

TNR

RESILIENCY IN RESERVE

GIVING BACK BUT NEVER GIVING UP

VOLUME 2020 ISSUE 4

FIGHTING INSTRUCTIONS

LEGAL READINESS

IT STARTS WITH US

STRENGTHENING TIES



TNR

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TNR tells the story of the U.S. Navy Reserve through articles, news and photos showcasing the contributions of Navy Reserve Sailors delivering real-world capabilities and expertise in support of the Navy mission. Find more news and information at www.navyreserve.navy.mil

FEATURES



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During a six-year pivot, Gonzalez walked along a road filled with new challenges, setbacks and obstacles, ultimately leading him to the doorstep of the U.S. Navy Reserve.



20 LEGAL READINESS

For many Reserve Sailors, legal readiness is not a high priority, but it truly is of utmost importance — primarily so Sailors can stay focused on the mission when deployed.



24 IT STARTS WITH US

We firmly believe that if we, as a Navy, focus more on positive behaviors rather than the negative, the results will ensure our Navy can sustain a lethal warfighting force composed of Sailors who are tough, masters of their trade and ethical warriors.



30 STRENGTHENING TIES

"Semper Gumby" is an old play on the official U.S. Marine Corps and Coast Guard mottos ... Embracing this mantra has been central to the identity of the RC FAO community as it has evolved over the past five years.

COVER RESILIENCY IN RESERVE GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA. — After spending years crafting a flawless application package no military service academy could ignore, Fernando Gonzalez was ready to step into the arena — more than anyone else he knew. A top-tier athlete in both football and track and field, Gonzalez was in the best shape of his life. His grades were stellar. His community service and volunteering credentials were impeccable. Yet his journey was just beginning. Read more about Ensign Gonzalez on page 16. Photo courtesy of Mark Massingill

THIS PAGE VADER 500 THE SKIES ABOVE MT. RAINIER, WASHINGTON — Capt. William "Kid" Fraser, Deputy Commander of Tactical Support Wing, flies VAQ-209 Star Warriors' Vader 500 in front of Mt. Rainier during a training mission in the Pacific Northwest. Photo by Cmdr. Peter Scheu

FROM THE TOP

FIGHTING INSTRUCTIONS

We are focused unambiguously on warfighting readiness. It is my number one and only priority — period. We will generate the combat power and critical strategic depth the Navy requires to prevail in conflict in an era of great power competition. That’s our job, and why we exist. All else is secondary.

The intent of these fighting instructions is to enable the Navy Reserve to deliver ready units of action and augmentation manpower to support Navy warfighting and enabling requirements throughout the spectrum of conflict at a resource-informed cost.

Global events and Navy organizational changes in 2020 warrant a recalibration and update to our strategic priorities. Additionally, the Navy Reserve’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic provided lessons learned across the Force, from Reserve activation and logistics to drill weekend execution. We must retain and apply these real-world lessons as our planning efforts continue. My Theory of the Fight is this; to create and maintain a ready force, we will Design, Train, and Mobilize the Force in alignment with the Navy’s Fleet Design and its Force Development, Force Generation and Force Employment processes.

Shipmates, we have reasons to be proud. For 105 years our nation has valued the awesome contribution our Citizen-Sailors give to the defense of our great country.

Every day, Reserve Sailors deliver ground-breaking work in every theater on the planet, in every domain, and our Navy is stronger as a result. And yet the changing geopolitical environment forces us to modernize our thinking, our force structure, our training and our operations to address the realities of a future conflict.

Simply said, we cannot assume tomorrow’s war will look like yesterday’s. Hence my Theory of the Fight includes accelerating our transformation to ensure we get, and remain, “future-ready.”

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that we must be ready to respond to national emergencies with little warning. You proved, once again, that when the nation needs us, we are ready. Thousands of you answered the nation’s call on short notice and with significant personal sacrifice. I am extremely proud of your performance in this unprecedented period, when we have contributed to mission assurance by leading the Navy with innovative approaches to getting the job done.

Now, we must just as urgently prepare to respond to a high-end fight against a peer adversary. We must prioritize our focus on readiness for rapid, large-scale activation in accordance with our Fleet Design over ad hoc operational support and mobilizations. We must be both “mobilization ready” AND “warfighting ready” on Day One. That is how we deliver critical strategic depth to our Navy. That is our purpose.

I am excited by the work ahead, and I am inspired to unlock the vast potential I see every day in our Force. Together, we must tackle with urgency the systemic, structural and cultural impediments that constrain our readiness, responsiveness and lethality.

It will be challenging, but I have every confidence you will rise to the challenge. Our nation, our Navy and our families are counting on you.

You have my commander’s intent. Now let’s get busy.

**We must be both
‘mobilization ready’
AND ‘warfighting
ready.’ On Day One.
That is how we
deliver critical
strategic depth to
our Navy. That is
our purpose.**



Vice Adm. John B. Mustin
Chief of Navy Reserve

DESIGN THE FORCE

In line with Navy requirements, we will identify warfighting capabilities best suited for the Navy’s Reserve Component (RC). This effort will complement established Fleet requirement generation processes to ensure all capabilities resident in the RC provide a net benefit to the Navy, particularly in generating strategic depth for warfighting requirements. Decisions to generate and maintain capabilities or capacities in the RC will be based on assessments and analysis demonstrating the RC can deliver required capabilities at reduced cost, and within acceptable risk, relative to the Active Component (AC).

TRAIN THE FORCE

Chief among Train the Force is what is called “MOB-to-Billet,” which focuses training and all time spent in uniform preparing Sailors for their mobilization billets, in addition to the more traditional unit training requirements which are the cost of being a Reserve member. This includes ensuring all Selected Reserve personnel understand their programmed mobilization billets; and that they are trained and ready to activate and fight on “Day One.” It also supports the Chief of Naval Operations “IA to Zero” effort to reduce the number of individual augmentee billets supporting the war on terror, and calls for infusing the force with a sense of character in line with the Navy core values, diversity and culture.

MOBILIZE THE FORCE

Mobilizing the Force for a conflict against a peer or near-peer adversary requires developing and employing mobilization processes based on the MOB-to-Billet design in order to expedite activation of RC forces in times of need. This includes implementing Distributed Mobilization, allowing for activating the entire Selected Reserve population of approximately 50,000 in 30 days and subsequent deactivation; and also calls for implementation of the Navy Personnel & Pay (NP2) system by January 2022, which will simplify pay processes for Reserve members going on and off active duty.

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT

RESERVE ORDER TIPS

So you have approved orders — but what now? How can you be sure your orders will make it through all of the administrative hurdles necessary to get paid on time and all of your benefits are on track?

While your Reserve team works through multiple process steps and behind-the-scene tasks to get you to your assignment successfully, here are six areas you should pay special attention to in order to make sure you, and your family, are set-up for success.

HAVE A PLAN

This may seem to go without saying, but communicate your plans and status of orders with your Reserve unit and Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC). Make sure both know when and where you're headed. Next, discuss your drill management plan (Authorized Absence or reschedule) with unit leadership for any drills scheduled to take place during your time on orders. If you choose to reschedule your drills, it is imperative to submit your request prior to executing orders. All of these are crucial steps in order to ensure you aren't mustered for drill periods mistakenly — a situation that could end up putting you in debt to the Navy. Timely communication will ensure you have the support you need if you run into significant challenges while on orders.

TRACK YOUR TRICARE

It's important to avoid gaps in your family's healthcare coverage. When going on active duty orders, you will be transitioned into the active component TRICARE program. For most Sailors, this will happen behind the scenes, but understanding the process will help you identify any problems early on.

The steps for checking on your active duty status — and your eligibility for active TRICARE — may vary for different order types, but for most Sailors, the first step is checking out from your NOSC — usually through the NOSC mobilization shop. This is where your Reserve pay record will be closed out and submitted to gain into the active system.

MOBILIZATION — For an Individual Augmentation (IA) MOB, following your Ready Load Date (RLD) at your NOSC, the next stop is normally checking in with the Expeditionary Combat Readiness Center (ECRC) for further processing. The Command Pay/Personnel Administrator (CPPA) at the ECRC will take care of your TRICARE transition.

ACTIVE DUTY FOR TRAINING — For Active Duty for Training orders greater than 30 days, you can bring a copy of your endorsed orders to the nearest RAPIDS site to be uploaded into your Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS) record. Once in the system, you will be able to apply for TRICARE Prime/Select.

NONE OF THE ABOVE — For other order types, stay in contact with your gaining command's personnel office to make sure each of the previous steps have taken place.

Further instructions are provided in the Commander Navy Reserve Forces Command (CNRFC) portal under FAQs for SELRES and TRICARE. The following link provides a step-by-step guide on how and when TRICARE benefits are activated/deactivate during the mobilization and demobilization process. https://private.navyreserve.navy.mil/cnrfc/N-Codes/N1/covid/SitePages/COVID_FAQs.aspx

Once your active duty status is updated in DEERS, reach out to your regional Tricare office by phone or through www.tricare.mil. From there, you can enroll in Tricare Prime, select a Primary Care Manager (PCM), and cancel any previously scheduled TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) premium payments. If you're a TRS enrollee, you may also be entitled to a refund!

TRAVEL SMART

If you're headed to active duty on non-training orders, talk with your gaining command in advance about either establishing an active profile in Defense Travel System (DTS) or, if you already have one, "gaining" your active profile — the same process for an active Sailor who is doing a Permanent Change of Station. As part of this, ensure your profile information (e.g. Government Travel Credit Card (GTCC) number and expiration date, DOB, etc.) is current in your active DTS profile just as it is in your Reserve DTS profile (the two profiles do not share information with each other). An easy way to distinguish between an active and reserve profile is by the SSN; the Reserve profile will have an "R" at the end of the SSN while the active profile will not.

The Reserve profile has nothing to do with non-training orders; it exists solely to facilitate Navy Reserve Orders Writing System (NROWS)-related travel and should never be gained or lost, even if you change Training Reserve Unit Identification Codes (TRUIC), NOSCs or squadrons. The first time you apply for NROWS orders via a new TRUIC, NOSC or squadron, a signal will be sent to DTS automatically transferring your Reserve profile to the new TRUIC Navy Reserve Activity's DTS hierarchy.

UPDATE & VALIDATE YOUR RED/DA

Maybe you've heard this term before, but we'll break it down for you. The "RED" in "RED/DA" is DD Form 93, Record of Emergency Data. The "DA" stands for NAVPERS 1070/602, Dependency Application.

These two forms are vital for you to keep updated in NSIPS immediately after any changes, but once you receive orders you must at a minimum validate your RED/DA data. Make sure your dependency data is current by submitting both forms through the Navy Standard Integrated Personnel System (NSIPS) RED/DA update feature. Updating your RED/DA information when required and validating frequently will ensure proper pay and allowance amounts arrive in a timely fashion once the gaining process is complete through your active duty command.

READ YOUR LES

Normally when your unit or gaining command's Command Pay/Personnel Administrator (CPPA) submits an Annual Training (AT) or ADT eMuster in NSIPS, it takes approximately 10 days to receive a Leave and Earning Statement (LES) listing your pay date. This is important for two reasons. First, to make sure you will be receiving a paycheck for your orders on time. Second, is to make sure you are not erroneously mustered for drills while on AT or ADT orders. It's always a good idea to learn how to read and review your LES to ensure you're being paid the correct amount — and not a penny less or more.

DON'T NEGLECT YOUR GTCC

Make sure any outstanding travel card balances are paid in full each month. Ensure you have enough credit to meet the travel requirements and check your card's expiration date to make sure the card won't expire in the middle of your mission. If you're headed to active duty, talk with your gaining command to make sure your card is switched over to support an active DTS account — this step should happen behind the scenes, but it doesn't hurt to ask.

