

**DON'T MISS: APPRENTICE GRADUATION 2019**

# **SERVICE TO THE FLEET**

Norfolk Naval Shipyard

We Are America's Shipyard

December 2019



## **BRAVO ZULU AMERICA'S SHIPYARD**

**NNSY successfully undocks USS Wyoming (SSBN 742) and completes USS La Jolla's (SSN 701) Moored Training Ship Conversion!**



**MA1 BRENDA BROOKS NAMED NNSY SAILOR OF THE YEAR**



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# TA-RRIFIC: NNSY EMPLOYEE WINS LOCAL "BRA-HA-HA" CONTEST

STORY BY KRISTI BRITT • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY PHYLLIS SCOGGINS • NNSY VISUAL INFORMATION SPECIALIST



Norfolk Naval Shipyard's (NNSY) Stacey Dunn with the Structural Engineering Division (Code 254) recently won the grand prize during the 12th annual Bra-Ha-Ha Awards Show and Auction.

Dunn's entry – which she entitled 'Abreast of Routine Maintenance' - was entered into the contest held at Tidewater Community College's Chesapeake Student Center Oct. 18. Among 140 other applicants, Dunn's design was awarded for "best profession inspired" and received the grand prize for the event.

When asked what inspired her design, she said that America's Shipyard was her biggest inspiration. "Being a shipyard worker, we all come together to maintain our Navy ships so they can protect our country," said Dunn. "I wanted to pay homage to that effort with my design. In the old days, the ships would have a figurehead at the front, a maiden that brings good luck to the voyage. So, I decided that it would also bring good luck to put a ship at the front of the women

who wear these designed bras. I'm very proud of the design."

Dunn has lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS), where areas of abnormal cell growth increases her risk of developing invasive breast cancer. In recognition of her treatment and to celebrate those like her who are survivors, she joined the contest for 2019.

The Bra-Ha-Ha event, is a part of the Chesapeake Regional Health Foundation, and is a one-of-a-kind fundraising experience that allows members of the community to construct unique designs using breast cancer as inspiration for their canvas. The event aims to raise funds to improve breast health and breast cancer detection rates in the area's under served population. To learn more about the event, please visit <https://brahaha.org/>.

## VADM Thomas Moore: From the Bridge

For nearly 18 years, our national defense strategy focused on containing violent extremism around the world. Though the terrorist threat is still real, our military's focus has shifted to "Great Power Competition," and that's what I'd like to focus on this month.

The Navy has shifted, or pivoted, our focus from the Middle East to Europe, Asia, and the Pacific Ocean to confront the growing threats posed by a resurgent Russia and a growing China. Both countries want to improve their global economic standing and are choosing to do so by increasing the size and effectiveness of their militaries. They then use their more modern forces to challenge their neighbors and the United States in international waters.

This is what I mean when I say "Great Power Competition." We are focused on ensuring global peace and prosperity by ensuring our rights, and those of our allies, to free trade and freedom of the seas against large and capable militaries. Eighty percent of the world is covered in water and 90 percent of the world's commerce travels over water. It is vital to the world economy that we protect the freedom of the seas.

As with every conflict, there are front lines. For the United States Navy, our frontline consists of our forward-deployed aircraft carriers, submarines, and surface ships. Within NAVSEA, you are the frontline. Without our naval shipyards, we cannot deploy combat-ready ships around the globe,

and without talented craftspeople, artisans, engineers, and support staff, our shipyards cannot operate. You are the women and men who ensure our Sailors go into harm's way with the most capable and lethal ships in the world. You are The Force Behind the Fleet.

Victory in this Great Power Competition will depend on our ability to expand warfighting capabilities and deliver ships back to the fleet on time. I expect the competition to extend many years and our adversaries will deliver new capabilities and employ new tactics to try to gain an advantage. The United States will do the same, and we will rely on you to ensure we have the ships required to Expand the Advantage our Navy has over all others.

In recognition of your importance to ultimate victory, we have grown the size of our shipyard workforce. Now we are executing the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program that will deliver critical repairs to our dry docks, optimize workflow within the shipyards through significant infrastructure improvements, and replace your aged and obsolete capital equipment. You are a 21st century workforce, and I want to provide you with 21st century facilities to match.

Next month's column will focus exclusively on the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program.

Send your thoughts, feedback and questions. You can email me at directly at [thomas.j.moore5@navy.mil](mailto:thomas.j.moore5@navy.mil) or through



our general feedback e-mail, [NAVSEA\\_Feedback.fct@navy.mil](mailto:NAVSEA_Feedback.fct@navy.mil). If you don't have reliable access to a computer or email, you can use your smartphone to send a message to the NAVSEA Facebook page at [www.Facebook.com/NAVSEA](http://www.Facebook.com/NAVSEA).

R,  
Tom.



## From the Commander, Capt. Kai O. Torkelson:



## An Important Year in America's Shipyard

It's a popular sentiment right between Thanksgiving and Christmas to ask, "where has the year gone?" Somehow that question seems even more appropriate this year. That's because as I reflect on 2019 successes of our shipyard—to include important first steps in realizing our Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, strides in workforce development, and our vital service to the fleet—it becomes obvious the year has gone fast because it's been filled with important activity across all fronts in America's Shipyard.

Last month Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) completed work on two aircraft carriers, USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) and USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), enabling them to go back to sea and conduct their missions, helping to maintain global security and stability. Our new Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Mike Gilday, said, "Thanks to you all for your herculean efforts in repairing the Truman and returning her back to the fleet! Your can-do attitude, dedication and devotion to mission is exactly why our Navy is the strongest in the world." NAVSEA Commander, Vice Admiral Tom Moore, visited us on Nov. 22 and personally honored our Truman team in a ceremony in front Bldg 1500. He said, "With a large amount of unknowns and early estimates that the repairs could take until after the first of the year the NAVSEA team got to work. Norfolk Naval Shipyard electricians worked six days a week around the clock. Combined with our engineering team and a big help from the industry, including many small businesses, we were able to finish her up and get her

underway. To cap it all off, the team finished an incremental availability for USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) on time Nov. 14. This is what right looks like. This is what great looks like. A huge Bravo Zulu to the NNSY and everyone from NAVSEA who made this happen."

In addition to that vital service to the fleet, last month we completed conversion of the next generation Moored Training Ship USS La Jolla (SSN 701), providing the fleet with a modern platform to train Sailors for the next several decades. We undocked USS Wyoming (SSBN 742), a key milestone in the boat's Engineered Refueling Overhaul. We graduated our 2019 class of apprentices, with 241 members who are now ready to help take the shipyard to greater heights of capability and service. We held a major emergency response exercise with our state and local partners. Finally, we welcomed approximately 2,000 attendees into the shipyard during our 2019 Family Day.

With December now here, our minds tend to turn toward family, friends, fun and festivities. I love the time leading up to Christmas and the holidays, for the good feeling of giving to others, helping those in need, and reflecting on our many blessings. While this can be the most wonderful time of year, it can also be stressful. We need to all be aware of the increased activity, potential for injuries, and stress that may occur, and plan accordingly. I encourage all of you to consider how you can use our C.O.R.E. values throughout this period, such as demonstrating Ownership in ensuring personal safety during holiday travels, or exhibiting respect when spending time with family and friends.

Since we're still a few weeks away from the holidays, it's important in the meantime that we remain focused on the tasks at hand in America's Shipyard. We've had a tremendously important past month of activity for the shipyard, we need to carry that urgency with us into 2020. Making resolutions are always important in December, but as we prepare to enter a new decade, they may be even more significant. In our shops, in our departments, and across our organization, we need to identify the challenges that remain in front

of us and attack them with vigor. The Chief of Naval Operations said we need a stronger, more capable and more innovative Navy in the 2020s, not the 2040s. Through the craftsmanship of our mechanics, the diversity of thought among our 11,000 employees, and the innovations we've been pursuing to bring out of the lab and onto the deckplates, we're at the forefront in meeting that challenge.

Prior to 2019, we achieved the expanded workforce to get right-sized in proportion to our workload. Now that the workforce is 11,000 strong, we must focus on developing the people we now have while identifying ways within the shipyard to grow our productive capacity. One code that's already helping in this area is our Radiological Controls department, which is working to trim its personnel by 2 percent to return those billets back to Production Resources for skilled trade hires. That's a great example of showing Care in choosing an attitude of supporting our common mission. Looking at the shipyard's history, we often do our best work in meeting the nation's and Navy's challenges when our rolls range between 10,000 to 12,000 employees, and it's time for this group—our group—to make its own history.

As we begin a new decade, commit to examining and implementing what "right looks like" across all aspects of our work. As part of seeing every problem as an opportunity to learn, improve, innovate and teach, we can no longer accept limitations in the timely and meaningful development of our people. Accepting deficiencies hinders our employees' ability to perform vital work, which in turn pushes ship deliveries out further. When VADM Moore and the Secretary of the Navy are fielding questions about getting carriers back out to sea, we own a significant role in that discussion. We need to each possess a "fleet forward" mindset in overcoming barriers, bringing innovations and taking calculated risks to achieve excellence in the repair and modernization of ships and submarines. That's how we truly will rebuild

Continued on Page 8



# Norfolk Naval Shipyard Completes Moored Training Ship Conversion of USS La Jolla

BY MICHAEL BRAYSHAW • LEAD PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST | PHOTO BY SHELBY WEST • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) successfully completed the conversion of USS La Jolla (SSN 701) into a Moored Training Ship (MTS) Nov. 7.

La Jolla is the first of two next-generation training ships converted at NNSY to become land-based platforms for training nuclear Sailors at the Nuclear Power Training Unit (NPTU) in Charleston, South Carolina. The second, USS San Francisco (SSN 711), has been at NNSY since January 2017.

“Converting La Jolla into a Moored Training Ship is a great investment in the Navy’s future and a commitment to fleet excellence,” said CDR John C. Smith, commanding officer. “Training on a more modern plant design provides a major upgrade and equips our Sailors with a reliable platform for the years ahead, which is key to ensuring maximum effectiveness across the fleet.”

As the first MTS conversion ever performed at NNSY, and the Navy’s first one in nearly 30 years, the effort proved similar in many ways to constructing the first ship in a new class. During its conversion, La Jolla underwent two complete hull cuts, separating the boat into three pieces, recycling the center section, and adding three new hull sections, adding 76-feet to the overall ship length. The new hull sections arrived from Electric Boat via barge and were craned into the dock. In the midst of that massive undertaking, the conversion also included work typical of engineered overhauls NNSY conducts on other Los Angeles-class submarines.

