelsea Mandello	Donald Hart	Porsha Brown
Daryl Powell	Rev. Jimmie Allen	Thomas Gross
		Wallace Green

2019 Nominees

Jimmie Allen	Wallace Green	Carla Moss
Brian Baird	Thomas Gross	Kevin Petersen
David Bechtol	Ellis Hatcher	Darryl Powell
Porsha Brown	Jimmy Jefferson	Gregory Selby
James Cornish	William Kenney	Michael Sheedy
Donald Hart	L. Grant Lewis	Keri and Craig Upton
Renee Foster	Chelsea Mandello	Robert Vader
Eric Gardner	Doug McLiverty	Jeff Wolfe
Milton Butch Gardner	Robert Miller III	

Carla Moss

Branch: Army | Rank: SPC | Years of Service: 8

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

I decided to participate in all of my associated organizations because it is important for me to give back to my community especially after serving my country.

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

Some of my achievements outside the military are as follows:

I am an event and volunteer coordinator for my installation; the Army representative for the Joint Service Council for the National Capital Region; an Honorary Member of the Regiment, The Old Guard (TOG); the Vice President of Education and charter member of Capital Superior Speakers Toastmasters Club; National Guard Bureau; the Vice President of the Adjutant General’s Regimental Club Association (Potomac Chapter), received the Civilian Service Achievement Medal; received the 2019 White House Presidential Volunteer – Gold Award for performing over 2,000 community volunteer hours; 2019 JBM-HH Team of the 1st and 3rd Quarter winner for civilian service; received the 2019 Blue Tie Affair Award for community service; received the Col. Robert E. Manning Achievement Medal; 2018 ACHI Woman on the Rise awardee; 2018 ACHI Volunteer of the Year nominee; two Commander’s Awards for

Civilian Service; Selfless Service Award at the Ms. Veteran America Competition; and has received several Certificates of Appreciation for both civilian and community service from 2001 to the present. Also, I have six college degrees.

Describe some of your military highlights.

Some of my military highlights include:

- Becoming a military truck driver that could barely see over the wheel of my own 5 ton truck.
- Becoming an executive assistant to our command staff when women were still finding their place as Soldiers in our military.
- Becoming a mother to two wonderful and successful adults.
- Continuing my college education while serving my nation. I now have six college degrees because of support from the military and from my family.
- Traveling the world to explore new cultures and appreciating cultural experiences gained from those travels
- Being a community volunteer and always helping others.



FAVORITE QUOTE:

“Be a trailblazer that leads from the front. Do better so we can be better together.”

Advice for other veterans:

Be your authentic self by loving and taking care of you so you can help others do the same.

Chelsea Mandello

Branch: U.S. Navy | Rank: E5 | Years of Service: 7

Why did you decide to stay in Hampton Roads?

Hampton Roads is a wonderful community.

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

I founded Troopster while still serving active duty to support those deployed and their families.

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

Small Business Administration Person of the Year Award; Entrepreneurial Excellence

Award; Cova Gives Back Award; Microsoft #EmpowerPossibility Award; Verizon Salute Award and Innovator of the Year.

Describe some of your military highlights.

After graduating from Ball State University with a Bachelor of Science in Advertising in 2011, I joined the United States Navy working as a photojournalist where I traveled the world to provide media support and see firsthand the accomplishments and capabilities of the Armed Forces. It was during my experiences with the military, serving across 13 countries over the course of 7 years, that I was inspired to establish Troopster.

Advice for other veterans:

You’re not alone. Whether you are seeking advice, a career, or help, you are part of a tribe that will help you.



FAVORITE QUOTE:

“Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.”

— Oscar Wilde



FAVORITE QUOTE:
“I am here to Serve!”

Daryl Powell

Branch: U.S. Army | Rank: Sergeant First Class | Years of Service: 21

Why did you decide to stay in Hampton Roads?

- Two reasons:
1. I departed from the area at the age of 18 for the Army and missed about 20 years of time with my parents.
 2. I wanted to serve within my Community.

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

Why not? There are too many that say they want to make a difference and I believe actions speak louder than words. I can’t expect anyone but myself to work and serve in my hometown. The 100 Black Men are doing great things.

