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# Great Lakes Bulletin

Serving the Quarterdeck of the Navy for 105 Years

Naval Station Great Lakes  
Great Lakes, Illinois  
Your Navy in the Midwest

Commanding Officer  
Capt. Steve Yargosz

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## Change of Command Ceremony at Naval Station Great Lakes



By John Sheppard, NS Great Lakes Public Affairs

Capt. Steve Yargosz relieved Capt. Jason Williamson as commanding officer of Naval Station Great Lakes during a change of command ceremony on the morning of Tuesday, Oct. 17. The ceremony took place aboard the installation at the Seamanship Trainer on the mainside of the installation. Rear Adm. Wesley McCall, Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, served as the guest speaker.

“Events like today and many others along the way in our Navy journey are the glue that bonds us all together,” McCall noted in his remarks.

Williamson served as Naval Station Great Lakes Commanding Officer from May 2021 to October 2023.

As commanding officer, Williamson inspired the command to execute critical services that ensured the uninterrupted annual training of 39,000 recruits to Sailors and the training of 15,000 enlisted surface warfare

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specialists in direct support of the Navy's directive to maintain and protect the Navy's accessions supply chain.

McCall awarded Williamson the Legion of Merit for Williamson's leadership during three years at the helm of the installation and his 25 years of honorable and dedicated service to the nation.

"During my career, I have been fortunate enough to be part of many highly functional organizations... I learned a lot from those tours," said Williamson. "Truly, I learned the most in this tour. This team is the best that I've had."

"In his time here, over 100,000 Sailors graduated from boot camp. That's about 40 percent of our warfighting force in enlisted service," said Yargosz, in appreciation of his predecessor as Naval Station Great Lakes commanding officer.

Williamson is a native of Yankton, South Dakota. He graduated from Boston University in May 1998 with a degree in BioMedical Engineering and was commissioned through the ROTC program. He was designated a Naval aviator in June 2000.

His assignments at sea have spanned both coasts, serving operational flying tours with the P-3C Orion and the P-8A Poseidon squadrons. He has logged over 2700 hours in multiple fixed wing aircraft in support of the Maritime Patrol missions.

Additionally, he served afloat on the crew of the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). Highlights include time with the "Fighting Marlins" of Patrol Squadron Forty (VP-40) from 2000-2004, the "Fighting Tigers" of Patrol Squadron Eight (VP-8) as a Department Head from 2009-2011 and command of the "World Famous Pelicans" of Patrol Squadron Forty Five (VP-45) during the P-8's maiden deployment to SIXTH Fleet in 2016.

Ashore, he has served as instructor pilot with the "Pro's Nest" of Patrol Squadron Thirty (VP-30), as Deputy Executive Assistant to the Director, Air Warfare (OPNAV N98) and as the MQ-4C Triton Requirements Officer on the Staff of the Chief of Naval Operations. He most recently served as Deputy Commander of Task Force SEVEN TWO (CTF-72) in Misawa, Japan.

Yargosz is a native of North Webster, Indiana and earned a Bach-

elor of Science Degree in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering from Purdue University in 1998. He commissioned through Officer Candidate School and completed Aviation Maintenance Duty Officer training in 1999.

Operationally, Captain Yargosz served in Fighter Squadron (VF) 143 as a Material Control Officer deploying on USS Dwight D Eisenhower (CVN-69) and USS John F Kennedy (CV-67) in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. In December 2002, he was selected for lateral transfer/resignation and completed flight

school in October 2004. Following flight school, he served with Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron (HS) 4 deploying three times with the Black Knights onboard USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76). As a department head with the Red Wolves of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 84, he deployed four times to Iraq where he flew over 120 combat missions in support of Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Arabian Peninsula. As Commanding Officer of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 9 he led the Tritents through multiple Fleet Replenishment and Training Squadron carrier landing qualification support detachments, as well as detachments to fleet week in New York, exercise JADED THUNDER 19, and Hurricane Dorian Bahamas disaster relief. Following com-

mand, he served as Navigator for USS George Washington (CVN-73) during the ships midlife Refueling and Complex Overhaul.