“Thank you to everyone who participated in the conversion of La Jolla, which was a long and challenging process, but also one important to our growth as an organization and an achievement vital to the development of our Navy Sailors,” said Shipyard Commander Capt. Kai Torkelson. “It’s truly a remarkable accomplishment to complete the conversion of a fast-attack submarine into a Moored Training Ship, the closest NNSY has come in more than 60 years to

constructing an all-new vessel. Along with San Francisco, La Jolla will provide a modern platform for enabling highly-skilled and fully capable 21st century fleet operators.”

The conversion’s unprecedented work for the shipyard presented unique challenges in all phases of the project. NNSY naval architects, docking officers and La Jolla project team members collaborated extensively to safely and successfully dock the boat on strongbacks, which are more than twice the height of blocks usually used at NNSY. The docking challenge hinged on having the boat sitting as high in the water as possible without creating an unstable buoyancy condition. This challenge was effectively met by pulling 40,000 pounds of material off the boat before docking, and “superflooding” the dock three feet above the river level during the breasting over of the ship on top of strongbacks. “This is the first time, to my knowledge, that a boat in the U.S. Navy has been dry docked using strongbacks,” said NNSY Stability and Weight Control Branch Lead Engineer Gus Goddin.

Per the NAVSEA Campaign Plan to Expand the Advantage 2.0, shipbuilding and maintenance sites should effectively partner and assist one another as needed, something that’s been done throughout the La Jolla project. “In our work partnering with Electric Boat on the conversion, we also helped build an environment promoting increased levels of innovation, collaboration and knowledge sharing across the shipbuilding, maintenance and repair community,” said Torkelson.

The Navy has used Moored Training Ships for 30 years, with the current two at NPTU—ex-Sam Rayburn (MTS 635) and ex-Daniel Webster (MTS 626)—having been converted at Charleston Naval Shipyard. Following that shipyard’s closure in 1996, NNSY assumed maintenance responsibilities of both Rayburn and Webster, to include their upcoming inactivations.



# NNSY HOLDS LA JOLLA CELEBRATION

Story by Allison Conti • Public Affairs Specialist  
Photos by Shelby West • NNSY Photographer

Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) employees celebrated the completion of USS La Jolla (SSN 701) into a Moored Training Ship (MTS) on Nov. 4. NNSY's leadership was in attendance to celebrate the accomplishment. Capt. James Mosman said, "This is about celebrating the effort that NNSY employees put into the ship during the conversion. As you know, La Jolla is the first in a new class of Moored Training Ships. After 252 years at the shipyard, we continue to have firsts and that is pretty impressive. This is another first for Norfolk Naval Shipyard." He continued, "Today marks the beginning of a new era for Moored Training Ships. I want to thank every department, every code, and every person out here today. Many, many people in this shipyard contributed to the La Jolla effort. Well done Norfolk Naval Shipyard! Congratulations on an amazing accomplishment!"

The former Commanding Officer of La Jolla, Capt. James E. Crosley said, "This project has definitely been exceptionally challenging. It has definitely been the hardest thing I've ever been involved in and it could potentially be the hardest thing the shipyard has ever done. But we got through it and here we are."

NNSY Commander Capt. Kai Torkelson said, "NNSY throughout its history has constructed over 100 vessels. It has repaired thousands. It has modernized thousands of vessels. It has been a long time since we've had a ship cut apart, put back together, and getting ready to go out and do the mission that it was designed to do. You should all be rightfully proud to talk about this for years to come. Hats off to you! As we watch this ship go down the river, there will be a tremendous hoorah."



**ERG MEMBER OF THE MONTH: IVONNE JACOME**

BY TROY MILLER • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST  
 BY DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

Code 902 Financial Management Analyst Ivonne Jacome is the chairperson for the Hispanic Heritage Employee Resource Group (HH-ERG). She was born in Los Angeles and raised in San Diego. She has been employed at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) for 13 years. She joined the HH-ERG four years ago. She saw an opportunity to serve and help others, so she took advantage of it.

Jacome loves helping others and sharing information, so being a member of the HH-ERG was a perfect fit for her. It was a chance to break down barriers and let the workforce know that the HH-ERG is available to assist them and improve the quality of work life for all.

**» GOOD-TO-KNOW**

**Shipyard Curtailment 2019**  
 NNSY will curtail all but essential operations on Dec. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31, 2018 and Jan. 1, 2020. Official government holidays are Dec. 25, 2019 and Jan. 1, 2020. Curtailing all but essential operations during this time will achieve maximum economy for a holiday period when significant numbers of employees are absent from work, thus reducing the normal productive effort. All three shifts will work on Dec. 23, 2019, ending with the third shift at 7:40 a.m. Dec. 24, 2019. Employees will return to work Jan. 2, 2020, starting with the first (or day) shift. This year, 40 hours of annual leave will be needed. Employees with sufficient annual leave will take leave during the curtailment period. New employees starting work after June 1, 2019 will take Leave Without Pay (LWOP) as an employment condition if they do not have sufficient leave to cover the curtailment period; or they may be furloughed (FWOP) per applicable negotiated agreements or other regulations.

**Service Only Weekends**

In order to allow our employees time off to rest, revitalize and enjoy family or non-work related activities, NNSY has established several services only weekends in accordance with

our overtime management plan.

Upcoming services only weekends:

Dec. 24-Jan. 1, Jan. 18-20, Feb. 15-17, March 21-22, April 11-12, May 9-10, May 23-25, June 20-21, July 4-5, Aug. 8-9, Sept. 5-7

**CMWR Holiday Hours:**

Ark: Closed Dec. 23 - Jan. 1  
 Dockers: Open Dec. 23 from 6:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Closed Dec. 24 - 25. Open Dec. 26 - 27 6:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
 Four Flags: Closed Dec. 23 - Jan. 1.  
 Pierside: Open Dec. 23 6:00 - 10:00 a.m. Closed Dec. 24 - Jan. 1.  
 Rusty Anchor: Open Dec. 23 6:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.. Closed Dec. 24 - Jan. 1.  
 Shoe Store: Open Dec. 23 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Closed Dec. 24 - January 1.

**Veterans' 101 Session:**

The Veterans' 101 Session scheduled for Dec. 6 has been canceled. The next Veterans' 101 Session will be held on Jan. 22.

**Federal Student Loan Repayment Program**

The Federal Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) is accepting applications. The

SLRP is an incentive program. Applications are competitive and there is no guarantee of approval. To apply, you must meet the minimum eligibility criteria. Applications will be accepted from Nov. 25 through Dec. 20. For more information, contact SLRP Administrator Courtney Watkins at 396-0557 or Courtney.watkins@navy.mil.

**Holiday Gift Giving Policy**

With the holidays coming up, people like to give and receive gifts. The good news is that there are no laws that prohibit you from giving gifts to your coworkers or subordinate employees. But supervisors should still be mindful about showing favoritism if giving a gift to a particular employee. There are also no laws that prohibit you from giving a gift to contractor employees, but the contracting companies may have their own rules against accepting gifts. You should avoid showing favoritism if more than one contractor supports your office or program. Remember that there are rules that restrict the giving of gifts to employees that are higher in your supervisory chain, and other rules restrict your ability to accept gifts from contractor employees. For questions, contact Shipyard Counsel's Office at 396-8625.

**From the Commander, Continued from Page 5**

America's Shipyard for its next 250 years of service.

To follow up on my commitment to you last month, NNSY has established a dedicated e-mail account, NNSY\_Feedback@navy.mil, that anyone at the shipyard can use to ask me a question or send a comment. You can also send them directly to kai.torkelson@navy.mil. In keeping with our Care value of being present and transparent, if there is a question you want answered or an issue you want resolved, please share your concern so it can be addressed.

I hope everyone enjoys this period of reflection and renewal, and prepares to come back to work to make 2020 a great year at America's Shipyard! Have a wonderful holiday season and happy new year!

**Capt. Kai Torkelson**  
 Norfolk Naval Shipyard's  
 108th Commander

# NNSY SPIRIT WEEK

PHOTOS BY CODE 1170 PHOTOGRAPHERS





## **NNSY T&I LAB PARTNERS WITH NCMS TO BRING STANDUP ABRADING MACHINE TO THE DECKPLATE**

**STORY BY KRISTI BRITT •  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST**

**PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
THE NNSY T&I LAB**

The Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) Technology and Innovation (T&I) Lab collaborated with the National Center for Manufacturing Sciences (NCMS) to bring innovative technologies straight to the deck plate.

“The NCMS partnership program is a two-way innovative collaboration where they take the needs of our team and seek out tools that would best fit those needs,” said Technology Insertion Manager Dale Berkley. “We work together to bring corporations onboard to provide technology demonstrations of their tools. In response, our workers test out the equipment and provide their feedback of how the tools work and any changes they would make to best fit their needs. The corporations can then make adjustments to their tools based on that feedback to make them better for their intended jobs.”

As the first demonstration in the program, Temple Allen Industries was brought onboard the USS McKee (AS-41) to test out its line of surface preparation tools, including a deck crawler and sander.

“At the shipyard, we use a handheld deck crawler,” said Dionisio Dillard, Code 970 Mechanic. “We use the deck crawlers frequently to deal with rough finishes on surface, especially on the flight deck of the carriers and onboard the submarines. The device removes non-skid areas but because it is a handheld device we have



**LEFT:** Code 970 Mechanic Dionisio Dillard uses the Standup Abrading Machine (SAM) on the USS McKee (AS-41); **ABOVE:** The Standup Abrading Machine is an ergonomic device that is able to smooth out rough surfaces, including non-skid surfaces.



to be down on the deckplate using the device. What's more is that you have to use face shields to avoid the dust kicking up and the teeth on the device shooting out when you're doing a job. There's nothing more frustrating about fearing the tools you work with but what we currently use is definitely a tool you need to fear to ensure you're safe while using it."

Code 970 Process Improvement Manager Gaston Shaw added, "We've been looking for a better way to do this job for years now. We wanted something that was more ergonomically sound for our employees so that they feel safe while efficiently getting the job done. We want them to have a good quality of life and providing them the best tools for the job helps do that."

The team had a hands-on demonstration of the Standup Abrading Machine (SAM) from Temple Allen, a standing deck crawler with a vacuum system engaged to pick up the dust left behind.

"One of the biggest wins of this machine is that it's standing and positioned so that it doesn't hurt the back of the user," said Dillard. "It was also easy to use. You lift up the machine with a trigger to navigate the surfaces and release it when you want to start grinding at a surface. It worked great on flat surfaces; however, for the grooved surfaces that weren't perfect we were finding that the machine would skid across it and not do a great job of fitting into

the grooves. We work at a shipyard and onboard vessels that hardly ever have perfect surfaces to work on."