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

Being able to reach, teach, coach and counsel young minds, the mentees understand that the sky is the limit when there are foot prints on the moon. I have had the pleasure of seeing mentees grow and return to our program to help out because actions speak louder than words. What they see is what they will be.

Describe some of your military highlights.

As a Bradley Commander being selected as TOP Gun in Germany was one of my highlights and more importantly seeing one of my Mentors being promoted to General. Last highlight was taking 10 young soldiers to Desert Storm and bring them all home safe.

Advice for other veterans:

Keep fighting, tough times don’t last, tough Veterans do!

Greg Selby

Branch: U.S. Coast Guard | Rank: E-7 | Years of Service: 22

Why did you decide to stay in Hampton Roads?

My wife and I initially planned to remain in the Hampton Roads area until our two children graduated from high school. During the two years between my retirement and their graduating, my entire family realized that we wanted to remain here. The primary reason for our change of heart was due to the close-knit feel that we developed with our neighbors and friends in the community and our church. Having spent 22 years moving, it was great to develop family roots and become part of a community.

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

Two words: Mid-life Crisis. In 2010, I decided that I wanted to get a motorcycle. I did not want the typical Harley or racing bike that everyone had. I discovered that there was a local dealer that offered a Russian motorcycle called a Ural and after one look I was hooked. I purchased it in October and within a few weeks, I decided that if Santa Clause ever road a bike, it would be one like what I had just purchased, bright red with a sidecar and very old fashioned looking. I went out and purchased a Santa suit and my wife reluctantly donated her beanie baby collection to me to pass out to kids. That first year I passed out about 100 toys and the look on the faces of children as they receive a toy from Santa is

something that I look forward to each year.

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

For the first two years following my retirement, I worked as an instructor for the Coast Guard base in Yorktown. Being able to pass on my knowledge to the future of the service was a great feeling and I enjoyed it each day. My fondest family memories would be watching my daughters graduate from high school and become successful women.

Describe some of your military highlights.

My tour as Executive Petty Officer of the Search and Rescue unit in Elizabeth City, N.C., was the best tour that I had in my career. To be a part of the leadership and ensure that the unit functioned at peak ability was a great highlight. When I first reported, the unit had averaged less than one hundred law enforcement missions per year. Within my first year, I had developed a training program that allowed the number of missions to increase to over 300 per year. By increasing the law enforcement activities, we saw a significant drop in the number of search and rescue cases we had to respond to.



FAVORITE QUOTE:
Work like a Captain, Party like a Pirate!

Advice for other veterans:

Become active in the community that you are stationed in. Don’t just hang out with your fellow service members. Become part of the community and expand your circle of friends.

Donald Hart

Branch: US Navy | **Rank:** Aerographers Mate Senior Chief E8
| Years of Service: 21 years and 6 months

Why did you decide to stay in Hampton Roads?

I went into the Navy right after graduation at 17 years of age, to pursue an education in meteorology. At this time I had also lost my best friend in a tragic car accident that eventually would set an anchor down in Hampton Roads. He wanted to be a teacher. I would fulfill his dream for him. I earned my Masters Degree in Science Education from Old Dominion University and started teaching in Virginia Beach City Public Schools, going on 26 years now.

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

One of aspects of the Military Life is our devotion to helping out in a variety of areas, this willingness to help is enhanced by the work ethic, time management and versatility I had developed in the Navy. It was this willingness that propelled me into foster care, coaching, fund raising and multiple community service activities. I could also easily see the need for students to be a part of the community they were growing up in. This led to the development of yearlong program, that began with a canned food drive for the Tidewater Food Bank (20 years with over 80,000 pounds collected at Ocean Lakes HS, Laskin Road Salt Marsh Clean Up, collecting toys for the Toys for Tots, Holiday Assistance Program, Academic Mentor Program). All these built the student’s Academic Resume and provided invaluable to their academic ambitions.