Be aware of mission requirements when traveling. The standard credit limit for a GTCC is \$7,000. Depending on your financial situation, members may be issued a restricted GTCC with a credit limit of \$4,500. Communicate early with your gaining command before initiating orders to get a clear picture of future expenses.

For active duty orders, verify your gaining command has properly transferred your card to their hierarchy. Your card will typically transfer hierarchy to the command who is paying for your Reserve assignment.

Any GTCC issue that may impact a future mobilization should be annotated by the "OAT" MAS code as an item to be discussed with your NOSC, Reserve Component Command and CNRFC N35.

For more information on the GTCC program, contact your command Agency Program Coordinator (APC).



AROUND THE FORCE

A SNAPSHOT OF NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE NAVY RESERVE FORCE DELIVERING STRATEGIC DEPTH AND OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY AROUND THE WORLD.



VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

Chief of Navy Reserve, Vice Adm. John Mustin, and Reserve Force Master Chief Chris Kotz speak to Sailors during a virtual town hall at Defense Media Activity, Fort Meade, Maryland, Nov. 7, 2020. Watch the entire discussion on the Navy Reserve website at: <https://go.usa.gov/xA3vD>.

PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS JYMYKA BRADEN

RADIO GMT

During one of NOSC Harlingen, Texas' first on-site drill weekends since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gunner's Mate 1st Class Luis Cano and Operations Specialist 2nd Class Pedro SanchezMelendez, coordinated a major win for their team in implementing an ingenious way to safely facilitate mission-essential general military training (GMT) to more than 165 drilling Reserve and Full-Time Support staff members.

"GM1 Cano came up with the idea of doing the training like a drive-in movie theater and I loved the idea," said SanchezMelendez, the command's training coordinator. "I bought an FM transmitter, which sends a signal to your designated radio station. We tested it, found an available station and ensured we would not interfere with any existing broadcasts, and were able to get a good feed."

In the NOSC's parking lot, Reserve Sailors and support staff were able to tune in to the training from the safety of their vehicles.

"It was kind of like listening to a podcast," said Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Anazette Cano who said it made the drill seem less distant. "It gave us some semblance of normalcy, being able to drill onsite instead of virtually like we had been doing since March."

The four-hour radio training session covered eight GMT topics: Sexual Assault Prevention and Response; Cyber Awareness; Counter-Intelligence Awareness; Record Management; Suicide Prevention; Equal Opportunity; Active Shooter; Combating Trafficking in Persons.

"The command gave us an opportunity ahead of drill weekend to volunteer to facilitate one of the briefs which I thought was really helpful for those of us looking for leadership opportunities," said Hernandez.

SanchezMelendez's unusual method of delivery for GMTs enabled NOSC Harlingen to complete more than 83% of its annual training requirements in a COVID-safe environment.

"As Reservists, maintaining readiness is one of our top priorities," said SanchezMelendez. "Things change all the time, so it's up to us to adjust and do whatever is required to complete the mission."

NOSC Harlingen Commanding Officer Lt. Cmdr. Thomas Wright said he is proud of the unique ways his team has adapted in light of the pandemic.

"I have always pushed our Sailors to think outside of the box at NOSC Harlingen," he said. "These times call for innovative and creative thinking. I challenged our Sailors with the safe execution of an all-hands drill weekend event in a COVID-19 environment and this is the solution they presented. To watch our staff move forward, empowered to make decisions, has been nothing short of remarkable. These Sailors make me proud to serve alongside them every single day."

STORY BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST
1ST CLASS LAWRENCE DAVIS



THE NAVY'S NEW FITNESS TEST IS HERE: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Navy will hold a single, six-month physical fitness assessment cycle during calendar year 2021, allowing the service to resume fitness testing while limiting Sailor exposure to COVID-19.

Announced in NAVADMIN 304/20, released Nov. 18, the message details how new additions to the PFA will be accomplished and graded. The forearm plank will replace the curl-up, and the 2000-meter row enters as a new optional cardio. It's the first major change to the assessment since the Navy introduced fitness assessments in the early 1980s.

Sailors have long complained about the curl-up. As Navy researchers studied the exercise, they found it was not a true test of abdominal strength. Also, it did not prepare Sailors to better accomplish shipboard tasks. In fact, curl-ups have been linked to an increased risk of creating or aggravating lower back injuries.

The forearm plank, however, is a functional movement required in 85% of regular shipboard tasks, including pushing, pulling, lifting and carrying.

The forearm plank uses isometric contraction to activate key abdominal and trunk muscles, mimicking the main function of the abdominal musculature — to act as stabilizers to resist the spine from moving while strengthening the lower back.

Training for the forearm plank strengthens the body's core, improves posture, and reduces the risk of lower back injuries throughout a Sailor's career.

Because there is overlap in the muscle groups used for the push-up and the forearm plank, the decision was made to conduct the push-up event first, followed by the plank and cardio portions.

This sequence was used in the initial tests. Researchers found it allows for maximum performance on the push-ups while limiting residual fatigue during the forearm plank.

The cardio portion's new addition will be a 2,000-meter row on the "Concept-2 Rower." The other options remain as the 12 minute stationary cycle, 500-yd swim and 1.5 mile run.



PROPER PLANK POSITION — In one of the most talked about changes to the physical readiness program, the plank brings a new test for core strength. Every Navy Reserve Sailor's never-ending fight for an outstanding score in the PFA will mean holding this horizontal position for 3 minutes and 40 seconds for the youngest Reserve members to a total of 2 minutes and 50 seconds for the most experienced Sailors.

A non-weight bearing, low impact exercise, rowing reduces stress on the legs, while providing a great full-body cardio workout as it works 80% of the body's muscles.

A big benefit of the Concept-2 Rower is that it's space saving and thus able to be easily used on any naval vessel as well as at shore installations.

A detailed description of how each of the new events will be conducted can be found in NAVADMIN 304/20. As previously announced, the Navy will give Sailors a one-cycle grace period for the forearm-plank. Though the event will be conducted during the 2021 Cycle, it won't officially count until 2022.

Initial performance standards for scoring the forearm plank and 2000-meter row were developed by the Naval Health Research Center (NHRC) and are available to both individuals and command fitness leaders on the Navy Physical Readiness Program website at https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/21st_Century_Sailor/physical/Pages/default2.aspx.

STORY BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS MARK FARAM
TOP PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS ERIKA KUGLER
PLANK PHOTO COURTESY OF NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND



TRANSFER OF INFORMATION

Rear Adm. James Butler took the helm of the Navy Information Force Reserve from Rear Adm. Gene F. Price during a change of command ceremony in Fort Worth, Texas, Oct. 24. CNIFR leads more than 8,000 Sailors within the Reserve Information Warfare team supporting mobilization, contingency and peacetime operations.

PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS VICTOR R. NAVARRETE

PSA: DON'T DOUBLE DIP

The term Dual Compensation is when a federal government employee, who is also a Reserve Sailor receives Reserve and regular civilian pay for the exact same time periods without being in a civilian leave status. If you are a federal employee, be sure to talk with your supervisor or human resources office to make sure your Reserve time matches up with your civilian leave dates. Whether you use Military Leave, Annual Leave or even Leave Without Pay, make sure you're not double dipping.

Federal law (5 USC 5536) prohibits a Reservist on active duty from working in a civilian capacity with the government at the same time. The law states that a Government Service employee cannot concurrently receive pay for their civilian position while also executing active duty orders unless in an appropriate civilian leave status — such as military leave or annual leave.

Contact your civilian Human Resources office or your legal office for more information.



BOLD QUEST

Navy Reserve Sailors from across the country provided operational support, physical security and force health protection enforcement during the Joint Staff sponsored Coalition Capability Demonstration and Assessment event Bold Quest 20.2 held at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, Oct. 13 through Nov. 4.

"This has been a great opportunity for people to see a joint and coalition environment in practice," said Cmdr. Lee Dortzbach, Bold Quest 20.2 Operations Synchronization Lead and a Navy Reservist assigned to Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) Norfolk. "It is a chance to see an operational level of warfighting and learn some of the tactics and see the systems that enable communication between different types of units in different services."

About a dozen Reserve Sailors supported the exercise this year, working closely with Joint Staff security in setting a watch on two entry control points and patrols of event facilities. They also coordinated with Airmen assigned to the 192nd Air Medical Group of the Virginia Air National Guard to plan and execute a force health protection plan for the event. The Sailors helped check temperatures and issued facility passes to exercise participants.

"Everybody I have talked to at Bold Quest, whether they are a civilian employee, contractor or another branch, says they want more Navy presence here," said Sonar Technician (Submarine) 1st Class Michael Amenti, a Navy Reservist assigned to Undersea Warfare Operations New London. "They want to interact more with the Navy, surface and sub-surface to understand our tactics and how we can be integrated into a joint operation."

The Reserve team included Sailors from six different rates, each bringing their own personal background, skills and experience with them. Dortzbach says the event would be difficult to complete if not for the contributions of his team and considers it a point of pride when someone is surprised that he or another Sailor is a Reservist, because they perform at an active duty level.

"It is essential that we have people who are willing to volunteer themselves for a duty like this," said Yeoman 2nd Class Michael Ledin, from NOSC Minneapolis. "A unit like this that can come together with so many different people, rates, ranks and leadership skills. It has been a great team and I am very impressed with how the Joint Staff has put on the event."

STORY AND PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS JONATHAN WORD

NAVY RESERVE PARTNERS WITH NAVAL TEST PILOT SCHOOL TO SOLVE COVID-19 CHALLENGES

The United States Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS) trains some of the world's finest developmental test pilots, flight officers, engineers, industry and foreign partners in full spectrum test and evaluation of aircraft and aircraft systems. One of the foundational aircraft used at the school is the Northrop Grumman T-38C Talon supersonic jet trainer.

As the T-38C is the USNTPS's primary fixed-wing trainer, students are required to receive formal flight training in the aircraft prior to arriving at the school. Before the COVID-19 pandemic set in, this was accomplished through a partnership with the U.S. Air Force's Air Education and Training Command (AETC) at Randolph Air Force Base in Texas. The pandemic forced AETC to pare back training commitments to the Navy and other customers. With new students preparing to arrive, USNTPS needed to find an alternative — and quickly.

While USNTPS had the capability to provide T-38C ground training and approximately 10 of the flight hours required to achieve initial T-38C qualification, the school had no way to conduct vital simulator training as the Navy does not have a T-38 simulator. Simulator training is essential because aircraft malfunctions and emergencies can be trained through simulations that otherwise would not be safe or possible to train to during actual flight.

USNTPS turned to the Reserve to help solve the critical training shortfall.

Cmdr. Adam Klein works as a civilian research pilot for NASA at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas and identified a solution to the problem. Klein also leads the Naval Air Systems Command's Reserve Program (NRP) Rapid Research and Development (RR&D) Detachment Officer in Charge and a Reserve T-38C Instructor Pilot with USNTPS.

NASA operates a simulator for the T-38N to train basic and emergency procedures as well as crew resource management. Working with USNTPS, the NRP and his NASA leadership, Klein rapidly developed a simulator training program tailored to the school's unique requirements as well as an inter-agency agreement between USNTPS and NASA.

"NASA appreciates its professional partnership with USNTPS, and we

recognize the importance of pre-arrival training for fixed-wing students," he said. "We were able to leverage both my civilian and Navy Reserve careers to solve a critical problem for USNTPS while continuing to strengthen the relationship between USNTPS and NASA."

Five Test Pilots Under Instruction (TPUI), the formal name for students attending USNTPS, traveled to the Johnson Space Center over the summer for training in the NASA simulator. Each student received basic, instrument and emergency procedures training. Klein said that although the avionics of NASA's "N" series aircraft differ from the "C" series flown by USNTPS, the fidelity of the simulator's flying qualities and performance were high enough to be an effective trainer for the T-38C.