The team then provided their feedback to the company's representative, sharing ideas of how the machine could conform to different surfaces. The corporation then took those ideas and has begun making adjustments to its machine to accommodate those concerns.

"This is one of the greatest things about this program. We help each other by doing these demonstrations and providing the feedback to make these tools better," said Berkley. "This not only affects our team should we purchase the product after the fact; but also anyone who purchases their tools in the future. It's a win-win. What's more is that these modifications are made at no cost to the Navy. The company is investing in these changes to best serve their customers."

"The fact that people are willing to take our feedback from working with the tool and are willing to make the tools better to fit those needs is huge for me," said Dillard. "They are taking our words to heart and truly making a difference in how they do business and that means the world to me. At America's Shipyard, we follow the C.O.R.E. values and you can really see how much this team cares about the deckplate worker. By showing you care, you are bringing up the morale of the people and inspiring them to make changes for the better in their respective areas. By living C.O.R.E., you are showing that all of us matter and our needs are worth hearing. Our safety matters. Our longevity matters. I can't thank the NNSY T&I Lab and the NCMS enough for providing this opportunity to us."

Berkley stated that this is only the beginning for NNSY. "Technology and innovation isn't always about having the shiny new toy at your disposal. Sometimes it's just making a slight change for the better," he said. "We want people to feel empowered to change and feel comfortable in their work. We want them to feel safe and cared for. We look forward to the future of this program and providing our workforce the tools they need to succeed."

For more information on innovation, contact the NNSY T&I Lab at 396-7180 or email the REAL Ideas program at [NNSY\\_REALIdeas@navy.mil](mailto:NNSY_REALIdeas@navy.mil).



# NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD UNDOCKS USS WYOMING

STORY BY MICHAEL BRAYSHAW •  
LEAD PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

PHOTO BY SHELBY WEST •  
NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

USS Wyoming (SSBN-742) successfully undocked at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) Nov. 6, a key milestone in the boat's Engineered Refueling Overhaul (ERO).

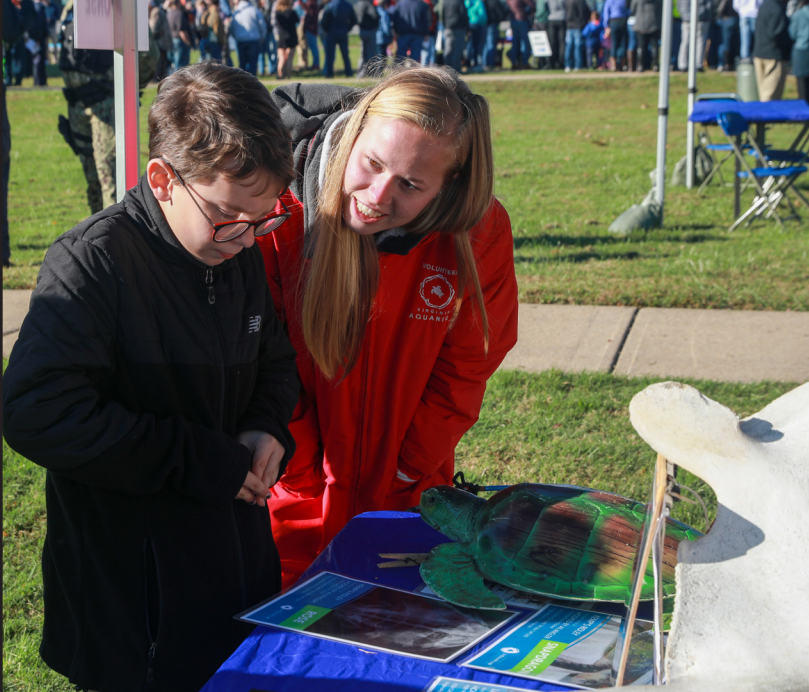
"Wyoming is now one step closer to completing its Engineered Refueling Overhaul and providing superior warfighting capability back to the Fleet," said Shipyard Commander Capt. Kai Torkelson. "This is a critical piece in the country's nuclear deterrence strategy, as Wyoming and the other Ohio-class submarines make up one leg of the nuclear triad. Thank you to everyone who has been contributing to this critical work of refueling and upgrading the boat during its ERO."

Wyoming has been at NNSY since January 2018, undergoing refueling and modernization. In a first for the shipyard, Enlisted Women at Sea ship alterations are being performed onboard, modifying the layout of berthing areas.

The Wyoming project team has achieved several successes so far during this overhaul, meeting a number of key events early and with first-time quality. Additionally, the team has set new standards in safety and boat cleanliness, resulting in the lowest Total Case Injury Rate for an ERO.

"Everything we do is a challenge, but the shipyard has leveraged a lot of experience and knowledge on this project, and ship's force has been alongside us throughout as we continue to be committed in achieving our goals," said Project Superintendent John Walker.

Reflecting on the importance of shipyard efforts to deliver boats like Wyoming back to the Fleet, NAVSEA Commander, Vice Admiral Tom Moore said "we use the term 'Great Power Competition' to describe today's military climate. Other countries, specifically China and Russia, are growing their militaries to improve their political and economic standing in the world. Our Navy is the primary tool the United States has to maintain global order and stability. That's because of what you do every day. You deliver the ships required to maintain that stability and respond to crises around the world."




NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD  
AMERICA'S  
SHIPYARD  
PORTSMOUTH • VA  
est. 1767

Family  
Day  
Nov. 2, 2019



PHOTOS BY TONY ANDERSON AND DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHERS



**NNSY Employees attend the Health and Wellness Fair, where they had a chance to learn about their options face-to-face with health care providers.**

## NNSY's Code 1102.3 Helps Employees Prepare for Open Season with Health and Wellness Fair

STORY BY ALLISON CONTI • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST | PHOTO BY DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) hosted its annual Health and Wellness Fair on Nov. 7. The event gave NNSY employees a chance to meet directly with healthcare provider representatives and learn about healthcare, dental, and vision plans available to them. “The employees get to have a face-to-face conversation with various representatives, whether they are satisfied with their current plan or if they are considering something new,” said Administrative Support Services Division’s (Code 1102.3) Linda Graham.

The event hosted representatives from the following organizations and healthcare providers: American Postal Workers Union (APWU), Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS), Optima, Compass Rose, Government Employee Health Association (GEHA), United Health Care, Aetna, Delta Dental, Dominion Dental, Metlife, United Concordia, and VSP Vision Care. HR representatives from the Command Benefits Center were also in attendance to talk to NNSY employees about their options.

“The fair was very informative and helped me to compare and contrast different healthcare plans. It was nice to be able to ask questions directly to the healthcare providers,” said Nuclear Fluid Systems and Mechanical Engineering Division (Code 2320) Engineer Dexter Babione-Putnam.

In addition, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) and Callaghan Fitness Center both had representatives present to discuss

the services they offer to the NNSY community. Many attendees were surprised to learn about that the fitness center is free and open to civilian employees.

The Health and Wellness Fair is aligned with the start of Open Season, which runs from Nov. 11 – Dec. 9. Open Season is the only time of the year when government employees can make changes to their health, dental, or vision insurance for themselves and their families. “It is very important that people review their enrollment every year because most of the plans change from year-to-year. The benefits can either increase or decrease. Some plans drop out all together, and in that case individuals can research and choose another plan that best fits their family’s needs,” said Graham.

When asked what guidance she gives to federal employees during Open Season Graham said, “The best advice that I can give is to do the research on all plans to make sure that you’re choosing the best plan both financially and medically for yourself and your family.”

For employees unable to attend the Health and Wellness Fair, remaining information was set up in Bldg. 163 on the second floor. In addition, employees can find information about what plans are available on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website at [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov).

# LUMPS, BUMPS AND MILK

## THE FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM'S BREAST CARE HEALTH TALK

STORY BY HANNAH BONDOC • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

PHOTO BY DAN DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

Breast health is a topic that affects everyone—yet most know little about it. To shed some light on the subject, Norfolk Naval Shipyard's (NNSY) Federal Women's Program (FWP) brought in two speakers: Certified Breast Care Nurse and Breast Health Navigator Marguerite "Meg" Shrader from Chesapeake Regional Breast Center who spoke about breast screenings, and Lactation Consultant Karla Johnson from Naval Medical Center Portsmouth who spoke on breast feeding. Topics included self-screenings and personal action, benign and malignant breast diseases, lactation and hormonal breast changes, clinical experiences, and barriers to care.

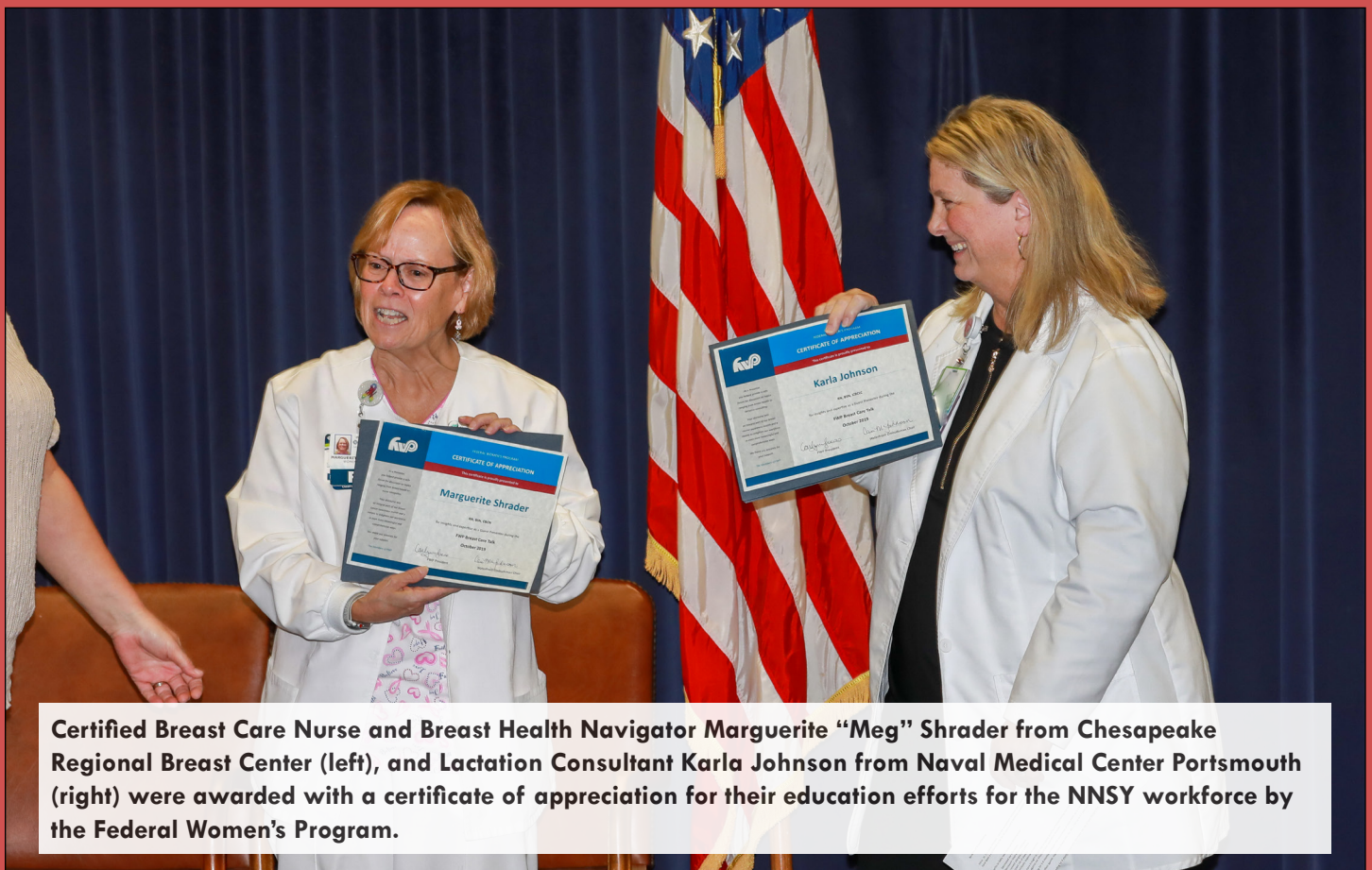
As a breast cancer survivor herself, Shrader strives to "help women craft a good experience whether it is with their diagnosis, treatment, or survivorship." She also said that women need to know their lumps, bumps, and general landscape of their breasts. She emphasized that the main goal of screenings is early detection. The earlier your doctor can detect cancer, the easier it is to treat.