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

14 annual 3 day team bonding sessions at YMCA Camp Silver Beach. 20 soccer players who got into Service Academies or ROTC programs as a result of my mentoring. Two this past year, Dawson Weiss and Grant Manock, now at the Naval Academy. Some tremendous memories from 20 foster kids I hosted at my house. 21

National Soccer Coaches Association Team Academic Awards (GPA of 3.75 or higher). 20 Virginia High School League Sportsmanship Awards. Developing winning soccer programs, both on the field and in the classroom, at both Kellam and Ocean Lakes high dchools.

Describe some of your military highlights.

Service aboard the following afloat commands: USS Blue Ridge, USS America, USS Raleigh, USS Nassau. Five years with the Commander 7th Fleet Yokosuka, Japan with visits to Australia, Thailand, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore and Hawaii. The excitement of forecasting a variety of weather from Blizzards in Japan to Typhoons in the Western Pacific. Fleet forecasting and the fantastic Big Sur while at Monterey California. In the pre-dawn hours chasing coyotes off the runways then sending weather balloons up at Naval Air Station Fallon, Nevada. The friendly environs of Boca Chica and Key West, Florida, where I recorded the second lowest temperature in Feb. 1978, 47 degrees. USS America deployments to the Arabian Sea, the Mediterranean, Rio De Janeiro and the adventure of becoming a Shellback during our equator crossing. Fleet Week in May 1991 on board USS Nassau following Desert Storm. The way New Yorkers welcomed us, the amazing parade through Manhattan.



FAVORITE QUOTE:

“Continuous efforts – not strength or intelligence – is the key to unlocking our potential”

- Winston Churchill

Advice for other veterans:

To persevere is essential regardless of the obstacle. Be persistent in your goals.

Rev. Jimmie Allen

Branch: U.S. Navy | **Rank:** LCDR (O-4) | **Years of Service:** 29

Why did you decide to stay in Hampton Roads?

After being stationed locally for many years and raising a family in the area, Hampton Roads became my home.

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

I was introduced to Prison Ministry by a good friend of mine in 1996. After working with her and assisting regularly with the Prison Ministry, it became my passion. I enjoyed watching the inmates transform while still incarcerated through the Word of God. I also had the pleasure of watching many of them become model citizens upon release.

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

I became licensed to preach by the state

Advice for other veterans:

Stay focused, energized and continue to use the skills you have obtained, in the military, and give back to the community once you retire.

of Virginia in February 2006. I was later ordained in December 2011. While my wife was on tour for 3 years in Naples, Italy, I was one of the assistant Pastors for the church service “Hallelujah Full Gospel Church,” located on Naval Station, Gricignano, Italy. I am currently a facilitator for three prison facilities, Indian Creek Correctional Center since 1996, St. Brides Correctional Center since 2017 and Naval Consolidated Brig since 2014, all located in Chesapeake, Va.

Describe some of your military highlights.

Advancing from Airman Recruit to Chief Petty Officer. Later advancing from Chief Petty Officer to Warrant Officer (W-3) and finally advancing from W-3 to Limited Duty Officer, Lieutenant Commander (O-4). I was also selected and awarded the “Lloyd Barker Memorial Award” as Commander Naval Air Force Atlantic Command, Maintenance Man of the Year for 1995.



FAVORITE QUOTE:

God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change... the Courage to change the things I can... and the Wisdom to know the difference.



FAVORITE QUOTE:

You may not be able to do everything for everybody, but everybody can do something for somebody!

Kevin Petersen

Branch: Navy | Rank: Commander / O-5 | Years of Service: 21

Why did you decide to stay in Hampton Roads?

Our children were in middle and high school, so we wanted them to continue their high school education in Virginia Beach.

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

Many of my volunteer efforts are driven by my faith. Whether helping in our church’s food pantry providing food for those in need, or helping promote awareness of the needs in poor areas of Tanzania, where our church has a sister parish, I am drawn to do what I can for those in who suffer hardship. I’ve also seen how lives can be improved by assisting at the Virginia Beach Housing Resource Center, where homeless individuals and families can obtain assistance. Being a caseworker at Navy-Marine Corp Relief Society with budget counseling and providing financial assistance, keeps me connected with the Navy, while assisting Sailors. I try to

do what I can toward addressing just some of the many needs in the community.