"While the differences between the two series of aircraft might normally be a detriment to the training flow of a fleet pilot, USNTPS is training TPUIs who need to rapidly adapt to new aircraft and interfaces," said Klein. "By exposing the TPUIs to the T-38N simulator, the students were able to receive the critical T-38 transition training while also receiving a test pilot school primer."

After the simulator training, Klein returned to Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland for his two weeks of Annual Training augmenting the USNTPS flight staff as an instructor pilot. Klein's support helped expedite the TPUI's training flow and ensured the students were able to start their 10-month training course on time.

"We rely heavily on the NAVAIR Reserve Program to fill critical and demanding billets within the squadron," said USNTPS Commanding Officer Air Force Lt. Col. Rory Feely. "They bring a wealth of experience and perspective with them and are instrumental to USNTPS mission success. Without the NRP, we would be dead in the water. I see this innovative use of staffing resources as a huge win-win for the NRP and USNTPS — we are talking top quality talent that dons their service uniform and gets after the mission."

STORY BY NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
PHOTO COURTESY PAUL LAGASSE



HSC-3: FIGHTING FIRE WITH COMMITMENT

The “Merlins” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 3’s Southern California Offshore Range (SCORE) Detachment is a Naval Air Force Reserve detachment that takes essential firefighting proficiency to the air, supporting naval installations and assisting civilian fire agencies during emergencies when state resources are spread thin. The detachment consists of eight Full-Time Support (FTS) and eight Selected Reserve (SELRES) pilots, 45-50 FTS maintainers, eight active-duty and eight SELRES aircrew. Their primary mission is to provide range support on San Clemente Island, most often supporting anti-submarine warfare (ASW) training.

“I think the best thing about being assigned to SCORE Detachment is how much we get to go out and do the missions we train for,” said Naval Aircrewman Helicopter 2nd Class Zachary Romero, who served with the detachment on active duty from 2012-2018 and continues his service with them as a SELRES. “At SCORE, we practice and then we get to regularly put what we practiced into action. There’s no better feeling than that.”

According to Lt. Cmdr. Zach West, the detachment’s officer in charge, the unit facilitates about 50% of the ASW readiness for the aircraft, destroyers and submarines that come from west coast squadrons. “We’re out on the island from one or two days to a full week just about every week with two aircraft providing range support.”

While the detachment primarily supports the range through the launch and/or recovery of underwater and aerial drone targets, West described how firefighting fits into their role supporting San Clemente range operations.

“Firefighting has always been a contingency mission for us,” explained West. “There is a firefighting requirement for San Clemente Island to support their live-fire range for small arms, missiles, etc. Ranges need firefighting capability if they have a live impact area.”

West also detailed how SCORE Detachment is uniquely positioned to be able to quickly respond to a fire.

“We are a sea-going command with the personnel and manning to support the quick spin up and turn around to support firefighting, while also being here in Southern California year round as our operations take place in San Clemente,” he explained. “We also have a high amount of collective experience with firefighting here as we have some longstanding Selected Reserve pilots who have been with us as many as eight years.”

This unique position led them to become the firefighting program managers for the local Helicopter Sea Combat Wing Pacific squadrons and to develop a close relationship with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) after working closely with them for 17 years.

“With the devastating fires we had in 2003, the Navy and Marine Corps were willing to help us, but were unable to because they didn’t have civilian radios to communicate or the correct training or procedures in place to operate in that civilian air space,” said Tony Mecham, dual-hatted fire chief for both

CAL FIRE San Diego and San Diego County Fire.

“That was when that relationship with CAL FIRE started,” said West. “[The “Firehawks” of HSC-85], who we were assigned to at the time, developed a joint ground training program with CAL FIRE. The squadron provided the aircraft-familiar egress training, and coordinated aviation water survival training for CAL FIRE military helicopter coordinators, who now fly with us when we fight a fire.”

Mecham detailed the value of the relationship with the Navy and Marine Corps in the stress of increasingly dangerous fire seasons.

“Every year, we think we have the worst fire danger conditions of all time, and then each year it gets worse,” said Mecham. “The fire danger here often comes from the Santa Ana winds, which blow generally from North to South. We’ll see fires happen up in the Los Angeles area first, for example, and send resources. Then the following day, we have fires down here while some of our resources are still up North. Having this partnership to support the region is a really comforting thing for us, knowing that in an emergency we have that backup.”

Mecham added his high level of confidence in SCORE Detachment pilots and those from other Navy and Marine Corps squadrons was born from his experience working with them and seeing their capability.

“The Navy and Marine Corps have incredibly talented pilots, and we love working with them,” said Mecham. “All we had to do was give them a little additional firefighting training, and then we let them do what they do best.”

Through this partnership, the detachment provided assistance for the Horse Fire in 2006, the Witch Peak Fire and the Harris Fire in 2007, the Basin Complex Fire in 2008, the Vallecito Lightning Complex Fires in 2012, the Springs Fire in 2013, the Lilac Fire in 2017, the Thomas Fire in 2018, and the Valley Fire in September 2020.

“Firefighting is really about the troops on the ground, in this case, the firefighters,” said West. “Those firefighters do incredibly hard work in really unforgiving environments. It really is an honor to be able to go out there and support them and protect the region.”

Having annual training and an established relationship with experts at CAL FIRE helps SCORE Detachment do just that, not only for supporting the region in emergencies with wildfires, but for being ready to fight fires on Navy installations.

“Supporting firefighting efforts from the air is a simple mission that has a lot of complex details,” said West. “At the end of the day, all you’re really trying to do is get water on the fire and put the fire out. But after taking into consideration the people on the ground, obstacles that may be hidden by smoke, the high-altitude and high-temperature environments that affect the performance of the aircraft, heavy aircraft loads from carrying the water, and winds that are sometimes unpredictable — it can quickly become very challenging. It’s important to have established proficiency and experience, so we can operate safely.”

In 2018, the detachment quickly dispatched for standby support of the Woolsey fire when it threatened Naval Air Station Point Mugu. Most recently, the detachment supported Sailors and federal firefighters working to contain the fire on the Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD-6).

For Romero, being a part of supporting the crew of Bonhomme Richard was a moving experience for him as a Sailor. “When you’ve been on a ship, you know that a lot of people have strong emotional ties to that ship,” said Romero. “When the crew is fighting the fire and working to save their ship, it’s a really powerful thing to know that you’re there alongside them.”

In addition to protecting the region and Department of Defense assets, having Reserve personnel able to respond to these emergencies, maintain this proficiency, and help train and qualify active-duty pilots and aircrew is also beneficial to the Navy as a whole in another crucial way.

“SCORE Detachment taking on the role as firefighting program manager has one important thing in common with the mission we carry out day to day,” said West. “Both augmenting the wing’s aerial firefighting capability and supporting range operations on San Clemente Island are roles that have allowed us to take some of the burden from our active-duty counterparts, so they can focus on warfighting.”

While the unit as a whole helps to take some of the weight off of local, active-duty squadrons, their SELRES also have a role in reducing operational stress from the detachment’s active duty and FTS personnel.

“The active and FTS Sailors are always there ready to go, but they’ll call the SELRES as well for additional support,” said Romero. “Firefighting is a really taxing mission, so having us available to fill in when they need to rotate out can make a big difference.”

Romero is aware of the difference the work he and his SELRES peers makes for their full-time counterparts. Recently, he gained a new, personal perspective on the impact of firefighting efforts in the region.

“Around the same time I was notified we were being called in for the Valley Fire, I also got a warning text message that my neighborhood might be evacuated,” said Romero. “I could see the smoke coming up just over a hill from my house. At that point, it wasn’t just the homes of people I didn’t know, it was my home and my neighbors’ homes. In that situation, it just becomes so much more real. You know when you’re making drops on that fire just how much every drop counts. When people are being evacuated and homes are being lost, all you want to do is be able to do something to help. This is a way for us to help make a difference.”

RESERVE 101: SATISFACTORY PARTICIPATION

In order to maintain our well-earned reputation as being dependable and responsive citizen Sailors, it is critical every Reserve Sailor completes the requirements listed in MILPERSMAN 1001-150 under Navy Reserve Participation Requirements. Some of the major participation requirements include:

INACTIVE DUTY TRAINING

Satisfactorily complete 40 of 48 IDT periods (Drills) each fiscal year (Oct-Sept). A Reserve Sailor who is unable to meet this requirement will be designated as an unsatisfactory participant when nine or more IDT periods in a running 12-month period are declared unsatisfactory or are unexcused absences.

ANNUAL TRAINING

Annual Training (AT)/Active Duty Training (ADT)/Active Duty (AD). Perform a minimum of 12-14 days AT, equivalent ADT, or AD each fiscal year.

MEDICAL & DENTAL

Report as directed (in-person) for physical and dental examinations and provide medical documentation as requested to determine physical qualifications for retention.

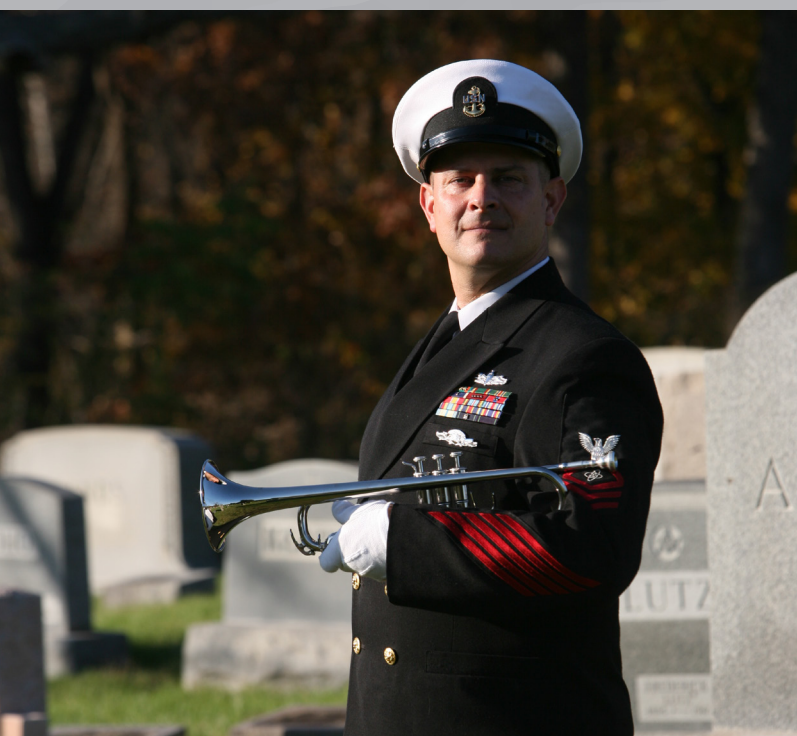
If an enlisted Reserve Sailor fails to meet these requirements, they can be placed on a six month probation or transferred to the Volunteer Training Unit (VTU) within five business days pending administrative separation. For officers, they can be transferred to the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) — Active Status Pool (ASP) or USNR-S2 within 10 business days. Additionally, officers may be recommended for separation for cause.

Review MILPERSMAN 1001-150 for the complete list of satisfactory participation requirements:
<https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/reference/milpersman/1000/1000General/Documents/1001-150.pdf>

PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS BENJAMIN STEVENS

STORY BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS CHELSEA MILBURN
PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS JOAN E. JENNINGS

PROFILES IN PROFESSIONALISM



Being part of the NOSC Baltimore funeral honors team is a rewarding experience ... It allows me to participate in the rich heritage that is the United States Navy.

