

NAVY RECRUITER



Mobile Engagement Vehicles
Deploy Nationwide

Pages 16-17

CNRC and Sea Cadets Partner
to Develop America's Youth

Pages 10-11

From the Admiral

Rear Admiral Dennis Velez
Commander, Navy Recruiting Command



Recruiting Nation,

As we close out this FY, I want to tell each of you how proud I am to serve as your Commander. You have brought in more than 60,000 Sailors in the past year and a half and your work is directly connected to our Navy's warfighting readiness.

As most of your know by now, I have released my second year priorities. Those include implementing Transformation 4.0; aligning our Task Force 1 Navy program with that of CNP and CNO; realigning our Reserve and Officer recruiting; moving classification out of MEPS; completing ATRP requirements for all; getting the SALESFORCE mobile app implemented; standardizing onboarding; implementing CRF Continuum of Training; driving youth outreach with Sea Cadets; transitioning from MRI to NMCI; marketing and digital engagement; aligning our single parent policy with the fleet; completing station wraps; and MEV 2.0.

These adjustments are a direct reflection of feedback, suggestions and observations you have provided to us. We are working hard to make sure you have what you need to do the hard job of recruiting the Navy the nation needs.

At the same time, youth propensity to serve in the military is declining. This makes your job significantly harder and I want you to know that we recognize that and are constantly working on ways to mitigate it. We know the challenges you are facing and appreciate what you do for the Navy and nation. I continue to welcome feedback from the field on what you are doing that works and suggestions on what we can be doing better.

As we look forward into FY22, Navy Recruiting Command's strategic focus will be on mission accomplishment and growing the Delayed Entry Program while striving for 100% FIT and 100% FILL. Continuous Process Improvement allows us to realize efficiencies, incorporate new technologies, and better align resources. Additionally, we will continue to develop our recruiting force through a Culture of Excellence, ensuring that the field remains healthy and effective. We need to make sure we are representing the Navy well and living by our Core Values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

Continue to conduct yourselves with honor and respect and here's to an even more successful year.

Rear Adm. Dennis Velez

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FRONT COVER:

BOSTON (Sept. 15, 2021) Sailors assigned to Navy Talent Acquisition Group New England present their Mobile Engagement Vehicle next to the USS Constitution. (Photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joshua Wahl)



BACK COVER:

BOISE, Idaho (Aug. 26, 2021) Special Warfare Boat Operator (SWCC) 1st Class Nick Fajardo, member of the U.S. Navy Parachute Team, the Leap Frogs, parachutes in a skydiving demonstration during Navy Fleet Week. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Daniel Gonzalez)

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Navy Recruiter encourages the submission of "Letters to the Editor" and articles expressing the opinion of individuals in the Navy recruiting community. All submissions must be signed. Send submissions to: elijah.g.leinaar@navy.mil

NTAG Houston Hosts Inaugural Navy Recruiting Women's Leadership Symposium



Story and photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joshua Keim, Navy Talent Acquisition Group Houston

Share This Story



HOUSTON – (July 8, 2021) Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Houston hosted the inaugural Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (CNRC) Women's Leadership Symposium on July 8 at the Lone Star Flight Museum in Houston. Developed and organized by NTAG Houston, the symposium focused on empowering CNRC servicewomen through mentorship, teambuilding and networking and emphasized themes like women's empowerment, leadership and self-care. "When I arrived in Houston, I thought it might be a great opportunity for some of my female command members to attend the Joint Women's Leadership Symposium hosted by the Sea Services Leadership Association," said Cmdr. Mary Decker, commanding officer of NTAG Houston. "When COVID-19 prevented that opportunity, I thought, 'why not host my own?' I am

fortunate to have a superb command trainer, Chief [Navy Counselor] Candilyn Gee, who shares my vision, and we put together an internal-to-Houston event. I shared the idea with the region central commodore, and he suggested I open it to all three regions. Our vision is to provide an insightful leadership experience and a day of connection to give our female team members an opportunity to connect with mentors and peers across our commands and across the CNRC enterprise." Servicewomen from NTAG Houston gathered in person to host the event while hundreds of female officers and enlisted Sailors from the remaining 25 NTAGs and CNRC headquarters assembled in locations across the nation and engaged from a virtual platform online. The symposium featured keynote speeches by thought-provoking leaders like retired Rear Adm.

Annie Andrews, retired Fleet Master Chief Petty Officer April Beldo, Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, CNRC, and Master Chief Heather Charara, the national chief recruiter, and included presentations by mental health experts and NTAG Houston leadership. "Since the establishment of the Sacred Twenty and the Navy Nurse Corps in the early 1900s, women have played a pivotal role in the success of our Navy, and you continue to have a profound and influential impact on our force today," said Velez. "Many of our brightest and most accomplished leaders are women, and it's up to each of you to continue to cultivate your leadership potential and curate the next generation of Navy service members. Recruiting the right talent to staff the fleet is challenging work, and it would not be possible without the effort and creative solutions you all bring to the field every day.

For that, I thank you."