As a mother who struggled with breast feeding because she did not have access to a lactation consultant, Johnson wanted to ensure

that other mothers would not have to go through the same thing. In her presentation, she discussed the benefits of breast feeding, such as the decreased risk of asthma for the baby and the decreased chance of breast and ovarian cancer for the mother.

After the talk, the FWP awarded both health practitioners with a certificate of appreciation for their education efforts. A surprising development for the shipyard was also announced: FWP is working on a nursing mothers initiative to purchase affordable prototype trailers. The units will provide more accessible privacy to breast-feeding mothers.

For more information on breast health information and care, visit Chesapeake Regional's related blog section at <https://chesapeake.regional.com/services-specialties/breast-health> or contact your health provider.



**Certified Breast Care Nurse and Breast Health Navigator Marguerite "Meg" Shrader from Chesapeake Regional Breast Center (left), and Lactation Consultant Karla Johnson from Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (right) were awarded with a certificate of appreciation for their education efforts for the NNSY workforce by the Federal Women's Program.**

# LUMBEE TRIBE MEMBER SHARES HIS MILITARY JOURNEY IN HONOR OF NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH

STORY BY ALLISON CONTI • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST  
PHOTOS BY BIANCA WILSON • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) welcomed Chief Petty Officer Jestin Lowery of Navy Cyber Defense Operations, Suffolk, VA Nov. 18 for an event celebrating Native American Indian Heritage Month. Shipyard Commander Capt. Kai Torkelson introduced Chief Lowery and said, “As we celebrate Native American Indian Heritage Month, I want us to recognize the outstanding work that Native American federal employees, both military and civilian, contribute every day. Especially here at Norfolk Naval Shipyard.”

NNSY’s Native American Indian Employee Resource Group (ERG) Chairperson Camille Brownell-Sorenson worked with NNSY Outreach Coordinator Valerie Fulwood to arrange Chief Lowery’s presentation. Brownell-Sorenson said, “The goal of the event is to raise awareness that we have Native American Indians serving in our military, many in the local area.” According to Brownell-Sorenson, over 140,000 living Native Americans are veterans and 18.6 percent of Native Americans served in the post 9/11 period.

Chief Lowery is one of these thousands of Native Americans serving in the Armed Forces. Since enlisting in the U.S. Navy in December 2006, he has been named the 2014 Military Performer of the year, the 2015 Sailor of the Year, earned his Enlisted Information Warfare designation, received his second and third Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, his first Joint Accommodation Medal, and was promoted to Chief Petty Officer.

A native of Lumberton, NC, Chief Lowery is a member of the Lumbee Tribe. With approximately 60,000 members, the Lumbee Tribe is the largest one east of the Mississippi River. According to Chief Lowery, the founders of the tribe settled along the swamps of the Lumbee River in 1700. Chief Lowery painted the audience a picture of his tribe’s culture. “Our descendants now speak a unique Lumbee English dialect where we use ‘ain’t, weren’t, yonder, der, and y’all.’ We cash our checks at the Lumbee Guaranty Bank and enroll our kids at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Pembroke, the country’s first state-funded four-year college to serve Native Americans. You can find us at our annual Lumbee Homecoming which takes place during the first week of July. This is a time when everyone comes home to spend time with family, eat some chicken bog and collard sandwiches, attend the Lumbee Pageant, homecoming parade, and the Pow Wow [an annual festival celebrating Lumbee culture].”

Though Chief Lowery is proud of his heritage and background, he didn’t always realize how it was unique and how his experiences differed from others. Growing up in a predominately Native American community, it wasn’t until he reached high school that he was in the minority of his classmates. He added, “It wasn’t until I joined the Navy that I realized I was raised in poverty. Robeson County has the highest poverty rate in NC, with 32 percent of its population living below the poverty line. We don’t have much, but what we do have we take pride in.”

Chief Lowery concluded his event with a message directed to every employee at NNSY. “If you take nothing else from this event I want you to remember that no matter where you come from or how poor you grew up, if you work hard to be a better person, set goals, and push yourself to be better every day, good things will happen and doors will open.”



**Photos Above:** NNSY Employees, including Shipyard Commander Capt. Kai Torkelson, listened to Navy Chief Petty Officer Jestin Lowery speak about his Native American heritage.

# NNSY DISABILITY AWARENESS COMMITTEE ERG SHINES A LIGHT ON INVISIBLE DISABILITIES

STORY BY ALLISON CONTI • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

PHOTOS BY DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) joined the country in celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) during October. NNSY's Disability Awareness Committee Employee Readiness Group (ERG) hosted two events that focused on "invisible disabilities." Disability Awareness Committee ERG Chairperson Daniel Freeh defined an "invisible disability" as something "that you may or may not see from the outside."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in four adults in the United States is living with a disability. That equates to 61 million Americans. The vast majority of people with disabilities are those living with an invisible one. When speaking on the topic, Freeh used himself as an example. "I'll tell you most people who see me on a day-to-day basis would not know I was disabled. I walk and I talk just like everyone else, but you should see me by 4 p.m. when I leave work. I'm not walking so nicely at that point."

The first event was held Oct. 25 and featured guest speaker Dr. Debbie Pfeiffer, Director of Outreach Programs, for the Virginia School of the Deaf and the Blind. Pfeiffer discussed the history and mission of the school located in Staunton, VA.

One highlight of Pfeiffer's presentation was her discussion of the Courtesy Rules of Blindness published by the National Foundation of the Blind. The rules, which can be found online at <https://www.nfb.org/programs-services/meet-blind-month/courtesy-rules-blindness>, provide tips for sighted people to reference when interacting with a person who is blind or vision impaired. Some examples included, "Understand – I may not recognize your voice. If I don't know you well, please say, 'Hi, it's Sue.'" Another was, "Experience – I probably have years of experience using nonvisual techniques to live my life. Feel free to ask me how I do something, or how best you can assist me if help is needed."

Pfeiffer emphasized that the discussion is not about the disability, but rather, how to allow access to all. She spoke about technology that helps to turn challenges into opportunities. Some examples were a portable scanner, used to transform printed text into electronic text through optical character recognition, and software that can read text aloud to a person who can't see it. Another example was relay interpreting services that provides access to telephone conversations between those using American Sign Language and those who do not.

Freeh led the second event and had the audience play a trivia game in which he listed facts about three historical figures, and the audience had to identify the person based on the facts. Freeh said, "These three individuals did remarkable things for humanity. They also happen to be disabled." The three individuals Freeh discussed were President Franklin D. Roosevelt, mathematician John Nash, and author Helen Keller.

Freeh wrapped up his presentation by speaking about how these individuals' disabilities "had no bearing on how they changed the world." This perseverance is a characteristic he sees mirrored in the workforce at NNSY. "Many people here have overcome their disabilities. They come to the shipyard every day, and they do a great job. They get the job done and their disability does not hold them back from striving towards excellence."



**Top:** NNSY DisABILITY Awareness Committee ERG Chairperson Daniel Freeh and Guest Speaker Dr. Debbie Pfeiffer from Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind. **Bottom:** Guest Speaker Dr. Debbie Pfeiffer, from Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind, addresses NNSY employees during National Disability Employment Awareness Month.



# NNSY'S OWN SUPERWOMAN

## SHIPYARD SPOTLIGHT: OFFICER JESSICA BRENNEMAN

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ALLISON CONTI • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

“You can take my hair, you can take my ta-tas, but you will NEVER take my fight.” This is Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) Police Officer Jessica Brenneman’s life motto. Brenneman was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer, Triple-Negative Breast Cancer, on May 1, 2018, at the age of 29. She described the day as the worst of her life. “Hearing the words ‘you have cancer’ was awful. I just kind of shut down.”

Brenneman, a U.S. Navy veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom and mom of two kids under the age of four at the time, said she looked at her children and decided to fight the disease. “Staring at their faces, I thought, ‘they’re young, they need their mommy. I have to fight this.’”

She decided to turn to her long-time passion, fitness, to help make it through the difficult journey ahead. Athletic

since childhood, Brenneman played both basketball and softball in high school. Before her diagnosis, she competed in CrossFit; however, it became difficult after she started treatments since her port for chemotherapy was in the way of many primary movements. This led her to bodybuilding.

While still undergoing radiation therapy, Brenneman started training at a gym in Virginia Beach. The training process for bodybuilding is grueling. Her trainer at Flex Gym told her that most people don’t make it on their first try because the workouts and diet requirements are just too demanding. But Brenneman not only made it through – she excelled.