Ashore, Captain Yargosz was a student at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College in Quantico, Virginia where he completed JPME Phase I and received a Master in Military Science. He served as a policy analyst focused on United Nations and European drug policy while at the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Executive Office of the President, in Washington, D.C. from July 2014 to January 2017. He completed JPME Phase II at the Joint Forces Staff College in 2020.

"I appreciate your support coming here," Yargosz told the assembled Naval Station staff and tenant command commanding officers, executive officers and command master chiefs.



**Capt. Steve Yargosz, Commanding Officer,  
Naval Station Great Lakes**

# 2023 Great Lakes Adopt-a-Sailor Information

This year, Sailors assigned to Surface Combat Systems Training Command Great Lakes (SCSTC GL) and Surface Warfare Engineering School Command Great Lakes (SWESC GL) onboard Naval Station Great Lakes (NAVSTA) will enjoy Thanksgiving dinner with local families thanks to the Adopt-a-Sailor program. Host Forms will be out the first week in Oct. and must be received by Tuesday, Oct. 31 to be considered, and families must live no farther than 50 miles from Naval Station Great Lakes to be eligible.

The program, a Great Lakes tradition since World War I, offers Sailors

to be invited into families' homes to share Thanksgiving dinner for an opportunity to enjoy a home-cooked meal and the company of a family.

In 2022, over 80 families hosted over 160 Great Lakes "A" School Sailors.

Sailors on board the base who would like to volunteer for this program are encouraged to talk to their chain of command as soon as possible.

Interested families are encouraged to visit the Naval Station Great Lakes to download the application form. The completed form should be e-mailed to:

[M\\_GRLK\\_CSCS\\_PAO@navy.mil](mailto:M_GRLK_CSCS_PAO@navy.mil) All Host Forms must be received by Tuesday, Oct. 31 to be considered, and families must live no farther than 50 miles from NAVSTA to be eligible.

On Nov. 14, we will conduct a lottery so that everyone

will have a fair chance to host a Great Lakes Sailor. Host families will be notified by e-mail or telephone after Nov. 15.

Requests for Sailors of a particular racial, religious background or sex cannot be honored. However, it may be helpful to note if your family will be serving a particular ethnic food or a particular diet, (i.e. vegetarian) and we will try to match those with an individual Sailor's preference.

Requests for Sailors will be limited to groups of two, three or four per family; with four being a maximum. Organizational

sponsors are not being requested this year.

Families should arrive at Naval Station Great Lakes Visitor's Center no earlier than 7:30 a.m. on Thanksgiving Day, and Sailors must be picked up no later than 8:30 a.m. The Visitor's Center is located outside Gate 1, 610 Farragut Ave., Great Lakes.

Sailors are required to be back in their quarters at the base no later than 10 p.m. and because they will have to walk from drop-off gates, please have them at the gate no later than 9:30 p.m. Underage drinking is strictly prohibited and it is the host's responsibility to confirm that the Sailor is of drinking age.

For further information or questions, please contact the Public Affairs Office at [M\\_GRLK\\_CSCS\\_PAO@navy.mil](mailto:M_GRLK_CSCS_PAO@navy.mil) or (847) 688-6558, ext. 128.

LINK [www.dvidshub.net/publication/issues/67702](http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/issues/67702)

GREAT LAKES, Ill. (Oct. 24, 2023) Chicago Bears players Khalid Kareem, Cody Whitehair, Patrick Scales and Trenton Gill are greeted by the Naval Station Great Lakes triad upon their arrival at the MWR Epicenter, Bldg. 525. Cmdr. Terry Traweek, NS Great Lakes executive officer, shakes hands with Kareem in the foreground. The Bears signed autographs for over an hour for eager NFL fans. (U.S. Navy photo by John Sheppard)





Naval Station Great Lakes was awarded the FY-2022 Chief of Naval Operations Shore Safety Award for significant contributions to Navy Safety and Occupational Health for Large, Non-Industrial Activity. Rear Admiral Wesley R. McCall, Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, presented the award on Monday, Oct. 16 to Mr. Ross Johnson, NS Great Lakes Safety and Occupational Health Manager/Explosive Safety Officer; Capt. Jason Williamson, NS Great Lakes then-commanding officer; the NS Great Lakes Safety Office staff; and to tenant command commanding officers for Surface Warfare Engineering School Command and Surface Combat Systems Training Command. Hooyah, Great Lakes Safety Team, for a job well done! (U.S. Navy Photo by Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Joseph Montemarano)



Your recreational hub aboard Naval Station Great Lakes!