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

I am so proud of my family: my wife who excelled as a caring Occupational Therapist, my daughter a talented event planner, with a keen sense of style, and my son, who is serving in the Navy as a Naval Flight Officer with the F/A-18 jet fighter. As we are now spread out across the country, my greatest memories are when all of us get together.

Describe some of your military highlights.

As a Supply Officer, I was always serving others. Shipboard, I was providing services of food service, disbursing, ship’s store or managing parts and logistics operations. Ashore, I continued serving others, mainly in financial operations. It seems my military background was all about serving others, which was a natural transition in my volunteer work.

Advice for other veterans:

The military provides you a wealth of skills that can be used all your life. Get involved, put those talents to good use and be thankful for those who have helped you get to where you are.

Porsha Brown

Branch: Navy | Rank: E5 | Years of Service: 4

Why did you decide to stay in Hampton Roads?

I stayed in Hampton Roads because it had become my new home. I met my wife here and wanted to raise my son here. After leaving the military, I wanted to stay close to the military environment. It’s just a part of who I am now. I could still interact with my junior sailors and be a part of their continued military journey. Even though I’m originally from New Jersey, I feel like I have the best of both worlds. I can raise my family in a place that has become special to me and still be close enough to my home state for frequent visits.

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

Prior to the military, I was already a frequent volunteer. The Navy provided me with more unique opportunities to give back. The Mission Continues opened my eyes to the needs of my fellow service members and their families. I was able to help military schools provide better facilities and help send deployed sailors packages. I would later learn the importance of those packages. Another unique program was PADS. While stationed in Great Lakes, I took advantage of assisting this amazing program for the local homeless. It was possibly one of the most humbling experiences I ever had. Being able to sit and talk with these individuals and to understand

their stories helped eliminate my own ignorance about homelessness.

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

My fondest moments have been watching sailors that worked under me continue to make rank and be successful. I have pinned many of them in their advancement ceremonies. When I can, I am also there for reenlistments and any other milestone. This is a promise I made to my sailors prior to me leaving. As long as it’s within my power, I will continue to support and mentor them. For me, it has made my military time that much more worth it.

Describe some of your military highlights.

One of my first big accomplishments was earning my surface warfare pin. It was something I wanted before I even joined. After that, I was able to make the rank of E5 in about 3 years. This helped me earn Sailor of the Quarter and Sailor of the Year. While deployed, I earned my third Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal. All of these awards were a direct reflection of the amazing crew I worked with.



FAVORITE QUOTE:

Success is a peace of mind, which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best you are possible of becoming.

-John Wooden

Advice for other veterans:

Whether you did 4 years or 20 years, continue to apply all the knowledge acquired in the military to your civilian life. Help your local veterans and civilians the same way you would as an active service member.

Thomas Gross

Branch: United States Navy | **Rank:** Chief Petty Officer | **Years of Service:** 15

Why did you decide to stay in Hampton Roads?

I am from Maryland so “home” is not that far for me. It’s a nice area in the summer time with lots of things to do, and it’s probably the only place in the country where I can actually afford to live on the oceanfront.

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

I saw how my father being in law enforcement always gave back to his community. I wanted to follow through. Too many times, people do things with the expectation of something in return. I want to be a good example of it pays to do the right thing when nobody is looking. I want to be a good role model for my children, my friends and the community I serve.

Advice for other veterans:

Don’t give up and don’t settle for anything less than what you deserve. Get any and every qualification and training you can at the military’s expense. At some point, we all will be outsiders looking in so it’s better to have the qualification and not need it then to need the qualification and not have it. Several job opportunities get lost!

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

I was awarded the Medal of Merit for being off duty and heading home only to see the police attempt to take someone into custody. The person pulled a knife out and injured his neck. I was able to provide direct pressure and other medical interventions and he’s still alive. In addition, you meet the citizens of Virginia Beach of whom you have the pleasure of serving.

Describe some of your military highlights.

Throughout my 15 years of service, I was selected for Sailor of the Year 3 times, selected for Chief 1st time up, obtained a master’s degree and the chance to deploy to some of the best places (and strangest) that one can imagine.



FAVORITE QUOTE:
At what level are you willing to participate?

Wallace Green

Branch: U.S. Navy | **Rank:** Chief Petty Officer | **Years of Service:** 30 total

Why did you decide to stay in Hampton Roads?