Brenneman said, “The training process for bodybuilding is very grueling on your body. Especially mine. I was still undergoing chemotherapy, so I had a lot of burn marks

under my arms and my chest. It was so tough. But I dug deep every day and knew I had to do it for myself and my children.”

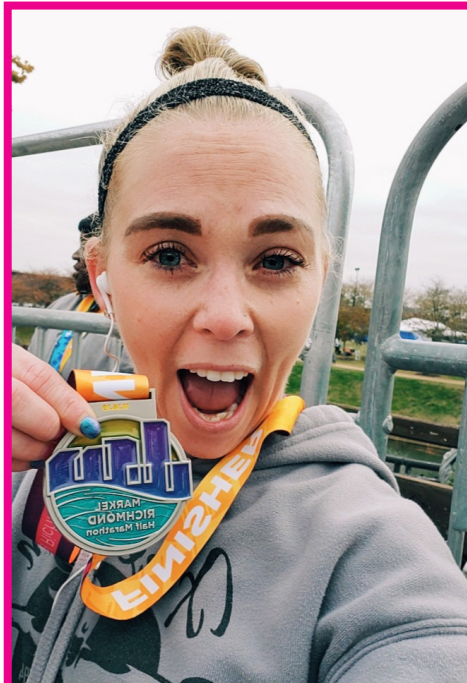
All of her hard work paid off as she competed in the 2019 National Physique Committee (NPC) Baltimore Classic on Oct. 26, winning first place in the Armed Forces Figure Division and placing third in Novice and fourth in the True Novice Figure Divisions. Brenneman didn’t just stick to bodybuilding. She regularly ran six miles following her radiation appointments and just completed her first half marathon, finishing the race in two hours and nineteen minutes.

As of today, Brenneman’s scans do not show any signs of cancer. “Having cancer is very depressing. Me personally? I can’t dwell on something so negative, so I flipped my life around and said, ‘what can I do to beat this?’

Fitness has always been a massive passion of mine. I have always loved it. I knew that if I did something I loved and kept my life as normal as possible, then I could beat this. So that's what I did – I went and worked out, tried to smile as much as I could, and kept fighting. I'm winning now."

Along with fitness, Brenneman relied on her support network to battle her diagnosis. Her two children, Gunnar and Adilyn, are her two biggest fans, and thanks to her mom and sister, she never had to attend a chemotherapy session alone. Her support network was not isolated to family and friends – her NNSY work-family supported her throughout her battle. "They've been amazing. I honestly can't thank everyone enough at the precinct. They've been so supportive anytime I had appointments. When I was going through chemo, they were right by my side. They gave me advice and rooted me on. It was amazing!"

Brenneman is now preparing for surgery that will pause her training routine and require physical therapy. However, she plans on being back on her feet in time to train and compete in the summer of 2020. She hopes that her story can be an inspiration to others. "The best advice I can give to anyone, no matter what you're dealing with, is to keep your head held high, keep smiling and keep moving forward. It's all mindset. Don't dwell on the negatives, focus on the positive, and you will beat it."



## 8 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT *Jessica Brenneman*

1. She's a die hard Philadelphia Eagles fan.
2. She's a twin. Her twin brother's name is Matt.
3. She served in the Navy for more than seven years as a Master-at-Arms and has four warfare pins.
4. She deployed to Afghanistan while serving, where she received her combat action ribbon.
5. She delivered her children at home, all natural.
6. She ran her first half-marathon in two hours and 19 minutes without training.
7. She grew up going to the Jersey Shore (North Wildwood) and loves the beach!
8. She is dedicated to serving the country.



**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:** CFC Coordinator Dorassa Fields celebrated the shipyard's efforts as part of CFC; Charity organization representatives set up in the Bldg. 1500 lobby during the kickoff so employees could easily have a look at what they had to offer; NNSY's Naval Civilian Managers Association (NCMA) Chairperson Bill Welch started off the donations for CFC by donating \$100 to the Red Cross.

# NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD RAISES THE ROOF AND FUNDS WITH 2019 COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN KICKOFF

STORY BY HANNAH BONDOC • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST | PHOTOS BY DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

Hot dogs, drinks, and a free concert? These are treats that one does not receive every day at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY), but were offered at the 2019 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Kickoff Nov. 6.

As of today, the CFC supports 20,000 nonprofit charities. Its mission is to “promote and support philanthropy through a program that is employee-focused, cost-efficient, and effective in providing all federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all,” according to its website.

This year's theme was “Show Some Love Through Giving.” Representatives from several organizations were at the fair so employees could see which charities they could donate to through the CFC. “By serving others, we spread the sense of pride and purpose we show to our Navy and nation from within America's Shipyard,” Shipyard Commander Capt. Kai Torkelson said in his opening remarks at the event.

Attendees were offered food and drinks; a raffle ticket to a giveaway for a Batman mug, local art pieces, an assortment of other gifts, and a surprise concert from one of NNSY's Shipping and Handling employees Dominic Carr. NNSY's Naval Civilian Managers Association (NCMA) Chairperson Bill Welch started off the donations by giving \$100 to the American Red Cross.

“It's important to get people excited about CFC,” CFC Coordinator Dorassa Fields explained. “If you're excited about it, you'll tell your friends. Even if it's just free hotdogs, at least the name CFC will be thrown out and the seed of what it is and what's going on will be planted.”

This year, NNSY's goal is \$300,000. To donate, go to <https://cfcvab.org> and use the code VHEF7N or visit <https://www.opm.gov/combined-federal-campaign/> for more information.

# NNSY HOSTS PORTSMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR STEM DAY EVENT

STORY BY ALLISON CONTI • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

PHOTOS BY KRISTI BRITT • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

The rooms of Norfolk Naval Shipyard's (NNSY) Dry Dock Club were buzzing with energy as hundreds of fifth-grade students roamed from table to table. Their eyes were wide with excitement as they learned about welding, watched a firefighting demonstration, and tried on an exoskeleton suit. One student from Westhaven Elementary School exclaimed, "This is the best day of my life!" as she played with 3D printed models. The cause of the commotion? NNSY's first-ever Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Workshop.

More than 500 students from six Portsmouth Public Schools (PPS) visited NNSY Nov. 15 to learn about STEM and see how it applies to the real world. "The goal of the event is to get PPS fifth grade students excited about STEM early in their educational pathway and learn about all of the potential career opportunities available to them within their community – many right in their backyard at NNSY," said NNSY School Liaison Officer, Terrilyn Williams.

Williams worked closely with PPS, NNSY's Morale, Wellness, and Recreation (MWR), the shipyard's Outreach Coordinator, and several local groups and organizations including Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic, Old Dominion University's Virginia Modeling Analysis, and Simulation Center (ODU-VMASC), Mid Atlantic Regional Maintenance Center (MARMC), NNSY Police and Fire Department, and Virginia Aquarium. Additionally, several NNSY codes and shops had exhibits. Code 2310's Nuclear Engineer and NNSY's STEM Employee Resource Group (ERG) President Erica Miranda helped to ensure NNSY was represented. "We wanted to have the different codes from NNSY present their daily STEM-based jobs and what tools we use to make this shipyard operate successfully," she said. "We want their creative minds to start thinking about how what they're learning can apply to the shipyard. Maybe when they're older, they might consider a career here at NNSY. They are the future leaders of tomorrow."

PPS and NNSY had the shared intention of showing the students how STEM can lead to a bright career future. NNSY's Executive Officer Capt. Daniel Rossler said, "There is so much to do in the STEM field, and we have the opportunity to show kids what is out there for them to do. We are showing them the match between what they learn in school and how they can use it in life – it's just incredible."

PPS's Science Coordinator Laura Nelson said, "STEM education is a leveler. You can come in at any level and go anywhere. We hope to inspire children to do just that. We are a STEM city with the shipyard right here in our backyard."

The event gave NNSY employees a chance to establish and expand relationships with the surrounding community. Production Piping Group's (Code 960) Submarine Director J. Allen Bernier said, "Events like this provide continuity with the public to maintain trust and build working relationships that may lead to apprenticeship and employment at America's Shipyard for some of the kids. Our C.O.R.E. values should not just be internal to our shipyard but also applied daily in our homes and communities."

Miranda agreed that events like this embody NNSY's C.O.R.E. values



Fifth grade students from Portsmouth Public Schools roamed from table to table at the first Norfolk Naval Shipyard Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) workshop Nov. 15.



and help us share those values with the community. "At the shipyard, we take pride in our excellent work. That is why we had such high participation. We care, have ownership, and we respect those who want to learn more about us and what we do."

This was the first STEM event hosted at NNSY, but there are already plans for another. "I hope that this workshop will become an annual event and that we will be able to host PPS's entire fifth grade student population," Williams said, "I want to continue to expose students to STEM in a fun and exciting manner while letting them see the significance of what the shipyard provides to their community."

# YOU ASKED, WE ANSWERED!

NNSY's Shipyard Leadership Team (SLT) has identified several topics where the workforce has questions and concerns. This new "You Asked, We Answered" feature will address those on a recurring basis. If you have any questions you would like to have answered in this forum, please e-mail [NFSH\\_NNSY\\_PAO@navy.mil](mailto:NFSH_NNSY_PAO@navy.mil).



Q

When will The Brig re-open in Bldg. M-32?

A:

In January 2020, CMWR will return to Bldg. M-32 with a food service facility, The Gosport Café. Formerly known as The Brig, it will feature a new menu, new look, and new layout. The café will feature self-serving stations for breakfasts and lunches, such as omelet and panini stations, and an expanded menu with freshly baked breads, fruit, salads and more. The vision is for the Gosport Café to look like a food court with improved ambience and lighting.

Q

I didn't get a flu shot Nov. 7 at NNSY. Will I get another chance?



A:

In past years NNSY averaged about 600-700 employees receiving flu shots on site, and this year all 900 were administered by the Naval Medical Center-Portsmouth team in front of Building 1500 Nov 7. NNSY's Emergency Management Officer is currently coordinating with the team to determine if shots can be provided again at NNSY at a later date. If you want to ensure you're covered for flu season, you can get a shot at your local pharmacy. Flu shots are required for active duty uniformed personnel and recommended for civilians.

Q:

*What are services only weekends?*

A:

Services only weekends are when NNSY project teams take the weekend off and only services are maintained on the projects. Some direct work or vital processes may take place during these weekends, but that will be limited. These weekends provide our employees time off to rest, revitalize, and enjoy family or non-work related activities. NNSY has established several services only weekends in FY-20 accordance with our overtime management plan. For more information about services only weekends, see NAVSHIPYDNORINST 5330.13.