Check out the latest events and activities from our MWR at [www.facebook.com/NavyLifeGL](https://www.facebook.com/NavyLifeGL) and on their website at [www.navylifegl.com](http://www.navylifegl.com).

For tickets and travel, call 847-688-5417

Life changes? Family or financial planning? Reach out to your team at FFSC for classes, resources, counseling, and more!

Fleet and Family Support Center Great Lakes, 525 Farragut Ave, Bldg. 26, 847-688-3603 ex. 100.

[ffr.cnic.navy.mil](http://ffr.cnic.navy.mil)



# MWR Great Lakes Wins Commercial Sponsorship and Advertising Creativity and Innovation Award

By Naomi Wilkins, Commander, Navy Installations Command

WASHINGTON --- In a groundbreaking move, the Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) Marketing Department has established the first-ever Commercial Sponsorship and Advertising (CSA) Creativity and Innovation Award. This prestigious accolade aims to celebrate remarkable accomplishments by installation and region CSA professionals who have made significant strides in elevating Fleet and Family Readiness (FFR) quality-of-life programs through creative and innovative sponsorship.

Across the Navy enterprise, the CSA program plays a vital role in establishing partnerships to bolster a range of events and programs. CSA professionals collaborate closely with external organizations and companies to enhance various FFR efforts, leveraging cash and in-kind partnerships while continuously demonstrating innovative approaches.

As part of this year's award, CSA professionals were given the opportunity to submit a case study showcasing their innovative contributions. The submissions were assessed based on their impact on quality-of-life programs, levels of innovation and creativity, tactics employed, and the successful execution of original concepts. These endeavors were required to have occurred between October 1, 2021, and September 6, 2023.

"We created the award to acknowledge installation and region CSA professionals for their exceptional contributions in innovatively enhancing Fleet and Family Readiness quality-of-life programs through strategic sponsorships," said Shannon Revelle, Commander, Navy Installations Command's Fleet and Family Readiness Commercial Sponsorship and Advertising Coordinator.

Entrants not only had to articulate their case study in writing, explaining how they met the criteria but they were also required to present their submission in person during the two-day Navy CSA training event held in Chicago, IL, September 25-26, 2023. In recognition of their exceptional accomplishments, team members associated with the first and second-place submissions received recognition and awards.

"During the presentations, participants demonstrated true

commitment as CSA professionals to quality-of-life programs. It was truly impressive," said Revelle.

The highly coveted first-place award was won by Navy Region Mid-Atlantic's CSA office. Their pioneering approach resulted in the replacement of an outdated print publication, provided to parents of new recruits attending the Navy Recruit Training Command (RTC) graduation at Naval Station Great Lakes, with a state-of-the-art website that serves as a resource for over 55,000 visitors to date.

The CSA office, supported by Great Lakes' Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Marketing team, partnered with the Navy Exchange (NEX) and utilized Sandboxx to promote the website, which achieved remarkable results in increasing revenue and cutting costs. The second-place award was presented to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, located in Navy Region Southeast, in recognition of their innovative approach to securing a substantial amount of sponsorship revenue for the Blue Angels Homecoming Airshow. Additionally, participation awards were extended to Navy Region Southeast, NAS Key West, and Navy Region Hawaii, recognizing their valuable contributions to the program at their respective installations and regions.

During the event, Leslie Gould, Commander, Navy Installations Command's Fleet and Family Readiness Director, presented the awards to the well-deserving recipients. This ceremony took place in front of an audience comprising 22 marketing and CSA professionals from installations and regions around the world. Gould emphasized the significance of innovation in shaping the future of commercial sponsorship and advertising, highlighting its impact on quality-of-life programming.