CHIEF ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN MATT SABO

Electronics Technicians are usually found maintaining and fixing electrical equipment and helping operate and manage electronics systems for the world's most advanced ships and aircraft. One responsibility normally not associated within his profession is trumpeter for military funeral honors ceremonies.

For Chief Electronics Technician Matt Sabo, senior enlisted leader for SurgeMain Baltimore, playing taps has become routine. Sabo has been participating in military funeral honors ceremonies since 2009 and has contributed to every role at a ceremony, including flag folding, presentation of the flag, and the playing of taps.

Sabo had previous experience playing the trumpet in his high school marching band, but had stopped until 2019 when he auditioned for the Navy Operational Support Center's funeral honors team with Yeoman 2nd Class Nick Aliberti, the team coordinator.

"YN2 Aliberti inspired and encouraged me to audition once he knew my background," said Sabo. "I was nervous; however, I found with some remedial training and practice it came easily to me to perform at the level needed."

Sabo has found his new role representing the Navy as a worthwhile experience and finds it a privilege to show his gratitude through paying final tribute to other shipmate's honorable military service. He's also discovered a bond with his fellow Sailors through the program.

"Being part of the NOSC Baltimore funeral honors team is a rewarding experience that I savor," he said. "It allows me to show my honor, courage and commitment and celebrate the legacy of those who have gone before me, and participate in the rich heritage that is the United States Navy."

LOGISTICS SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS BRANDI MADDOX

In 2014, Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Brandi Maddox was looking for a new career.

The Detroit, Michigan native was busy raising her two children and working long hours as a temp for an office supply company. She was looking for something steady and solid, a job she could leverage into a career.

She was three classes shy of earning her associate's degree when she was notified she had official Individual Augmentee deployment orders to Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, Africa.

Maddox said it was a mission that would change her life.

"My first tour to Djibouti is the main reason I fell in love with logistics back in 2014," she said. "I've been working in the field on the civilian side ever since. If it wasn't for that first tour, I would've never found my lifetime career."

In Djibouti, Maddox was a vital part of the seven-person CLDJ N3L Cargo Handling Unit, an around-the-clock core group of logistics specialists responsible for ensuring timely delivery of mission-critical parts and equipment to U.S. Military Sealift Command vessels for follow-on distribution to U.S. Navy ships.

The challenging, relentlessly high-tempo year-long assignment earned her the job experience to secure a new civilian career after returning home.

Maddox is now a civilian logistics and customer service representative handling logistics for materials imported from Japan, Thailand and Spain via ocean liner. She also completes accounting procedures for international customers and is responsible for verifying shipping transactions and paying freight and import charges for international shipments.

"I'm lucky that I'm a logistics specialist in the Navy and I'm lucky to work in logistics in the civilian world as well," she said. "Things that I learn from the civilian side can always be applied to help me on the military side, and vice versa."

Now in her eighth year in the Navy Reserve, Maddox is deployed again — this time as a lead fuel accountant for Expeditionary Fuels Detachment, assigned to Commander, Task Group 56.3, Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group Forward, Bahrain.

"It's my daily job to maintain accountability of all the fuel that we have on hand while working as a contact point between the Defense Logistics Agency and the Navy," she said.

While acknowledging the difficulties of a dual career, Maddox said the benefits far outweigh the challenges.

"In my eyes, those of us that are Reservists are very fortunate," she said. "Yes, it can sometimes be difficult to balance both worlds. But when we successfully pull it off, it is the best. It's a wonderful feeling to have two careers you love and can be proud of."



My first tour to Djibouti is the main reason I fell in love with logistics back in 2014 ... If it wasn't for that first tour, I would've never found my lifetime career.



One of the main things I've learned in my career is just to be approachable ... As a leader, don't allow rank to change the way you are when you're with your sailors.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER QUINTIN TOWNSEND

Lt. Cmdr. Quintin Townsend entered the Navy as an undesignated airman 31 years ago. Over his career, he progressed through the ranks to senior chief, earned a commission as a warrant officer, and then earned his commission as an officer. Having spent time on active duty, in the Reserve, and now on Full-Time Support (FTS), he has seen the Navy from almost every conceivable angle and has picked up many simple, practical leadership lessons along the way.

Townsend recalled his first assignment aboard the combat stores ship USS White Plains (AFS-4) during the runup to Operation Desert Storm in 1991. What he remembers most is not the anticipation of conflict, or the nervous energy of a crew preparing to join in a historic fight, but how his leading petty officer simply took advantage of some downtime to train him on the basics of electronics.

"My leading petty officer was Robert Washburn," said Townsend. "I'll never forget this guy. I didn't have any knowledge of electronics. He took the time, wrote out schematics and taught me the different formulas, how to read for resistance, and find the answer. He'd throw a trick in there for me to figure out. But that's what helped me on the exam. And I made third class the first time up. The fact that we had one-on-one time, that was one of the most memorable moments early on in my career, and it got me to where I am today."

Now as the Maintenance Material Control Officer (MMCO) at Fleet Readiness Center, Mid Atlantic, Townsend is one of 6,500 Sailors and Marines supporting the Navy's eight Fleet Readiness Centers (FRCs), with locations on the U.S. East and West coasts and in Japan. FRCs are responsible for the maintenance, repair and overhaul of aircraft, engines, components and support equipment.

"We have five different platforms that we work with here," said Townsend. "We have the H-60, helicopters, H-53s, and we work with the V-22s. We also work with the fire scout program so we are pretty busy here. We actually have the largest FRC in the region. There are a lot of moving parts."

A native of Martinsville, Virginia, Townsend enlisted in the Navy at 18 years old and spent nine years on active duty before transitioning to the Navy Reserve, primarily to close the geographical gap between his young family in Florida and his duty station in Oceana, Virginia.

"I separated from active duty Dec. 8, 1998," he said, "and Dec. 9, I was swearing right into the Reserve because I didn't want any breaks in service. I really enjoyed the military, but at the time, it was important to me to keep my family together."

Now serving as a FTS officer, Townsend stressed how important it is for Navy leaders to stay approachable, humble, grounded and teachable.

"One of the main things I've learned in my career is just to be approachable," he said. "As a leader, don't allow rank to change the way you are when you're with your sailors. Be approachable, stay humble and be an active listener, because we don't know all the answers."

Recently promoted yet again, this time to lieutenant commander, the hard-charging Townsend said he's currently closing in on yet another personal milestone.

"I have a re-enlistee next Friday, it'll be my first one at my new command," he said. "This one will be my 100th re-enlistee. I've been keeping track ever since I was commissioned."

CHIEF YEOMAN (SELECT) CIERRA WEIDHOLZ

Chief Yeoman (Select) Cierra Weidholz joined the Navy at age 17. After serving four years on active duty and four years in the Navy Reserve, in October this year, at age 26, she got the type of career news some Sailors wait almost 20 years for. She'd been selected as a chief petty officer.

"Making rank at a young age has put me in difficult positions where I am leading Sailors who are older than me," said Weidholz. "But at the end of the day, someone is counting on you to rise up to the occasion, whether you see it in the moment or not."

Weidholz credits her success to the mentorship she received throughout her career.

"I know for a fact I had leaders who saw something in me and never let me ease up," she said. "So it's a combination of timing, evaluations and opportunities. But the thing with opportunity is, you need to set yourself up to be able to see it, appreciate it, and make the most of it."

Born in Minnesota and raised in Arizona, Weidholz's family moved back to Minnesota just before her senior year of high school. In 2012, she saw an opportunity to serve and seized it by taking the U.S. military oath of enlistment.

At the time, her parents considered it a rash decision, but Weidholz knew she needed the structure, guidance and professional development only the military could provide.

Stationed on active duty with Beachmaster Unit Two, Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Va., Weidholz deployed aboard USS Gunston Hall (LSD-44), and USS Winston Churchill (DDG-81). When her active duty enlistment ended, she joined the Navy Reserve and used her Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit to pursue her bachelors degree in exercise science from Old Dominion University.

"I knew I wanted to go to school and get a degree," she said. "I also knew I wanted to pursue a different route, but I didn't want to leave the military behind."

Her first command assignment with the Reserve was with SEAL Team 18. Both the unit's operational tempo and frequent travel requirements paved the way for an experience Weidholz said she'll never forget.

"I deployed to Germany and traveled to six or seven countries in one year," she said. "I went paragliding in the Alps, hiked up a mountain in Germany during a blizzard, and went to Italy for a week. It was an awesome experience."

Once again on active duty orders as Command Services Leading Petty Officer at Reserve Component Command Norfolk, Weidholz assists regional commands and NOSCs with administrative oversight of education and training on processes, policies and guidance implementation. She is currently balancing her primary duties with the unique requirements of the chief petty officer initiation process.

It is a challenge Weidholz says she is ready for, thanks to the leaders throughout her career.

"That I selected for chief is something I owe 100% to the Sailors and chiefs who've mentored me in the Navy Reserve and active duty," she said.



Making rank at a young age has put me in difficult positions where I am leading Sailors ... But at the end of the day, someone is counting on you to rise up to the occasion.

RESILIENCY in RESERVE

NAVY MEDICAL OFFICER GIVES BACK BUT NEVER GIVES UP

BY CHIEF MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST (SELECT) SCOTT WICHMANN



After spending years crafting a flawless application package which no military service academy could ignore, Fernando Gonzalez was ready to step into the arena — more than anyone else he knew.

A top-tier athlete in both football and track and field, Gonzalez was in the best shape of his life. His grades were stellar. His community service and volunteering credentials were impeccable.

He collected mountains of personal paperwork, from his birth certificate to his inoculation records to his old report

cards; filled out the seemingly endless forms and met all the deadlines; aced the SATs and the ACTs; procured all the requisite letters of recommendation; he even tackled the hardest part — securing a formal nomination from a sitting U.S. congressman.

But when the U.S. Air Force Academy found a reference to childhood seizures buried in his medical records, years of forward momentum and planning ground to a sudden and perplexing halt.

During a six-year pivot, Gonzalez walked along a road filled with new challenges, setbacks and obstacles, ultimately leading him to the doorstep of the U.S. Navy Reserve.

Gonzalez was raised by his mother, a university Spanish teacher, and his father, a San Diego-based engineer whose work responsibilities required the family to move back and forth between San Diego, California and Tijuana, Mexico.

The second of four children, Gonzalez spent his adolescence absorbing and appreciating the cultural and linguistic differences between two different countries while simultaneously playing the protector role for his three siblings.

“Growing up, my older brother Luis was kind of a troublemaker,” said Gonzalez. “So I would have to take care of him and my two younger sisters.”

Gonzalez said his brother’s short-lived rebellious phase soon gave way to a more disciplined and focused outlook, as well as a career in the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA).

It was a path Gonzalez had every intention of following. In fact, the ambitious young man had two different careers mapped out. Once he’d successfully gotten his foot in the door in the USAFA, his next goal was to level up and into the Air Force’s Special Warfare community. After his military career ended, he would use his Post 9/11 G.I. Bill benefits to put himself through medical school and become a doctor.

But at age 12, Gonzalez had experienced a small cluster of complex partial seizures, a condition causing impaired consciousness in affected individuals, characterized by rapid

blinking, lip smacking and a loss of awareness. Complex partial seizures, also called Focal Onset Impaired Awareness Seizures, affect a specific area of the brain in short bursts. Usually caused by everyday triggers such as LED screens or flashing lights, seizures are often common in young people ages 4 to 14.

However common, strict USAFA medical guidelines dictated that, in order to even apply for entrance to the academy, a potential applicant had to prove to be both seizure-free and medication-free for a period of five years.

Despite almost constant daily exposure to traditional triggers, six full years without seizures, and medical clearance from a team of top physicians, the answer from the USAFA was still a firm, non-negotiable — No.

After the stinging rejection, he tried to stay positive.