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM  
AMERICA'S SHIPYARD**



# CODE 926 FORGES A BRIGHT FUTURE WITH LOW REJECT RATES ON WELDS

STORY BY ALLISON CONTI • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST | PHOTO BY TONY ANDERSON • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

You stand, sit, squat, or lay in a confined area. In your hand is a tool that can easily reach 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Your body is covered in pounds of safety gear to help protect you. Sweat drips off your brow and down your back. The job in front of you is both highly difficult and dangerous. Your success is vital to Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY), fulfilling its mission of delivering service to the Fleet.

This is the challenge that members of NNSY's Welding Shop (Code 926) face every day when they come to work. Yet, despite the circumstances, Code 926 has achieved excellence. Since Dec. 2017, Code 926 has held a 0% reject Radiography Tests (RT) rate on its welds on the non-nuclear side. Code 926's Training Director James Anderson remarked, "It is outstanding and unheard of, to have this kind of success with the volume of RT welds and challenges we experience. We couldn't be more proud of this team!"

But Code 926's success is not isolated just to the non-nuclear side. The code currently has a 2.22% reject rate for its nuclear welds in 2019. Code 926's Nuclear Director Matt Myers reflected on the success: "We base all of our data on that from across the corporation with all other shipyards. Where we currently sit, with a reject rate of 2.22%, is probably 3% lower than any other shipyard in the corporation."

Code 926's leadership team credits five crucial factors for the code's success: taking and implementing feedback from successful members at every level; an innovative and personalized training program; an interactive coach-style leadership method; clear communication and goal-setting; and a team of welders who are enthusiastic about their work.

The code has been working on revamping its training program for the last year and a half. One of the first steps in doing so was sitting down with employees at every level to hear their feedback and suggestions. Anderson said, "We got some successful members from the nuclear and non-nuclear side, and we put them all in a room. We had welders of all ranks in the meetings. They helped to develop the minimum competencies to ensure a consistent training plan for the welding school. Instead of senior leadership or the welding school management dictating everything that is done

and learned, we included the feedback of people who weld successfully every day. It was a team effort that helped us ensure that the pipe welders are deckplate ready for the challenge they will soon encounter." Anderson said that the think tank meetings gave members of Code 926 ownership in their program, implementing one of NNSY's four C.O.R.E. values.

The feedback from the think tank meetings was used to revamp and improve the code's training program. One of the cornerstones of Anderson's revitalized training program is personalization. He said, "The 926 training group updated the program to be both a proficiency-based program and a program of overall welder development. We're trying to develop the welders at an advanced level. We do this through engagement with the students, flexibility, and tailoring our training plans as needed." In addition, the training program places a new emphasis on making sure that its graduates are ready to face real-world welding conditions. Anderson said, "We have an area where we are building mockups that are more realistic to the ship. They're going to learn to mirror-weld. They're going to learn how to weld with their non-dominant hand and weld in tighter restrictions. They're going to learn how to weld in someplace that is not comfortable, a place that is not the welding school."

Anderson's teammates praise his work and firmly believe that the new training program is helping the code to achieve success. Myers stated, "All of the new training products, the vision that Jimmy has, the way he lays that out and formulates a plan individually to develop these people and then get them to us. Once they get into our program and into execution, we take over and have a plan and process that we roll out. It is an overall process that we've incorporated and follow consistently. This process has made us highly successful." Anderson himself emphasized, "Even though this model improves with runtime, we now recognize the direct correlation between the training that rolls over to production"

But the revamped training program is not the only reason for the code's success. "We've been working on revamping the training for a year and a half, but the non-nuclear success goes back to 2017. Jeremy Clark



**Above:** Members of Code 926 are celebrate their accomplishment of a 0% RT reject rate on non-nuclear welds and a 2.22% reject rate on nuclear welds – both rates are well below industry standards.

and his team have done things to make us successful on the deckplate." Code 926's Trades Manager Jeremy Clark nodded along to Anderson's statement. He added, "My job is relieving any pressure I can from the person doing the job. If they're thinking about something else while they're welding, they're probably going to make a mistake."

Clark's coaching method is directly connected the code's overall effort to communicate clearly keeping their workforce focused on their primary goal. Myers said, "I think that is important, getting everyone to move in one direction with the same goal and same focus in mind. It makes it a lot easier when everyone understands the goal, has the same focus, and is driving to the same place. With the reject rate being as low as it is, I bring that to the forefront of my people's minds daily."

The team agreed the most critical component for Code 926's success are the welders themselves. "My mechanics are responsible for the success. They're my people. They are hardworking, motivated, self-starters," said Clark.

On a personal level, Anderson, Clark, and Myers all agree that they come to work every day because they love what they do. Anderson noted, "I love welding, and I enjoy training. I think you have to enjoy your job to give you the motivation to want to be here early in the

morning and to be here late at night. Sometimes, that's what it takes. It takes a lot of hours, a lot of effort, a lot of time, and a lot of input." Myers agreed, saying, "I love my job. I'm a welder through and through. With welding, you have to be somewhat of an artist. It's artistry. You go down there, and it's you, a welding rod or a torch, and a piece of pipe. There is nothing between you and the canvas."

With the many new initiatives Code 926 has a new training program rooted in its employee's feedback, supportive coaching-style leadership, and possibly an all-time low reject rate - Code 926's future is bright, and the team has big plans for it. One goal is to bring more innovative equipment to the shipyard. Anderson said, "I think bringing innovative solutions into the code is going to be a good thing for the type of workforce we have today. We have welders now that have an electronic and innovative mindset, and they can run equipment, so I think we've got to start focusing on developing programmers and operators to start automating some of the work."

Meanwhile, the biggest goal for Code 926 is constant, and it is one they are already achieving: a zero percent RT reject rate. Anderson stressed, "We live and die by the reject rate. When the numbers are low, it is a good day. Right now, life is good."



STORY BY HANNAH BONDOC • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST  
PHOTOS BY DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

With the holidays just around the corner, people are thinking about what gifts to give—but Norfolk Naval Shipyard's (NNSY) Welding Shop (Code 926) received its present early: a brand new orbital auto welding training center. The center was built to be “a model of what excellence looks like,” according to the code’s Training Director James Anderson. Co-created by Welding Production Superintendent Chris Comar and Welding Instructor Roy Steen, the new facility was completed after 10 months of development and had its ribbon cutting ceremony Nov. 1.

“This training center was built from a welder’s point of view,” Steen said. With custom paint schemes that match the welding machine manufacturers and a piping mock-up assembly table, welders who train in the facility should expect nothing but the best modern equipment. “Although some of the procedures and equipment are still under development,” Comar said, “this also means increased productivity and first-time quality for Norfolk Naval Shipyard.”

According to Steen, the new installation has caught the attention of Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) and the rest of the Production Resource Department (Code 900). Other training areas have also started to use the same LED lighting utilized in the space because it requires less electricity, as well as the same modern tools that are less cumbersome than their predecessors. Moreover, it is the first school to combine both nuclear and nonnuclear welders.

“This area represents a one-stop shop for NNSY’s orbital welding needs,” Anderson said. “With the insertion of this innovative equipment, the training demand is expected to increase.” As Capt. Kai Torkelson said at the event, the shipyard now has “a key example of how we will become the Navy the nation needs in the 2020s.”



Among the many hands it took for this project to happen are Deputy Administrative and Business Branch’s (C980) Chuck Callahan, Sam Chhim, and Kevin Campbell, Temporary Facilities’ (C900F) Truman Boyd, Structural’s (C920) Jeff Graham, and C926’s Elizabeth Wiggins, Matthew Hall, and Cornell Holt.

## THE ARCHITECT: ROY STEEN

As the mastermind behind the orbital auto welding training center, Roy Steen was the source of many ideas that ensured the project was cost effective. He made 60 to 70 percent of the facility out of recycled material from the shipyard, saving an estimated quarter million dollars in its construction.

Steen worked tirelessly to keep to project on target. In one instance, Welding Production Superintendent Chris Comar wanted to buy specific benches for the booths. The benches needed to be able to hold certain tools and weights, and were quite expensive. After searching online, Steen was not able to find a cheaper alternative that could also do the job—so, he built them himself. This thoroughly impressed Comar and Training Director James Anderson. Steen said, “I told Anderson, ‘they were manufactured and assembled by ASY,’ and to his puzzled look I said, ‘America’s Shipyard!’”

At the ribbon cutting, Capt. Torkelson awarded Steen with a certificate for his efforts. “He wanted something that the shop could be proud of,” Anderson said. “He is truly paving the way for the modernization of our welding school!”

# SHOP 31 WINS BIG ON BUSH PROJECT

STORY BY ALLISON CONTI • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST | PHOTOS BY SHELBY WEST • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER



**Left: Members of Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY)'s Inside Mechanist's (Shop 31) celebrate their win on the Bush project. Top Right: Justin Fuller, Jacob Burrell, and Ryan Threet work on a seawater valve. Bottom Right: Durell McClain and Mike Grove demonstrate the type of work Shop 31 completed on the Bush project.**

Innovation, planning, and communication – these three attributes helped Norfolk Naval Shipyard's (NNSY) Mechanical Group (Code 930) Inside Machine (Shop 31) achieve their recent win on the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77). The group completed all seawater valve work six days early, a significant win supporting NNSY's mission of "delivering service to the fleet safely with the right quality on schedule and within budget." According to Code 930's Inside Shop Director Justin Hayden, "this will help get the Bush out on schedule without feeling crunched for time."

The last time the shop worked on a project of this nature was when it repaired the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) in 2015. The experience gained from that project led to several lessons learned and innovations that were useful for the Bush project. "We did a value stream analysis in 2016; that's where all the ideas originated. We relied on the insight of the folks who worked on the Eisenhower. They came up with the initiatives and ideas we used on this project," said Hayden.

One of these innovations was the creation and use of special pallets made out of T-slot aluminum and stainless steel plates. These support the NAVSEA Culture of Affordability priority by streamlining processes and saving time. According to Hayden, "The valves can be transferred upright and vertically as opposed to laying down on a wooden pallet. That way, they could be blasted in one evolution as opposed to going back and forth several times." Shop 31 worked with Process Improvement (Code 100PI) to create the pallets.

The pallets were not the only innovation that Shop 31 launched for the project. Shop 31 Trades Manager Luther Blalock said, "The project had the foresight to reach out and grab assets before the project even started. We started that work before they even offloaded their existing valves. We started with 11 valves. Those 11 valves normally take a couple of weeks to overhaul. We had

them done before the ship even got to NNSY."

While innovation and proper planning contributed to the operational success, there is a third crucial component to the shop's success – communication. Blalock said, "We explained at the muster table what we were trying to achieve. Mechanics, apprentices, everyone in the shop knew what we were shooting for."