After retiring from the Navy, I had a job interview with the Social Security Administration in Woodlawn, Md., where I used to work. Following my interview, I woke up to a familiar picture, over 11 inches of snow, traffic on the side streets were unable to move for a of couple days and my usual four hour drive from Baltimore to Virginia Beach turned to a 10-hour creep. That is when I decided to make Hampton Roads home.

Why did you decide to participate in your organization(s)?

I decide to participate in kidney disease organization in 2003 when I required dialysis treatment. I decided to form Health & Awareness, Inc., Oct. 9, 2012, after volunteering with the National Kidney Foundation and Dialysis Patient Citizen and I realize there was no training available for seniors or low-income people. Uninsured, public assistance families that could not afford WiFi and computers where most of the larger organization offer prevention information. So, I formed Health & Awareness, a 501(3)c Chronic Kidney Disease Prevention Organization to educate those in greater need. Because my request for a room to hold training was denied from hospitals, I started holding the training wherever possible, most without WiFi connection. My decision to get involve with kidney organization was because kidney failure and during my eight years on dialysis, I decide to hold personal interviews with over 200 dialysis patients learning each story could have been preventive. 97% of patients were unaware they had kidney disease until it was much too late or they did not understand what the doctor was leaving out during their visit. MEDICARE did not authorize dietician’s treatment until patients are on dialysis. In addition, Warren Buffett announced in 2014 America’s next big business was to buy stock in dialysis. I decide to form Health & Awareness, Inc., because no one offered face to face chronic kidney disease prevention training. On July 10, 2019, the Trump administrations made kidney disease a national health priority in a news release, making an announcement CKD is an epidemic and the fastest growing noncommunicable disease in America. Health & Awareness, Inc. has been reaching out to leaders in the community for eight years with our outlined strategies because Virginia is ranked number 9 on the death list from kidney failure.

What are your achievements or fond memories outside the military?

My achievements outside the Navy consist of traveling rough roads. When my doctor told me I would be in a wheelchair the rest of my life and I was sent to get mental health care because he felt I was in denial because I did not believe it. My faith, knowing myself and abilities put me back on my feet.

Selected as the 2017 Virginia Governor’s Volunteerism Awards in the Senior Category, 2019 Hampton Roads Volunteer Achievement Award Community Senior Honoree; 2019 National Donor Memorial Award for Excellence nomination; American Kidney Fund Kidney Health Coach; and a host of letters of appreciations.

Raising awareness and addressing how to slow down or stop the progression of kidney failure. Educating others with kidney disease risk factors of the things to do in the early preventive stage.

Organize, plan and teach a workshop for low-income, uninsured, seniors, veterans and disabled people without computers to received kidney disease prevention information. The workshop training includes but not limited to: how well are your kidneys working, how to read food labels/nutrition, the importance of understanding labs results and misunderstand and misconception regarding organ donation.

Ambassador LifeNet Health – Promote and raise the need for organ, eye and tissues awareness.

As for my fondest memories outside the military? There are many memories. My wife Sandra provided heartfelt care for me in my time of need, assisted me when I was unable to care for myself. I will always remember the comfort received – it’s priceless. Sandra is truly the honoree and one of my most memorable memories.

I’ll never forget June 23, 2013, when I received a call from my sister that when my mother was hospitalized, instructions were given to prepare surgery for my mother to receive dialysis. After reviewing her lab results and symptoms, I recommend she decline the surgery and talk with a nephrologist other than the one in the hospital. Memories of the trust mom had in the knowledge I had in chronic kidney disease gave me the confident help other — six years later mom continual to follow my recommendations. and confirm her decision with her kidney doctor.



FAVORITE QUOTE:
God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change.... the Courage to change the things I can.....and the Wisdom to know the difference.

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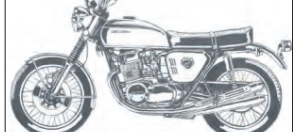
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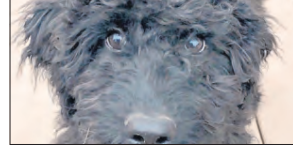
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