“Sometimes the military is black-and-white,” he said. “But at the same time, you have to keep your head up and hope for the best.”

Despite the setback, Gonzalez’s brother kept urging him to stay focused, assuring him there would be a second chance to make a contribution. As far as Luis was concerned, finding the right fit for his younger brother was just a matter of when, not if.

“My brother told me, ‘Always be prepared and ready for anything.’” Gonzalez said.

A second chance at military service soon came when in 2012 he was accepted to the Citadel Military College of South Carolina, where Gonzalez received a prestigious Reserve Officers’ Training Corps scholarship. This time, Gonzalez set his sights on becoming a U.S. Army Green Beret.

Right out of the gate at the Citadel, Gonzalez burst to the head of the pack as one of only two freshmen to qualify for the

Army Citadel Ranger Challenge. Billed as the “Varsity sport of Army ROTC,” the contest, an arduous physical and mental competition testing land navigation skills, marksmanship and physical endurance, would further prepare Gonzalez for his chance to earn two highly sought-after Army Airborne Warfare qualifications the following summer.

Gonzalez was in the midst of preparation for the Ranger Challenge halfway through his freshman year when leadership at the Citadel pulled him aside to tell him a routine review of his application package had revealed a crushing oversight. His childhood seizures disqualified him from receiving the ROTC scholarship.

While not disqualified from attending the Citadel, he was forced to endure the disheartening revocation of a scholarship that had removed the economic burden

A fired-up Cadet Gonzalez took his medical waiver case before the school, then to ROTC leadership, and eventually before a congressman, but his quest to become a Green Beret had stopped before it started.



TOP, ENSIGN FERNANDO GONZALEZ STANDS IN FRONT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE GREENVILLE. RIGHT, GONZALEZ TRAINS WITH A SIMULATION MANNEQUIN. PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARK MASSINGILL.

of attending the prestigious institution. As an added disappointment, he was still not eligible for military service.

A fired-up Cadet Gonzalez took his medical waiver case before the school, then to ROTC leadership, and eventually before a congressman, but his quest to become a Green Beret had stopped before it started. Meanwhile, a call went up through the Citadel's alumni network to assist the young man in defraying the cost of tuition, allowing Gonzalez to focus on his studies and complete his four-year degree.

By the time he graduated college, however, Gonzalez was suddenly no longer in need of a military waiver, as he'd now been seizure-free for 10 years and off medication for six, making him fully medically eligible to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Almost immediately, Gonzalez's cell phone was blowing up. The Army did an abrupt about-face and offered to send him to Officer Candidate School (OCS). He also fielded multiple, aggressive recruiting calls from the Marine Corps.

While he pondered his next move, Gonzalez read a series of biographies by Navy and Marine Corps medical professionals. A slow, yet significant shift began to take place in his thinking.

After reading Dr. Richard Jadick's biography, "On Call in Hell," detailing a veteran Navy physician's experiences as

a combat surgeon forward-deployed to Iraq, Gonzalez was inspired to become not just a member of the military special operations community, but a medical professional to look after them. He wouldn't wait to go to medical school — he'd combine two career goals into one.

The third time proved to be the charm, and in July 2019, Gonzalez walked proudly donned the dress whites of an ensign, graduating with class 19040 at U.S. Navy Officer Development School in Newport, Rhode Island.

Gonzalez applied for and received a Navy Health Professional Scholarship to attend the University of South Carolina's School of Medicine in Greenville.

"All of that adversity and disappointment was a sign to tell me "There's something better ahead for you," Gonzalez said. "There's so much opportunity in Navy medicine."

Along with this new opportunity came new challenges: 12 day stretches without a day off, 16 hour rotations, intensive, minutely-detailed syllabuses and long written exams.

Gonzalez always tried to meet the daily grind of his clinical responsibilities, studies and classes with gratitude and cheerful readiness.

"I'm always thankful because I know how hard the path has been and I know that there are many people who are trying to get where I am," he said. "As a future physician and leader in this country and the Navy we have a responsibility to mentor others and help them achieve their aspirations — one generation better than the next."

The Navy Reserve pays for Gonzalez's education with the expectation that he will pass his classes and pay the Navy back with sustained superior performance during the course of his four year commitment.

Having graduated ODS and passing his knee-buckling eight-hour Medical Board exam, Gonzalez looks forward to spending summer 2021 performing clinical rotations at U.S. military hospitals.

"Around this time next year, I'll be headed to Walter Reed, Balboa or Portsmouth," said Gonzalez. "I'm thankful for this great chance to serve the people serving our country. I wish more people would look into this great opportunity."

Motivated by the outpouring of support, Gonzalez resolved to use his education to give back to his community. The irrepressible newly-minted 26 year-old Ensign is also leveraging his medical training, problem-solving skills and can-do spirit to bring healthcare screenings to the Hispanic population of his Greenville, South Carolina community.

The primary objective of his ongoing program, run in cooperation with individual healthcare workers and local churches, is to overcome specific obstacles to medical care faced by the Hispanic community and others in Greenville.

Gonzalez identified language, education and transportation as chronic barriers to healthcare, adding that the first and most difficult barrier to overcome is the lack of cultural emphasis on the importance of regular check-ups and proactive health measures.

"As a Hispanic individual, I know that many people in my community don't really like going to see a doctor," said Gonzalez. "They don't make it a priority to get a yearly check-up. For instance, when you turn 50 you've got to get a colonoscopy screening, but many don't because to them, it seems weird."

Gonzalez regularly tries to dispel such widely-held misconceptions by instilling his patients with the philosophy that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

"Some of the people we provide with health screenings

were never taught that preventative medicine is the way to go," said Gonzalez. "Instead, some of them often wait until the last minute and that's not what we want to see."

According to Gonzalez, the overwhelming majority of Greenville's Hispanic residents work long hours during the week and often share transportation, making midweek medical care visits impractical. The grassroots outreach program is designed to bring medical screenings, information packets and other healthcare resources to anyone who needs it most — at easily accessible locations — often on weekends.

"Many of these individuals work from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and don't really have access to transportation in the middle of the week," said Gonzalez. "They can't afford to not get paid for missing those hours to go to the doctor to get a check-up."

While working on clinical rotations, Gonzalez discovered no barrier is as critical to conquer as the language barrier when it comes to ensuring positive health outcomes.

"As I went into my third year and started working in the hospital, I realized not only were some Hispanic individuals not seeking treatment at the right time, but when they did receive treatment, it wasn't always effectively communicated to them," said Gonzalez.

The current pandemic has exacerbated some existing widespread communication issues.

"COVID has prevented interpreters from coming into the hospitals," he said. "There aren't a lot of physicians around here that are bilingual, bicultural or who even have the time to break down everything."

Currently, Gonzalez is addressing this problem by attempting to create a four-year medical Spanish immersion program at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, with the long-term goal of improving communication between patients and healthcare providers.

"It would be a program focused on learning a lot of translated medical terminology and then reaching out to clinics with a certified provider," said Gonzalez. "They'd be able to practice not only their Spanish skills, but their cultural skills, which are two different things. So as the physician develops over the course of four years they can earn their certificate and also earn a lot of valuable experience they can use wherever they go."

One of Gonzales' biggest hopes is the program will pay dividends down the road by equipping medical professionals with the tools to treat a wider swath of the population.

"The reality is, in the year 2040-2050, one third of the nation will be Hispanic," he said. "It doesn't matter if you go to Texas or if you go to New York or Boston, you're going to treat Hispanic people. Having that (experience) under your belt will make you a more competitive asset in anything you do."

Gonzalez said he is glad to be able to make a difference in his community and hopes others will join in to make the outreach program even stronger in the coming years.

"I realize the problem here is a generational problem," he said. "I'm not going to be able to fix it overnight, but at least I can start something — and, if someone else picks up on it, we can continue to push on it together, and a generation from now it can change."

Gearing up for another clinical shift, Gonzalez offered some simple advice for those who are chasing their own aspirations while facing steep obstacles, seeking to make a difference, both in the Navy Reserve and local community.

"Never give up. Never forget where you came from. And never forget you represent the United States Navy." ✂

Never give up. Never forget where you came from. And never forget you represent the United States Navy.

LEGAL READINESS

BY LT. CMDR. ERIN BAXTER-HAYNES, DEPUTY RESERVE FORCE JUDGE ADVOCATE,
AND LEGALMAN 1ST CLASS KENDRA CLOWNEY, FORCE LEGALMAN

Imagine, while deployed in the Middle East, you receive an excited call from your daughter. She asks for permission to play soccer this year and says her coach is sure she's going to be a star player. She seems to be bursting at the seams with enthusiasm; you reply "Absolutely, let's get you signed up!"

Shortly after that conversation, you receive another call. Now in tears, your daughter says grandma couldn't sign her up because she's not a parent or guardian. There's no way for you to get the needed documentation signed and returned before the deadline. Your daughter is crushed, and you are emotionally distracted from focusing on the mission, simply because you didn't set up a power of attorney before deployment.

For many Reserve Sailors, legal readiness is not a high priority, but it truly is of utmost importance — primarily so Sailors can stay focused on the mission when deployed. Remaining focused aids in keeping everyone safe. As legal service providers, we see first hand how many service members are distracted from their jobs when issues back home consume their thoughts.

Legal readiness for the Reserve force means Navy Reserve Sailors have assessed their current situation and the possible scenarios that may affect them and their loved ones in their absence, and executed the necessary legal documents in advance of deployment to plan for those scenarios. These situations include but are not limited to:

SUPPORT: allotments, direct deposits, account access, DEERS registration

FAMILY CARE PLAN: designated caregiver, health care permissions

WILLS: property distribution, legal guardian, trustee

LIFE INSURANCE: life insurance proceeds don't need to pass through a will

BREAKING LEASES & SERVICE CONTRACTS: residential, vehicle, cellphone, etc.

There are four main areas of focus every Sailor should be familiar with prior to deployment and to ensure legal readiness. Each is important in its own way, and to be ready for a deployment, every Reserve Sailor should understand the basics.



WILLS & POWERS OF ATTORNEY

In Cuba, we had a Sailor who needed to renew his vehicle tags. He had left his car at his apartment in Virginia, and it was going to be towed unless his girlfriend could renew the tags. The Sailor quickly worked with legal to expedite a power of attorney. However, by the time the paperwork arrived, the car had already been towed. As the power of attorney was only for registering the car, his girlfriend couldn't get the vehicle out of the impound lot for nearly six weeks — and after incurring a tremendous impound fee. With proper planning and counsel, this Sailor could have easily avoided the lost money, frustration and wasted time.

Powers of attorney and wills are two common documents prepared for Sailors before they head out for deployment. It is important to understand when and why you may need one.

Frequently, leadership of a unit preparing for deployment will tell everyone in the unit to head over to the legal service office and get wills and powers of attorney drafted in order to be “legally ready”. What some do not understand is that many Sailors, especially younger Sailors, may not need a will and may or may not need any powers of attorney.

If a person were to pass away without a will, intestate succession — or the laws of the state — would apply. These are the actions that take place over your possessions in accordance with state law. For the most part, it follows the line of relationships. If you are not married and you have no children, everything you own will go to your parents. If you don't have parents, everything will go to your siblings. If you are married, everything you own will go to your spouse. And if you have no spouse but you have children, everything will go to them.

All of this will just happen as a matter of law — no will required. On top of that, there are many items Sailors possess that can transfer outside of a will, or outside of probate. For instance, life insurance has a beneficiary form to name a person to receive payment at the time of death. At your bank, you can request a ‘payable upon death beneficiary form’ to transfer your account balance automatically. Even your Thrift Savings Plan account provides a beneficiary form. Anything that has one of these forms does not need to be listed in a will.