Hayden added, "We had a well-defined target and goal. Everyone wanted that. We worked together to hit that. Internally, folks took that goal, stepped up, and met it."

NNSY's C.O.R.E. values were practiced at every opportunity throughout the project, allowing personnel to further develop their potential while teaming to achieve excellence in the maintenance of Bush. "We implemented C.O.R.E. throughout the project. The project was driven by ownership on the part of the supervisors, managers, and mechanics. Everyone stepped up and wanted to get it done. We also respected folks' ideas. There were lots of improvements that took place and a lot of ideas that came out of former projects. We never shut those down – we fostered them. All of this produced excellence."

The win was not an easy one to earn. "It was a challenge because we are working every project on the waterfront. We're not just focused on one project," Blalock said. The shop rewarded those involved in the win with a catered lunch on Nov. 21 in the Superintendents' Cabin. "We're proud of our people. It was a team effort, and everyone worked hard. Success takes a lot of scheduling, communication, prioritization, and communication. It's not always easy, but Shop 31 always finds a way to get the job done and support the mission."

# MA1 BRENDA BROOKS

## NNSY'S SAILOR OF THE YEAR 2019

STORY BY HANNAH BONDOC • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST  
PHOTOS BY SHELBY WEST • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

With the humble confidence she carries herself with, the trademark uniform, and skin glowing in the pink hued lighting set up for her interview, Master-at-Arms First Class Petty Officer (MA1) Brenda Brooks embodies her role as the U.S. Navy Shore Sailor of the Year for 2019. Raised in Chicago in a Mexican-American family, Brooks followed in her siblings' footsteps and enlisted in the U.S. Navy at 19. She is still proudly serving her country 13 years later.

"Nobody joins the Navy to fail," Brooks said. "By the time you reenlist, you already know what you got yourself into and if you want to continue doing it. Three enlistments later, and I still want to do it. It's rewarding." She also said that being in the Navy has made her into the person she is today by teaching her to step outside of her comfort zone.

"I have gotten where I am today because I learned from my mistakes. I listen and I am humble enough to take that criticism and make a change," said Brooks. She also takes notes on the success of other people so she can learn and practice what they have done.

Being a female in a male-dominant field pushes her to do better. "I am a mother with two daughters," Brooks explained. "I must set the example not only for other females in the force, but for them as well."

When asked about what advice helped her thrive, her response was to pay it forward because, "we're here to help each other." The advice she would give to young Sailors would be to never give up. "Just because you've been passed over once," she urged, "does not mean that is your cue to step back. Take a day off if you need to get out of your funk, but keep pushing forward." Her network of supporters includes her husband John Anthony, her chain of command, and Senior Chief Master-at-Arms (N03PT) Edward Pare.

Brooks's next step is to compete in the Regional Sailor of the Year competition, with one more round in November. If she wins, she will be one of the four Sailors to go to Washington, D.C. to learn about the heritage of the position.





# NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD'S MILITARY CIVILIAN OF THE YEAR NOMINEE: KRISTEN JOHNSON

STORY BY HANNAH BONDOC • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST | PHOTO BY DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

She volunteers for the Carrollton Volunteer Fire Department, the Norfolk Police Department (NPD) and the Nirvana Ridge Ferret Rescue Meet Aviation Electronics Technician Petty Officer 2nd Class (AT2) Kristen E. Johnson, Norfolk Naval Shipyard's (NNSY) nominee for the Military Civilian of the Year (MCOY) award of 2019. Johnson was nominated by Electronics Technician Chief Petty Officer Chief Carri Williams. The award is based on one's services to the community.

After joining the Navy in May 2016, Johnson went through a year of training starting with boot camp in Great Lakes, IL. From there she went on to study at the Naval Aviation Technical Training Center in Pensacola, FL. Finally, she finished her studies at the Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, MS. before being stationed at NNSY.

Before she joined the Navy, Johnson was a volunteer firefighter emergency medical technician. This experience encouraged her to volunteer with the Carrollton Fire Dept. She also participates in the annual NPD Toy Drop.

Like the commitment Sailors have to their naval community, Johnson committed to her local community. "It really helps when you are in the military," she said. "Every time you move, you think 'I don't know anybody, I don't know how to get around,' it's a good way to get to know your community."

Out of all the volunteer work that she does, she is particularly

fond of her work with ferrets. Johnson volunteers at a shelter and also fosters ferrets at home. "People call the shelter to tell us they cannot take care of the ferret anymore," Johnson said. "I go get the ferrets, rehabilitate them for a couple of weeks, and then take them back to the shelter."

One of her favorite ferrets she worked with was named Tigger. "He was a little, tiny white ferret," she reminisced fondly. "He was the most hyperactive, bouncy ferret I had ever met in my life, so he was a blast."

Regardless of what kind of community service she is doing, she understands the values of it to the people around her. "When you volunteer and get involved in service groups, you feel more at home in that community, and you feel like you're giving back to something that gives so much to you," she said.



## NNSY VET-ERG Leads Celebration for Veterans Day

STORY BY KRISTI BRITT • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

PHOTOS BY TONY ANDERSON AND DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHERS

Every year in November, the Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) Veteran Employee Readiness Group (VET-ERG) leads the charge in celebrating the veterans of the shipyard and within the community in honor of Veterans Day.

This year, the VET-ERG participated in three separate events: hosting the Veterans Day Fall-In for Colors Nov. 8, partnering with the Navy Wives Club in placing flags on the graves of fallen veterans at the Ted Conaway Memorial Naval Cemetery at the Portsmouth Naval Hospital Nov. 7, and marching alongside the USS Alabama float in the Virginia Beach Veterans Day Parade Nov. 11.

“Our VET-ERG is always ready and willing to help service the shipyard, the community, and the fleet,” said VET-ERG President Mariellen Champion. “We have a wonderful group of folks who take time out of their busy schedules to aid their fellow veterans. I’m very proud of our team and look forward to our continued efforts in the future.”

Veterans Day originated from Armistice Day, marking the end of World War I, which occurred on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918. Each year at NNSY the shipyard workforce comes together to support the men and women who fought and continue to fight for the freedom of the nation. At NNSY alone, there are more than 3,000 veterans employed, with more than 650 considered Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) Wounded Warriors.

“Veterans Day is a time we can come together as a nation and salute those who have served our country, honoring their contributions and sacrifices to America and its people, and thanking them for the liberties we enjoy every day,” said Deputy Shipyard Commander, Capt. Dan Rossler during NNSY’s Veterans Day ceremony. “I can never thank you - our veterans - enough for your efforts because what you have done is so tremendously important to all of us. By choosing to serve, you have helped protect our freedoms. Your service is an undying testimony to the strength of will of the people of the United States and has allowed our nation to flourish into the greatest in the world. For those veterans who are no longer with us today, we remember you and the tremendous role in history that each of you played.”

The ceremony’s keynote speaker was founding member of the VET-ERG Jonathan Echols, who shared his family’s history in serving the nation and what it means to serve America’s Shipyard.

“I’ve had a family presence in every war since World War I,” said Echols. “Unlike a lot of people who entered the Navy because it was expected of them, I knew at an early age what I wanted to do with my life. I wanted to serve, just as others in my family had done. At three years old, I went to Oceanview with my family and my uncle who had served pointed to the ships and told me that when I was older, he wanted me to get my seaman papers. I told him not only would I serve, but they would have to force me off those ships because that was my dream. I served thirty years with the Navy before I was forced to shore. But I wanted to continue to serve in any way I could, and that’s how I found NNSY. I’ve served eight years here and I am proud to do my part every day to service our fleet and our people.”

Following the ceremony, Oscar C. Thorpe, the oldest veteran stationed at NNSY, and Rashad Williams, the youngest veteran stationed at NNSY, came together with Capt. Rossler to cut the ceremonial cake to celebrate all veterans.

“We have such an amazing workforce here at America’s Shipyard and I want us to continue to be the best we can be and do our best to serve the fleet,” said Capt. Rossler. “It is our duty as members of the Department of Defense to make it our year-round mission to support those who wear the uniform. These warriors have sacrificed so much for our freedom and the freedom of this great nation. So I ask you all to take care of one another and be there for each other each and every day. We are a team serving the Navy’s mission and we are strongest as a unit working hand-and-hand.”

The VET-ERG, an employee resource group at NNSY, is a group of like-minded people aiding the veterans within the shipyard and community.

“The VET-ERG works hard to help fellow veterans within the NNSY community and the local area. Whether it’s hosting fall-in for colors or placing flags at the local cemeteries, the VET-ERG has done many activities to support our veterans and I salute each and every one of you for doing so,” said Capt. Rossler. “Your efforts go above and beyond the call of duty and we are proud of what you have accomplished.”

For more information regarding the VET-ERG, please contact [Mariellen.I.Champion@navy.mil](mailto:Mariellen.I.Champion@navy.mil).



Mechanical Group (Code 930) Boiler Shop (Shop 41) mechanics Larry Montgomery (center left) and James Yung (center right) were recognized as the Third Quarter Cleanliness Warriors for their continuous efforts in cleanliness as well as their efforts as part of the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) project. Both recipients were awarded a certificate of achievement, a Cleanliness Warrior sticker, a service award, and a C.O.R.E. award.

## CLEANLINESS WARRIORS CELEBRATED FOR HIGH QUALITY PERFORMANCE

STORY BY KRISTI BRITT • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST | PHOTO BY BIANCA WILSON • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHER

The Cleanliness Community of Practice (C-CoP) celebrated the third quarter's Cleanliness Warriors Nov. 14, rewarding two individuals who achieved excellence and have become inspirations to those throughout America's Shipyard.

"The C-CoP works around the clock to ensure that cleanliness is held to a standard of excellence at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY)," said C-CoP Lead J.R. Dulce. "Dedicated individuals work hand-in-hand with every shop and code across America's Shipyard, whether they be non-nuclear or nuclear, and address cleanliness from every aspect of the job. We can preach the principles of cleanliness but it takes that dedication across the board to get the job done and service the fleet. If cleanliness is not taken seriously, then it could significant impact the ships and the work we do onboard. So when there is good work being done, we want to recognize those folks and let them be seen by their brothers and sisters at America's Shipyard. Their passion for their work inspires others and their strive for excellence is what truly makes them Cleanliness Warriors."

The third quarter ceremony celebrated the efforts of two individuals from the Mechanical Group (Code 930). Boiler Shop (Shop 41) mechanics James Yung and Larry Montgomery were recognized for their continuous efforts in cleanliness as well as their efforts as part of the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) project. Both recipients were awarded a certificate of achievement, a Cleanliness Warrior sticker, a service award, and a C.O.R.E. award.