The CSA Creativity and Innovation Award not only acknowledges exceptional creativity and innovation but also encourages professionals in the field to continue pushing the boundaries of what is possible. The award ceremony served as a testament to the program's evolution, spotlighting those who have played a pivotal role in transforming commercial sponsorship and advertising into a realm of limitless possibilities.

# NTAG Great Lakes Holds Change of Command Ceremony

By Anna Jefferson, NTAG Great Lakes



Cmdr. Eric Rolfs, incoming commanding officer of Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Great Lakes addresses guests at the change of command ceremony. The change of command ceremony was held at Naval Station Great Lakes in North Chicago, IL on October 6, 2023. (U.S. Navy photo by Anna Jefferson)

NORTH CHICAGO, Ill. – Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Great Lakes held a change of command ceremony at Naval Station Great Lakes in North Chicago, Illinois, October 6. Cmdr. Eric Rolfs relieved Cmdr. Matthew Sass as commanding officer. Sass has served as the commanding officer of NTAG Great Lakes since March 2022.

Sass, of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, holds a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Wisconsin. With a distinguished naval career, Sass has earned a number of personal awards including a Joint Meritorious Service Medal, five Air Medals (Strike/Flight), one Joint Commendation Medal, three Navy Commendation Medals, one Navy Achievement Medal, and various Service and Unit awards.

“[Sass’s] success wasn’t just measured in contracts written by sailors, or sailors shipped to bootcamp and Officer Candidate School . . . but in everything [he] did to show [his] passionate dedication to the Navy and the mission,” said Capt. Robert L. Moran, Commodore, Navy Recruiting Command Region West, and the presiding officer at the ceremony.

Sass expressed his gratitude to his family and to the entire NTAG Great Lakes command.

“You’ve shown me this is not my command,” said Sass. “Everything we do is for our Sailors. It’s never been about me. It’s been about them, and the amazing services they perform daily.”

Rolfs reflected on the accomplishments made under Sass’s leadership and his dedication to establish confidence in the command.

“Over the last 15 months, we’ve instilled best practices to be a more efficient organization and dedicated our efforts not only to the mission, but to each other,” said Rolfs. “To build a foundation of a championship team has taken a major effort by each sailor and civilian here ... but we are not finished, we cannot and will not be satisfied.”

Rolfs, a native of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, reported to NTAG Great Lakes as executive officer in March of 2022. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 2004, with a Bachelor of Science in Economics and his Commission. In 2016, Rolfs earned a Master of Arts Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the United States Naval War College. Most recently, Rolfs has served as the Executive Officer aboard USS Wichita (LCS 13) and as the Communications Officer and Navigator aboard USS McClusky (FFG 41).

Rolfs expressed his plans for the program’s future, emphasizing that the command will work to be more proficient and passionate in their recruitment efforts and “will do it with the respect and understanding that all who volunteer to serve, regardless of the branch, are making a commitment to defend our country,” said Rolfs. “NTAG Great Lakes, I’m proud to stand as your commanding officer. We will earn a championship together. No excuses, play like a champion.”

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Moran extended congratulations to Rolfs and assured attendees of his confidence in the command's new leadership.

"Let us remember that the strength of our Navy lies not in the ships' technology and strategy but in the character, dedication and professionalism of the men and women who serve," said Moran. "As we move forward under new leadership, let's contin-

ue to foster a culture of excellence, innovation and collaboration, ensuring that the legacy of this command remains strong."

Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Great Lakes covers Northern Illinois, Northwest Indiana, Eastern Wisconsin and Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Headquartered in North Chicago, IL, NTAG Great Lakes has 30 recruiting stations and employs more than 150 military and non-military personnel.

## Navy Shore Enterprise: Celebrating 20 Years of Service

**By John Belanger, Commander, Navy Installations Command**

Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) reached a significant milestone – 20 years of "Sustaining the Fleet, Enabling the Fighter, and Supporting the Family."

During a ceremony held at the shore enterprise's headquarters at the Washington Navy Yard on Oct. 5, CNIC leadership and team members reflected on their history and discussed the command's future.