But how can you be certain whether or not you need a power of attorney or will? At a glance, you will probably need one if you have minor children, you and your spouse have children from prior relationships, or if you have real property. However, the way you can know for sure is to sit down with a legal assistance attorney and discuss your situation. For commanding officers that say “everybody needs a will and power of attorney,” the better language is, everybody needs to SEE if they need a will or power of attorney.

Meeting with a legal assistance attorney and going through what you have, how you want your property disposed of — if God forbid should something happen to you — how you want your children cared for, and if you want any trusts set up, will help you understand what types of estate documents you might need and if the Navy can help you set up those documents.



Early planning and communication with your family and leadership is crucial to maintaining a ready to fight Reserve force. Our goal is for every Reserve Sailor to be legally ready. The more prepared you are, the more you can focus on the mission.

LINE OF DUTY

Another significant part of legal readiness is understanding the importance of proper accounting for when you are actually on duty in regards to injury and illness.

If you happen to become sick or injured while on duty, you need to make sure that proper documentation is added to your medical record or that it is recorded through a Line of Duty investigation if it is not documented in your military medical record. Proper documentation is critical to accessing care or treatment from the Veterans Administration in the future. It is very difficult to establish that some form of long term care or disability is earned based on an active duty event if it was not properly documented at the time it occurred.

A Line of Duty Inquiry is important for all service members, but for Reserve Sailors it is even more important. An active duty member who has any type of injury or illness is on duty 24/7 — but a Reserve Sailor is on duty while subject to orders. Without proper documentation, Reserve Sailors could miss out on medical treatment, services and future compensation.

USERRA

It is also important for Reserve Sailors to understand their rights and responsibilities regarding their civilian employment prior to mobilization. Recently we had a Reserve Sailor who took on a multi-year set of orders. His civilian position at the Norfolk Shipyard was guaranteed under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). However, after his orders ended, he didn't immediately return to the shipyard. Instead, he drilled out the upcoming year's IDT periods in one block of time and then took on another set of long term orders. In total, he was away from the shipyard for over six years.

At the end of his orders, he found out he couldn't return to his old job. USERRA protected him for a period of time, and he was not aware of the specific periods and required timeframes and communications. Had this Sailor returned to work at the shipyard between the different set of orders, he would have reset his clock and likely been able to keep his job.

USERRA seeks to ensure that those who serve their country can retain their civilian employment and benefits and can seek employment free from discrimination because of their service.

There are four basic entitlements that Reserve Sailors called to active duty have under the law. 1) Prompt reinstatement to civilian employment — generally a matter of days, not weeks, but will depend on the length of absence. 2) Accrued seniority as if continuously employed — this applies to rights and benefits determined by seniority as well. 3) Training or retraining and other accommodations. 4) Special protection against discharge, except for cause.

For service of more than 30 days but less than 181, the service member must submit an application for reemployment within 14 days of release from service. For service of more than 180 days, an application for reemployment must be submitted within 90 days of release from service.

A key part of staying on good terms with your employer is communication. We strongly encourage sharing your drill schedule with your boss. Let them know as far in advance what your drill and training schedule looks like. If you are part of a unit or community who may need to mobilize rapidly — such as the recent medical response teams to the COVID-19 pandemic relief efforts — make sure your employer is aware of your circumstances. Communicating upfront will save a lot of headache later on.

SCRA

The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) provides a tremendous amount of protections to servicemembers. Specific to Reservists and legal readiness, a SCRA focus is the financial protections for service members who mobilize or are called to duty. It could be a matter of a leased vehicle, cell phone contract, membership at a local gym or cable and internet services — under SCRA, Sailors are able to break some contracts due to an upcoming mobilization or possibly reduce interest rates on existing debts.

If, for instance, you take orders to Meridian, Mississippi, your cell phone contract can likely follow you, as you will most likely have service available there, and you may not be able to terminate that contract. You will likely be able

to terminate your apartment lease early without a penalty, though. However, if you're going to Iraq, you probably could terminate your apartment lease and break or put on hold the cell phone contract because service is unavailable.

Bottom line, any orders outside a service area for a given contract or service is an area you may be able to save money while called to duty. This is an area to chat early with a legal assistance attorney as advance notice of cancellations are required in order to save you the most money. ✂



HOW TO STAY LEGAL READY

Typically a Reserve Sailor is not eligible for legal services unless they are on orders or preparing for a mobilization. If you know about an upcoming deployment or are planning to volunteer for one in the future, talk with your unit leadership and with NOSC staff. Find out when you can meet with a legal services representative.

Each Navy Reserve Activity (NRA) should have a mobilization readiness program. Whether that is a Deployment Readiness Training weekend or individual unit readiness, look for available times to take care of your legal readiness.

Pre-deployment services are given priority. Engaging with a legal assistance attorney to determine your specific legal needs before deployment can avoid unforeseen hassles and challenges before they happen. Coordinate in advance of your needs so there is not a rush when time is short and focus needs to be elsewhere.

Every Reserve Sailor is encouraged to be ready — in all facets — for short notice deployments. Time and legal representative availability is finite. Early planning and communication with your family and leadership is crucial to maintaining a ready to fight Reserve force. Our goal is for every Reserve Sailor to be legally ready. The more prepared you are, the more you can focus on the mission.

For more information contact your local legal representative, mobilization officer or visit: <https://go.usa.gov/x7SuR>

IT STARTS WITH US

BY LT. J.G. JACOB DIRR AND MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS CRAIG RODARTE, WITH EXCERPTS FROM THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS GUIDANCE TO THE FLEET, "SIGNATURE BEHAVIORS"

From the intense requirements of executing aircraft carrier flight deck operations, long hours of standing a night bridge watch, or the stealth patrols of the ocean depths, a fundamental part of what we do in the Navy depends on much more than a single Sailor — it takes a team to succeed.

The Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday has directed us as a team to establish a culture of excellence by following a list of 10 "Signature Behaviors."

"When adopted and used in our daily lives, these behaviors positively contribute to an improved well-being, greater connectedness and increased toughness, trust and resilience," the guidance stated. "We firmly believe that if we, as a Navy, focus more on positive behaviors rather than the negative, the results will ensure our Navy can sustain a lethal warfighting force composed of Sailors who are tough, masters of their trade, and ethical warriors."

The following 10 Signature Behaviors demonstrate our commitment to one another, to work together in teams, and to ensure we have each other's back.

01. Treat every person with respect
02. Take responsibility for my actions
03. Hold others accountable for their actions
04. Intervene when necessary
05. Be a leader and encourage leadership in others
06. Grow personally and professionally every day
07. Embrace the diversity of ideas, experiences, and backgrounds of individuals
08. Uphold the highest degree of integrity in professional and personal life
09. Exercise discipline in conduct and performance
10. Contribute to team success through actions and attitudes

In June, Gilday further encouraged every Sailor to focus on removing destructive biases in the Navy.

"As a Navy — uniform and civilian, active and Reserve — we cannot tolerate discrimination or racism of any kind," Gilday said. "We must work to identify and eliminate individual and systemic racism within our force. We must demand of each other that we treat everyone with dignity and respect. If you won't do that, then our Navy is not the best place for you."

These words were meant to inspire every Sailor and every Navy civilian to address issues of racism, sexism and other destructive biases in the Navy and their impact on naval readiness head-on.

To put these concepts into practice, leaders across the Navy were tasked with organizing and leading open and honest conversations and dialogues earlier this year. In August, Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (CNRFC) held some of the first of these conversations, to bring Sailors together to share their stories of personal experiences within and outside the Navy.

On the following pages are five testimonials from CNRFC, illustrating important, powerful emotions and the shared understanding that can come from command dialogues.

Lt. Cmdr. Amy Thomas, assigned to the CNRFC training department, says the most important part of a conversation is listening rather than problem solving or reaching a consensus.

"Everybody has a story, and these dialogues are an opportunity to share with the people we work with," she said.

Thomas said that although the gravity of Sailor experiences are impactful, she is encouraged by the Navy's efforts to identify and eliminate individual and systemic racism.

PHOTOS BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 3RD CLASS CRAIG RODARTE

COMMAND MASTER CHIEF TRACY HUNT

When I was a recruiter years ago, we would often set up at the local mall to work. Back then, I was what is called today a 'sneakerhead' and could not wait for the new inventory of sneakers to hit the shelves. I decided to visit the shoe store during lunch to view the latest release. While in uniform I was greeted warmly by the store clerk, spoken to in a respectful manner, and treated with world-class customer service. After a brief viewing, I saw a pair of shoes I wanted so I decided to come back after working hours to purchase them. When I returned later on that evening, I was dressed in civilian attire and was treated in a completely different manner. Though the exact same store clerk was present, I wasn't greeted with the same warmth and respect as earlier. After some time being in the store, the manager finally approached me and sternly asked, "What do you need?" I replied to him that I was just in here and his response was "Well, we get a lot of you in here!"

There have been moments in life that I have been treated differently because of the color of my skin, but that particular moment has stayed with me because I realized that my uniform acts as a shield of protection from being stereotyped or judged. I am the same person in and out of uniform, but some people see a miscreant when I am not in uniform because of my skin color. I am a geo-bachelor and travel on weekends to my family. I stay in uniform as I transit home after work, not because I'm in a hurry to get on the road but because I believe that if I happened to get stopped by police, I would rather have the "protection" of my uniform than risk being profiled by the color of my skin.



YEOMAN 2ND CLASS **ERICA KNOWLTON**



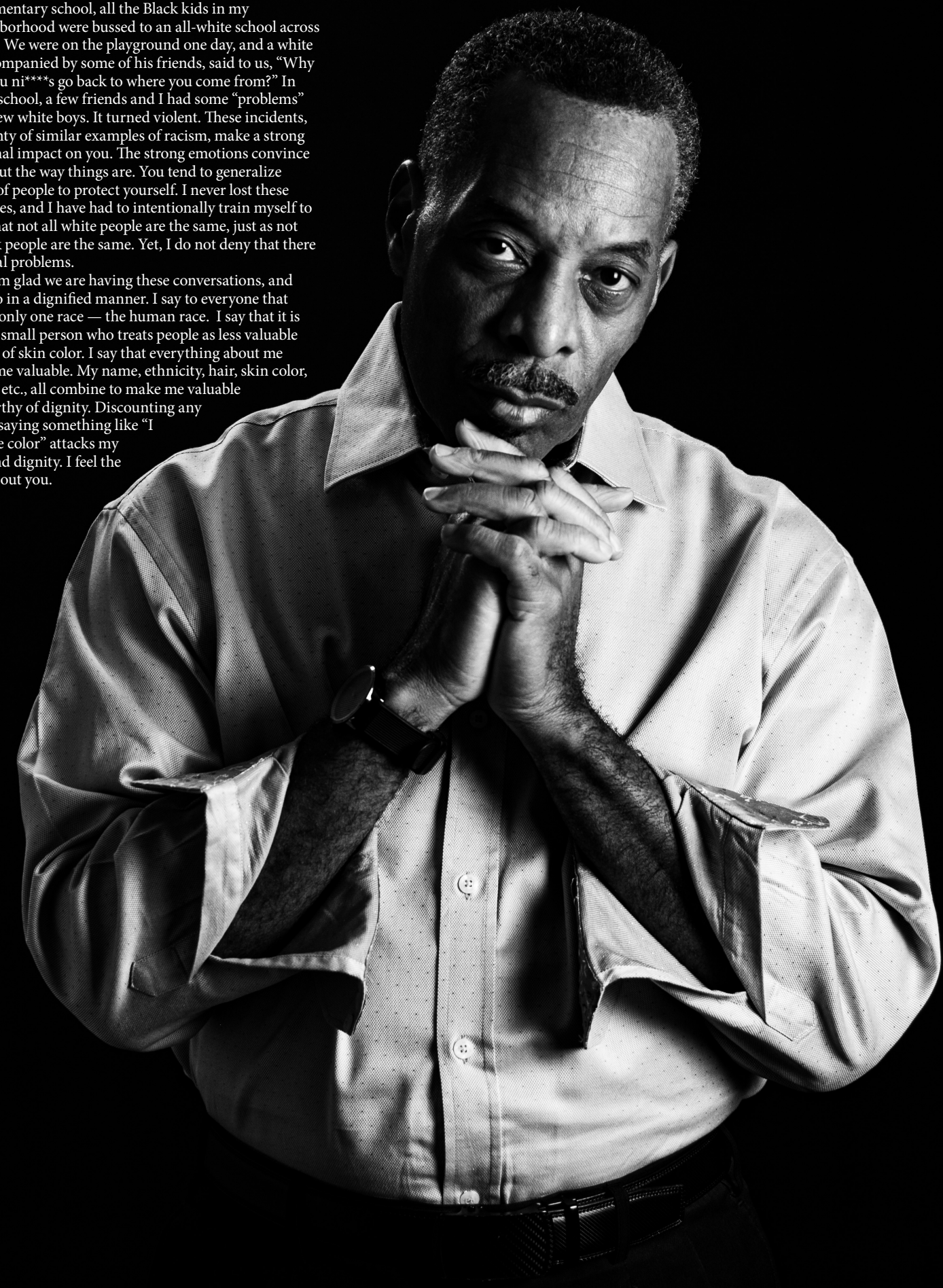
I find myself upset at times because I turn on the television and see police officers that are supposed to protect us showing a complete lack of humanity to African Americans. The disappointment and fear never really gets to rest because so often someone that looks like myself and my sons are killed, and their murderers are protected twice over because they wear a uniform and because they are white. And then, sometimes I feel anger when I know the color of my skin is negatively affecting my career.