"Both Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Yung perform their duties in cleanliness with precision and first-time quality," said Shop 41 Supervisor Lee Mcelhiney. "They require little supervision and guidance to perform assigned cleanliness work and excel at what they do. Whether it be performing in table top reviews, interactive briefs, or directly servicing the components on the vessels, these two go above and beyond in their duties. They have a solid understanding of the jobs we perform to maintain cleanliness which make them both valuable assets to Shop 41 and America's Shipyard. And what's more, they work well in a team environment and they mentor our apprentices on how

to perform the work safely and accurately. A job well-done to both Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Yung! Shop 41 is proud of your accomplishments!"

Code 900 Production Resources Officer Cdr. James Kuhlman noted, "Motivated by our inspiration in seeking to live by these C.O.R.E. values, we develop individuals and teams of increasing competence and character, with high levels of trust and confidence to treat one another exceptionally well.' That comes directly from the Command Philosophy of NNSY and it is referring to our workforce. Individuals like Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Yung who represent the brightest spots in our shipyard – who work hard each day and go beyond the call of duty. Thank you both for your hard work. I urge you to continue to strive for excellence and inspire others with your good work."

To inquire about how to nominate someone as a Cleanliness Warrior, please contact [rodolfo.dulce@navy.mil](mailto:rodolfo.dulce@navy.mil).

# NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD WELCOMES NEW JOURNEYMEN AT APPRENTICE GRADUATION

STORY BY KRISTI BRITT • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

PHOTOS BY BIANCA WILSON, TONY ANDERSON, AND DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHERS



**LEFT:** Rear Admiral William C. Greene, Fleet Maintenance Officer, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, delivers the keynote address at the ceremony. **ABOVE:** Valedictorian Matthew Waters addresses his fellow graduates.

Friends and family gathered Nov. 12 at Chrysler Hall to celebrate the achievements of the graduates of the Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) Apprentice Program.

The 241 graduates, representing 24 trades across the shipyard, have completed a four-year training program, which includes academics, trade theory, and on-the-job experience. During the ceremony, the apprentices received a Technician Career Studies Certificate and were promoted to the journeymen level of their trade.

“I frequently speak of how people are the heart of what we do to accomplish the mission of Norfolk Naval Shipyard,” said Shipyard Commander, Capt. Kai Torkelson. “Our apprentice program is a vital artery of that heart. Tonight as graduates, the challenge is on each of you to renew your oath to the Navy as being entrusted to maintain the U.S. Navy’s ships and submarines, so they are well-equipped, highly capable, and ready to operate at sea thousands of miles from home. You are on the front lines of executing the NAVSEA mission to design, build, deliver and maintain ships and systems on-time and on-cost for the United States Navy.”

The keynote speaker for the ceremony was Rear Admiral William C. Greene, Fleet Maintenance Officer, U.S. Fleet Forces Command. In his speech, he spoke about the fleet’s current readiness and future, and what it would take to maintain it. “That is why Norfolk Naval Shipyard, America’s Shipyard, is so vitally important to our fleet,” he said. “Norfolk is the crown jewel in our defense industrial base, able to conduct all levels of maintenance on our Navy’s aircraft carriers, submarines and surface ships. No other institution contributes so directly or so significantly to the nation’s defense, and has done so for so long.”

The NNSY Apprentice Program Class of 2019 valedictorian was Matthew N. Waters, a Shop 38 marine machinery mechanic. The 29-year-old Western Branch High School graduate completed

the program with a 3.914 GPA. “These graduates possess unrelenting perseverance and commitment to quality and excellence to serve America’s Shipyard,” said Waters. “It’s often a marathon that teaches you a lot about the finish line. Without the hurdles I’ve encountered, I wouldn’t be here today. Use your obstacles to make you stronger and smarter. Embrace the chaos, conquer your fears, and become the best version of yourself. Take pride is what you do, don’t take it for granted, don’t ever compromise your integrity, strive for your goals, and selflessly serve America’s Fleet.”

This year marks the 106th anniversary of NNSY’s Apprentice Program, one of the most historic and honored apprentice programs in the nation. The program has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor, in partnership with the Secretary’s Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA), as a 21st Century Registered Apprenticeship Trailblazer and Innovator.

Salutatorian Jacob Burrell said, “I’ve enjoyed the atmosphere, the people, and the work here at NNSY. It’s been an once-in-a-lifetime experience and I’m excited to continue my career as part of America’s Shipyard.”

For the second year in a row, one of NNSY’s apprentices was honored with the Department of Labor’s Outstanding Apprentice Award for the Commonwealth of Virginia. This year’s honoree was Insulating Mechanic Aisha Clark, a native of Portsmouth. “It’s a tremendous honor and I’m proud to be part of NNSY,” said Clark. “For our fellow apprentices, both current and future, stay humble, stay true to yourself. Your character is most important, so never let anyone jeopardize it.”



# DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

STORY BY HANNAH BONDOC • PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

PHOTOS BY BIANCA WILSON AND DANNY DEANGELIS • NNSY PHOTOGRAPHERS

According to Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Director Valerie Scott, the Diversity & Inclusion Office (Code 1103) is committed to recognizing and valuing the differences and commonalities amongst the NNSY workforce. Here are some of the initiatives and events D&I has recently held at NNSY:

## D&I Strategic Team Biweekly

Established in Nov. 2018, the D&I Strategic Team began meeting with the shipyard commander, members of senior leadership team, and the workforce representatives in Aug. 2019. The team is working on initiatives to remove barriers to inclusion and create a high performing organization, such as utilization of exit interview data and visibility of senior leadership in department organizational charts on SharePoint.

“From a manager’s standpoint, it’s helpful understanding the concerns that individuals on our team have on different processes, such as how we make the selection for a certain position,” said Deputy Business and Strategic Planning Manager Maria Williams (Code 1200).

By establishing communication between management and the strategic team, people in higher positions can make more conscious and informed decisions to create true diversity in the workplace. The results are already beginning to show. “Even though we, the Radiological Controls Department (Code 105), are required to have diverse hiring panels,” Director Gary Sauers explained, “we also publish in our newsletters the panel for each supervisory and management hire.”

If interested in joining the D&I Strategic team, please call 396-8086.

## The Third Annual DEOCS Peer-to-Peer

As iron sharpens iron, D&I held its Third Annual Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute’s (DEOMI) Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) Peer-to-Peer event Nov. 5, where more than 20 departments attended and shared best practices on “areas of concerns” identified in their code’s DEOCS climate survey. For the first time, Stephanie Spence and her team from the Naval Foundry and Propeller Center (Code 1420.1) in Philadelphia were able to make the trip. The departmental DEOCS points-of-contact were also asked to present and be evaluated by their peers on a set of standard criteria to determine the “DEOCS Trailblazer,” which was won by Nuclear Operations (Code 300N).

The DEOCS Quad Sheet is a plan of action that lists the top three or four weaknesses from the survey for a department, outlines solutions, and details on how that strategy is communicated to the rest of the code. This plan is put together by a volunteer subgroup in the department called the Performance Improvement Team (PIT) or Performance Action Team (PAT). The team is a “cross-functional and diverse team of six to eight members depending on how big your department or organization is,” explained PIT member Rebekah Pascouau from the Welding Shop (Code 926).

Cheryl Wilson-Bonner with Business and Strategic Planning (C1200) described the PIT as, “a safe place. You can voice your concerns and leadership will listen because it is an opportunity to change and improve.”

Tying back to what she said about the biweekly meetings, Williams said the peer-to-peer questions are also a good tool for management because, “people are also more willing to answer questions with honesty on the DEOCS forms than if management asked them.”

## Blacks in Government National Training Convention

In August, members of D&I and Blacks in Government (BIG) attended the 41st Annual Blacks in Government National Training Convention in Dallas, Texas. Some of the workshops attended were “Blind Spots—Overcoming Unconscious Bias in the Workplace”, “Staying on track: A Guide to Overcoming Barriers, Difference, and Difficulties in Work Execution”, and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) sponsored “Increase Your Knowledge of Your Rights and Responsibility in the Workplace” as well as Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of Navy (DON) Agency Forums.

Code 1103’s Deputy Director Craig Fieldings attended the event and said, “It is important that we make diversity and inclusion a high priority in order to bridge and sustain the talent gap needed to insure our shipyard’s success into the foreseeable future.”



**Above:** A Command Policy Signing Ceremony with Shipyard Commander Capt. Kai Torkelson and members of Diversity and Inclusion (1103) and Equal Employment Opportunity was held in the Bldg. 1500 MIC Room. "We are working toward the success of an EEO compliant workplace here at America's Shipyard!" Scott said. **Below:** Diversity & Inclusion Director Valerie Scott and Deputy Director Craig Fieldings representing Diversity and Inclusion at the 2019 Shipyard Celebration.



# C-FRAM FRAUD SCHEME AWARENESS

## DECEMBER: PURCHASE FOR PERSONAL USE

Purchase or Requisition of Items by a Government Employee for Personal Use or Resale

### DOD EXAMPLE

Between 2006 and 2011, Alpha Research and Technology, Inc. (ART) submitted subcontract proposals to its prime contractors, such as Raytheon and Boeing, for inclusion in firm-fixed-price proposals submitted to the U.S. Air Force. ART knowingly included its owners' personal expenses in the proposals, which were unallowable per FAR Part 31. As a result, the DoD improperly paid inflated prices that funded the design and construction of the owners' personal residence, luxury cars, a personal caretaker, and a weekend at the Hotel del Coronado. In Oct. 2018, ART agreed to pay \$1 million to resolve allegations that it violated the False Claims Act.

### DON EXAMPLE

Akbar Fard defrauded the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Missile Defense Agency, and DON out of approximately \$2.1 million. Fard diverted \$1,472,082 for personal use that should have been used for critical national research priorities related to satellites and the protection of naval assets from fires. Fard used these funds to pay for an overseas vacation, a car, retirement, groceries, and other retail items. In Aug. 2018, Fard was sentenced to three years in federal prison for wire fraud and ordered to forfeit \$1,472,082 traceable to the offense.

## INDICATORS (RED FLAGS)

Living beyond one's means; Never/Rarely taking leave; Missing or altered documents.



### LEARN MORE TODAY

Check out the C-FRAM site on WebCentral under C100CE for more information.

Need to report fraud? Contact the NNSY Hotline today at 757-396-7971 or [NNSY\\_IG\\_HOTLINE@navy.mil](mailto:NNSY_IG_HOTLINE@navy.mil).