### **Looking Back**

Established in 2003, CNIC has played a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of life for Navy personnel and their families, managing and maintaining naval installations worldwide, and ensuring readiness across the fleet.

"CNIC may be young in comparison to other Navy commands, but we are equally committed as enablers for the Navy's forward presence around the globe," said Rear Adm. John Menoni, Acting Commander, Navy Installations Command.

Before CNIC stood up, there were 18 major Navy commands that handled installation functions. The complexity of that organizational structure resulted in little unity of effort, which caused significant challenges for the fleet.

When CNIC was established 20 years ago, it became the single focused installation management organization with core responsibility to provide unified program, policy, and funding to manage and oversee shore installation support to the fleet. This action allowed other commands to concentrate on their primary operational missions, independent of concerns regarding base operations, owning of facilities, host nation responsibilities, and the provision of support to their tenants.

"Installations are operationally relevant warfighting and logistics platforms that are vital to the defense of the nation," Menoni said. "Success in the Navy's primary mission; defending freedom, preserving economic prosperity, and keeping the seas open and free, and when deterrence fails, winning our nations wars, is not possible without the shore."

### **The Future of Navy Installations**

In May of this year, CNIC was designated by the Chief of Naval Operations as the Shore Type Commander (TYCOM) with administrative control of all Navy installations and enduring locations by coordinating and overseeing Manpower, Training and Equipping functions and standardized operations.

"The shift to Shore TYCOM aligns command and control authorities, responsibilities, accountability, and resources to the installation's center of gravity – the installation commanding officer," Menoni said. "Bottom line, we are past looking for efficiencies and manpower savings. This course correction is about getting our installations ready to fight and win."

With its continued dedication, CNIC will play a pivotal role in shaping the Navy's success in the years to come, ensuring that Navy installations remain safe, efficient, and supportive of the fleet's mission. One way of accomplishing this is taking on the oversight and management of the Navy's bulk fuel systems across the globe.

As directed by the Acting Chief of Naval Operations last month, CNIC and Naval Supply Systems Command are in the process of transferring the majority of the Navy's bulk fuel Defense Fuel Support Points to the Navy shore enterprise to establish the installation commanding officers as the single accountable offi-

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cial for safe, effective, and efficient operations. The ultimate goal of the transfer is to improve the efficient and effective management of bulk fuel systems and enhance operational and material readiness.

### **Supporting the Fleet, Fighter, Family**

CNIC has been a steadfast guardian of the Navy's installations and a dedicated advocate for the wellbeing of Navy personnel and their families for the past two decades. The shore enterprise has numerous efforts underway to improve quality of service for Sailors and their families.

In the past year, CNIC has improved access to high speed WI-FI by upgrading services at 61 liberty centers for single and unaccompanied Sailors. The command is also developing a pilot program that will introduce free high speed WI-FI to a selection of Hampton Roads barracks by next year.

In addition, CNIC earlier this year released the Unaccompanied Housing Bill of Rights & Responsibilities, which clarifies expectations regarding what the Navy guarantees to provide for Sailors and what is expected of residents to maintain their own housing space. CNIC also launched Unaccompanied Housing QR maintenance codes to allow residents to easily report maintenance issues at any time of day and receive updates about the status of

their maintenance requests.

Childcare remains one of the top priorities. In the past year, CNIC has increased Child Development Center enrollment on base from 70-84 percent of infrastructure capacity through comprehensive provider recruitment initiatives, employee childcare discounts, and increased marketing of our positions. CNIC has also achieved an increased capacity in the community through the Navy Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood program with approximately 6,300 children enrolled in this fee assistance program.

"Making this all possible are the 43,000 military and civilian personnel who are the backbone of CNIC," said the command's Force Master Chief Jason Dunn during CNIC's 20th anniversary ceremony. "The skilled and talented personnel who make up Team CNIC are dedicated to serving our Navy and nation. Our people are the best in the business."

It is with its workforce that CNIC will continue to improve the delivery of high quality services to the Navy fleet and Sailors.

"As we look to the future, we will bias ourselves towards action and accelerate our course change as we work towards positive and consequential outcomes for the fleet," Menoni said.



Photo of the RTC graduation by Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher O'Grady