As strange as it may seem even when I am validated of experiencing racist treatment, some sort of survival mechanism makes me move past it so I can continue to be an effective Sailor. Instead of addressing the issue or talking to someone about it so they know what I'm experiencing or it's documented for my own safety, I take a breath and move on. In my mind, I cannot allow myself to be weighed down by anger, hurt feelings or having to work twice as hard as my Caucasian counterparts. I push forward and do my job. But, my hope is that we as a Navy and as a country get to a place where people that look like me don't have to go to work expecting racism with canned mental and physical responses just to survive. I pray the Navy continues taking action in respect to race relations ensuring we display our honor courage commitment in the treatment of all.

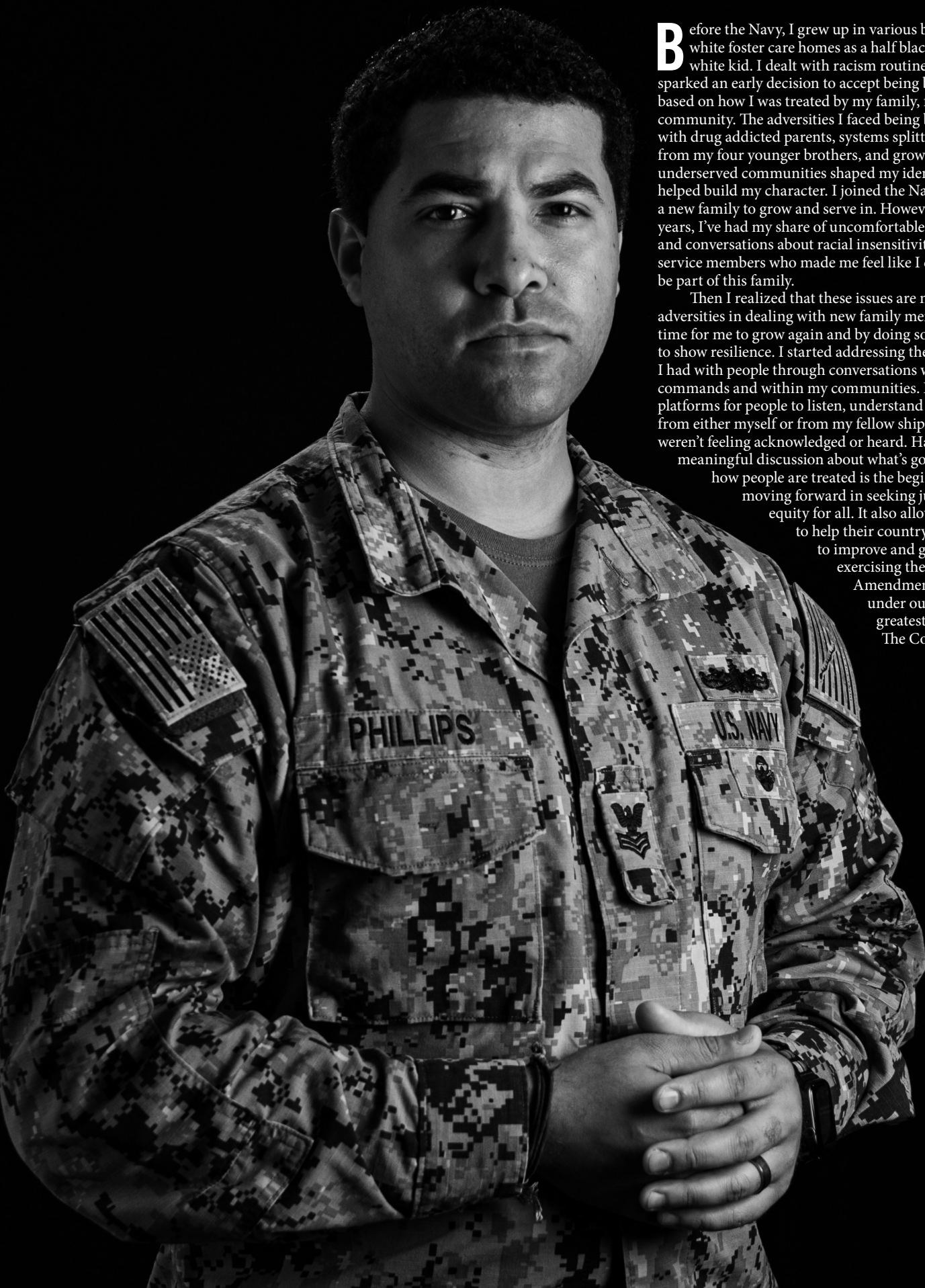
CARL HODGES

In elementary school, all the Black kids in my neighborhood were bussed to an all-white school across town. We were on the playground one day, and a white kid accompanied by some of his friends, said to us, "Why don't you ni****s go back to where you come from?" In middle school, a few friends and I had some "problems" with a few white boys. It turned violent. These incidents, and plenty of similar examples of racism, make a strong emotional impact on you. The strong emotions convince you about the way things are. You tend to generalize groups of people to protect yourself. I never lost these memories, and I have had to intentionally train myself to know that not all white people are the same, just as not all black people are the same. Yet, I do not deny that there are racial problems.

I am glad we are having these conversations, and doing so in a dignified manner. I say to everyone that there is only one race — the human race. I say that it is a pretty small person who treats people as less valuable because of skin color. I say that everything about me makes me valuable. My name, ethnicity, hair, skin color, religion etc., all combine to make me valuable and worthy of dignity. Discounting any of it, or saying something like "I don't see color" attacks my value and dignity. I feel the same about you.



YEOMAN 1ST CLASS CAMRON PHILLIPS



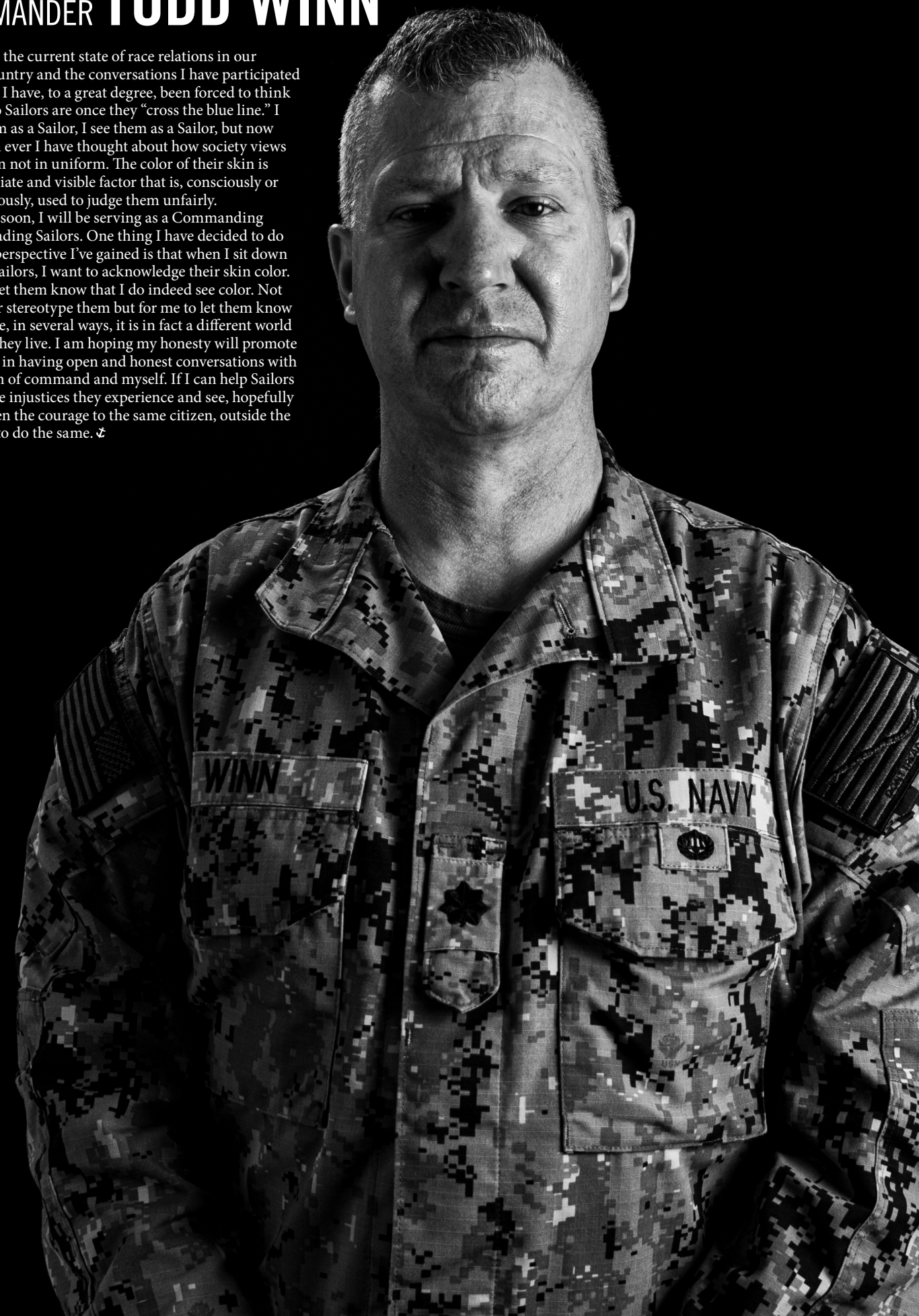
Before the Navy, I grew up in various black and white foster care homes as a half black and half white kid. I dealt with racism routinely and it sparked an early decision to accept being black solely based on how I was treated by my family, friends and community. The adversities I faced being black, dealing with drug addicted parents, systems splitting me up from my four younger brothers, and growing up in underserved communities shaped my identity and helped build my character. I joined the Navy seeking a new family to grow and serve in. However, over the years, I've had my share of uncomfortable situations and conversations about racial insensitivity with service members who made me feel like I didn't want to be part of this family.

Then I realized that these issues are new adversities in dealing with new family members. It was time for me to grow again and by doing so, I needed to show resilience. I started addressing the problems I had with people through conversations within my commands and within my communities. I sought out platforms for people to listen, understand and learn from either myself or from my fellow shipmates who weren't feeling acknowledged or heard. Having a meaningful discussion about what's going on and how people are treated is the beginning of moving forward in seeking justice and equity for all. It also allows people to help their country continue to improve and grow while exercising their First Amendment rights under our Nation's greatest document - The Constitution.

COMMANDER TODD WINN

With the current state of race relations in our country and the conversations I have participated in, I have, to a great degree, been forced to think about who Sailors are once they "cross the blue line." I know them as a Sailor, I see them as a Sailor, but now more than ever I have thought about how society views them when not in uniform. The color of their skin is an immediate and visible factor that is, consciously or subconsciously, used to judge them unfairly.

Very soon, I will be serving as a Commanding Officer, leading Sailors. One thing I have decided to do from the perspective I've gained is that when I sit down with my Sailors, I want to acknowledge their skin color. I want to let them know that I do indeed see color. Not to judge or stereotype them but for me to let them know I recognize, in several ways, it is in fact a different world in which they live. I am hoping my honesty will promote their faith in having open and honest conversations with their chain of command and myself. If I can help Sailors express the injustices they experience and see, hopefully I have given the courage to the same citizen, outside the blue line, to do the same. ♣



STRENGTHENING TIES



PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 3RD CLASS ANDREA RUMPLE

Reserve Foreign Area Officer program strengthens U.S. ability to partner with allies

BY LT. CMDR. JUSTIN DARGAN AND CHIEF MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST STEPHEN HICKOK

Leaving the customs checkpoint of the Madrid International Airport, the sights and sounds of the second largest air terminal in Spain seemed to welcome Lt. Cmdr. Justin Dargan to his latest Reserve assignment as a Foreign Affairs Officer (FAO). The cuts of jamón ibérico hanging overhead in airport bars, football (soccer) jerseys in seemingly every storefront, and the silhouettes of bulls plastered across much of the tourist merchandise brought back memories from nearly a lifetime ago during Dargan's first visit to the country.

Since the establishment of the Reserve FAO program in 2015, the organization has evolved into a tight-knit group of military diplomats. FAOs are experts in regional languages and cultural knowledge who maximize the collaborative abilities of U.S. partner nations and military forces while continuing the shared goal of maintaining peace and stability across the globe.

There are a number of key characteristics that unite most FAOs — as illustrated in the following article by Dargan. FAOs maintain a broad range of military skills and experiences; are knowledgeable on political and military affairs; have familiarity with the political, cultural, social, economic, and geographic factors of the countries and regions in which they are stationed; are proficient in one or more foreign languages; and also possess a regionally focused master's degree and qualification in a U.S. Navy warfare specialization. Most FAOs also share a passion for multilateral engagements, building relationships with allies and partners, and promoting allied unity in pursuit of shared goals.

LT. CMDR. JUSTIN DARGAN IN HIS OWN WORDS

I'd been to Spain 16 years ago as part of the Naval Academy's summer study abroad program. I chose to minor in Spanish, in no small part because I liked the idea of learning about other cultures and had hoped to experience them firsthand.

Growing up lower middle-class in a Midwestern U.S. suburb, I had never traveled abroad, and this first taste of cultural immersion as a 21-year-old Second Class Midshipman sparked a real and unshakable enthusiasm for multicultural engagement.

It was the same passion that eventually motivated me to redesignate as a Reserve FAO.

Last year, my second trip to Spain was on short notice, having been selected to serve on orders with the Spanish Maritime Force (SPMARFOR) in Rota. The command had recently fallen below full-readiness manning levels, understaffed in both national Spanish officers and full-time NATO liaisons. One of five NATO High Readiness Force headquarters designated to serve on a rotating basis as Maritime Component Command (MCC) for the NATO Response Force, SPMARFOR was in need of Navy Reserve FAO support to prepare for and assume the role during calendar year 2020.

Since redesignating as an FAO, I have been amazed by the variety of backgrounds and breadth of experience among the many talented officers in the community. Cmdr. Demetrio Camua, who joined me in the SPMARFOR assignment, is a prime example.

Born in the Philippines and having immigrated to the U.S. after college, Camua is one of many FAOs who has spent much of his life overseas. This imbues him with globally informed insight that comes in handy while working with foreign partners abroad. After four years on active duty, Camua transitioned to the Navy Reserve in order to pursue a civilian career in commercial aviation. He subsequently earned his flight instructor and commercial pilot certification and flies as a first officer for a regional airline in Florida.

My background is also in aviation as a Naval Flight Officer. After serving my first fleet tour as a controller and mission commander in the E-2C Hawkeye, I embarked on a three year program in an exchange billet flying in the E-3D Sentry with the British Royal Air Force. I also spent considerable time abroad with NATO allies, including a two month assignment in Italy's Combined Allied Operations Center.

My positive experience serving with my British squadron mates and allied NATO officers further fueled my passion for foreign engagement. During my final active duty assignment, I began working on a master's degree in international relations. Eventually I transitioned to the Navy Reserve while continuing to pursue graduate studies with the ultimate goal of attaining a doctorate and becoming a university professor.

Although Camua and I had experienced a good deal of success during our Navy careers, we both strayed from the typical career path of most officers. When the Navy Reserve began soliciting applications for the new FAO community, each of us saw it as the perfect opportunity to capitalize on our unique talents and give back to the service. By the time I met Camua in Rota, it felt like I already knew him.

The Reserve FAO program is a tight-knit group. In addition to those who have served together in Reserve units, many of us have spent time face-to-face through a combination of joint FAO training in Monterey, California, region-specific seminars or association sponsored meet-and-greet events. Our community is active online where members can share information about potential activations, educational opportunities, deployment stories, international connections and general advice. It was through these informal channels that we'd both found out about the opportunity in Rota.

Upon checking into SPMARFOR, Camua and I were integrated into the command staff, filling gapped billets in the N7 Training and N3 Operations departments. Our primary focus was to help the staff prepare for the successful execution of two large joint NATO exercises while deployed at sea aboard Spanish Flagship ESPS Castilla (L52).



“Semper Gumby” is an old play on the official U.S. Marine Corps and Coast Guard mottos ... Embracing this mantra has been central to the identity of the RC FAO community as it has evolved over the past five years.

Exercise Dynamic Mariner was planned for October as a live-fire exercise with a distinctly maritime focus. Then, November's follow-on exercise Trident Jupiter was to be a computer-assisted command post exercise, placing emphasis on the joint service element of multinational military operations. Successful completion of both would be necessary to attain the fully mission-capable status required for the official assumption of NATO Response Force standby Maritime Component Command duties.

Based on my background as an NFO, I was assigned to the air operations division working as part of the operations planning team ashore, and as the deputy director of the maritime air operations center aboard Castilla. With his previous experience as a training and readiness department head, Camua was billeted as a branch head in the training and plans division, working as one of the key officers responsible for the successful overall planning of the upcoming exercises and frequently traveling to represent SPMARFOR at NATO planning conferences.

As we settled into our positions and became integrated within the exercise staff, Camua and I threw ourselves into our

roles in the training and operations divisions. However, we soon found out that some of the most important contributions to be made existed outside of our defined roles on the NATO staff.

“Semper Gumby” is an old play on the official U.S. Marine Corps and Coast Guard mottos which are sometimes invoked by service members and first responders to describe the best state of readiness for operational success — staying flexible. Embracing this mantra has been central to the identity of the RC FAO community as it has evolved over the past five years.

Requests for Reserve support have often come on short notice and many of us have needed to respond quickly to an increasing demand for the Reserve team's operational and diplomatic capabilities. In my case, this meant leaving a new civilian job at the Naval War College and temporarily suspending plans to earn a doctorate. For Camua, it meant taking unaccompanied orders away from his wife and two children to an area of responsibility outside of his geographic specialization.

At SPMARFOR, our willingness to adjust as necessary to support operational requirements has allowed us to fill gaps and increase command response time and efficiency. I found there was never a shortage of documents, speeches and high visibility messages in need of writing and editing. This came in handy during Dynamic Mariner at SPMARFOR where my own cultural and media awareness allowed me to support SPMARFOR's need for a public affairs officer.

Without formal training in Spanish, Camua started off with a disadvantage. He went to work immediately in his off-duty time to meet the mission need. He enrolled in Spanish courses and dedicated most of his free time to learning the language. In just one year his progress was exceptional. Additionally, during Dynamic Mariner when there was neither a dedicated billet for a space

warfare specialist, Camua volunteered to take on the role, quickly getting up to speed on NATO space warfare guiding documents and procedures.

As we studied our new collateral duties, public affairs and space warfare, we joked that this was all part of our job description as Swiss Army knives of military diplomacy. The description is an apt description for the utility of Reserve FAOs. Regardless of operational background or regional specialty, FAOs are trained to tactfully and effectively represent the U.S. Navy abroad, building relationships and contributing to U.S. and shared allied interests.

For me, the journey that began nearly 20 years ago with a study abroad trip to Spain has come full circle with a successful Reserve tour in the same country. The mission has reinforced my commitment to continue my career in international relations and military diplomacy. I am proud to serve as a representative of the FAO community, and excited to do so as an advocate for the program's future development. ✚



FOREIGN AREA OFFICER PROGRAM

Top-performing officers who wish to become a FAO should submit re-designation applications to the Reserve FAO community. All candidates must meet the following eligibility criteria.

- SECURITY CLEARANCE** TS/SCI eligible
- WORLD-WIDE ASSIGNABLE** Must meet Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) overseas screening standards
- LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY** Speak at least one foreign language as documented by Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) and/or Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) — minimum scores of 2/2 in two of three modalities of the DLPT/OPI taken within the last three years
- MASTER'S DEGREE** See BUPERS website for additional degree specifics such as regional focus
- REGIONAL EXPERIENCE** Proven understanding of U.S. and foreign military operations, policy and security cooperation objectives, a deep understanding of interagency and nongovernmental organization capabilities and cultures gained from time spent in specified regions

Further application guidance, to include deadlines and required documentation, is available on the BUPERS the Navy Personnel Command Reserve OCM website at: https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/community_managers/active/restricted/Pages/ForeignAreaOfficer.aspx



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NAVY RESERVE FIGHTING 2020 INSTRUCTIONS

DESIGN // TRAIN // MOBILIZE

DESIGN THE FORCE

Identify warfighting capabilities best suited for the Reserve component, which provide a clear benefit to the Navy — delivered at reduced cost, within acceptable risk, and optimized for warfighting readiness.

TRAIN THE FORCE

Focus training efforts on preparing Navy Reserve Sailors for their mobilization billets, ensuring all Reserve Sailors are trained, ready to activate, and be able to fight on "Day One." Infuse the force with a sense of character in line with the Navy core values, diversity, and culture.

MOBILIZE THE FORCE

Develop and employ rapid mobilization processes like Distributed Mobilization to ensure large-scale readiness for conflict against a peer or near-peer adversary. Expedite Personnel & Pay improvements for Reserve administrative and pay processes.

CNR's Fighting Instructions call on Reserve Sailors and units to focus efforts on warfighting readiness. This directive affects every Reserve Sailor.

Are you ready to fight on Day One?

Read ALNAVRESFOR 025/20 at <https://go.usa.gov/x7GPd>

“Achieving strategic depth and improving warfighting readiness requires us to build on the hard work completed so far with a sense of urgency.”

Vice. Adm. John B. Mustin
Chief of Navy Reserve

**U.S. NAVY
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www.navyreserve.navy.mil