The full-day event included a panel discussion with Sailors in diverse leadership and support roles and a team-building exercise that encouraged participants' creativity, innovation, teamwork and communication skills.

"...women have played a pivotal role in the success of our Navy, and you continue to have a profound and influential impact on our force today,"

"During our last equal opportunity survey, some of my command females identified a desire to be more connected and included with the command," said Decker. "This symposium was designed to do just that because inclusion is a top priority for me. We had a wonderful discussion today between our panel and all the female future Sailors in our [Delayed Entry Program] pools around the nation who logged in online. The panel focused on what we all wish we knew about the Navy before we joined and was geared toward answering questions from our future Sailors."

The symposium closed with an open dialogue among all the participants, debriefs about the team-building exercise, and a guided mentorship workshop tailored to the specific career ambitions of individual Sailors.

"The end of the symposium was really all about empowering the females of Navy recruiting in a way that prepared them to move forward in their careers with actionable steps they can take as soon as they walk away today," said Gee, the command trainer at NTAG Houston. "We all come from different backgrounds, have varying experiences, and want different things for our futures, but at the end of the day, we're all female Sailors in the United States Navy. These guided mentorship sessions grouped women together based on their career aspirations and matched them with women who have the right skillsets and have already accomplished those goals to provide a truly customized experience."

According to a survey conducted after the event, 82.5% of participants agreed their experience at the symposium positively impacted their attitude toward continuing their service in the Navy, and 97.5% of participants said the event positively impacted their personal and professional growth as a Navy leader. 🦋

◀ From left: Cmdr. Mary Decker, commanding officer of Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Houston; Master Chief Mistie Marcucci, command master chief of Navy Recruiting Region Central; Gas Turbine Systems Technician (Mechanical) 1st Class Crystal Bock, leading petty officer of Navy Recruiting Station Woodlands in Houston; Operations Specialist 2nd Class Iyana Johnson-Brown, talent scout at NTAG Houston; Chief Navy Counselor Selina Redmond, division leading chief petty officer at NTAG Houston; and Chief Navy Counselor Candilyn Gee, command trainer at NTAG Houston, form a discussion panel to answer questions fielded from female future Sailors across the nation during the inaugural Commander, Navy Recruiting Command Women's Leadership Symposium hosted by NTAG Houston.

Recruiting Ends Fiscal Year on a High Note

Story by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Elijah Newton, Navy Recruiting Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – (July 14, 2021) While this past year presented many challenges for Navy recruiters, June was a largely successful month, especially for Navy Talent Acquisition Groups (NTAG) Philadelphia, Ohio River Valley, Heartland and Rocky Mountain. Their successes may help Navy Recruiting Command's (NRC) recruiting mission conclude on a high note as we head into the end of the fiscal year.

Recruiting nation was able to meet their active component shipping goal, as well as the nuclear field contracting goal.

NTAG Ohio River Valley employed some new strategies that are working well for them, including a parent indoctrination, where they hold a video conference call with the parents of future Sailors, said Senior Chief Navy Career Counselor J.D. Anderson, chief recruiter for NTAG Ohio River Valley. While easing the minds of parents during that call, they also ask for referrals.

"The INDOC is a great tool and allows parents to be part of the process," said Anderson. "Parents also may know other parents whose kids may need help or direction."

"We post something like a nuke ad and shout it out to our recruiters who use it on their recruiter social media pages," said Anderson. "The recruiter will tag the NTAG and will also tag any future Sailor in the program."

By tagging the future Sailor, their friends will see the post. Anderson said usually the future Sailor will comment about their experience and will then receive a lot of congratulatory



▲ BALTIMORE (Sept. 7, 2021) Students attending the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) take a selfie with the Navy recruiters, assigned to Navy Recruiting Command and Navy Talent Acquisition Group Philadelphia, during Navy Promotional Days (NPD) Baltimore. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Diana Quinlan)

messages. This gives the recruiter a chance to jump back in to plug the Navy and have anyone interested contact him or her.

E-talent is also a huge resource. Any time the E-talent team has someone who has agreed to a meeting or a call, they immediately connect the prospect with a talent scout in a three-way call. They introduce the prospect to the area recruiter via phone. Anderson said these are called "hot turnovers" and they are the best way to maintain a prospect's interest.

While these are just the strategies of one NTAG, outside the box thinking like this is happening all over the recruiting enterprise and has contributed to recent success.

NTAG Portland employed some new strategies to help meet the recruiting goal. Recruiters are introducing themselves to local business owners and informing them on the benefits their employees can receive from the Navy Reserve.

"They then talk to them about providing supplemental educational, medical, and dental benefits, while continuing at their current job," said Master Chief Navy Career Counselor Juval J. Velasquez. "They find this approach to be extremely effective since they aren't taking their employees away but rather providing them benefits that they may not be able to offer their employees."

"We focused on within," said Master Chief Navy Career Counselor Stephen Callaghan, chief recruiter at NTAG Philadelphia. "I think what worked for us is our transparency with our Sailors and providing them with clear, exact information they needed to succeed and achieve the goals for their respective stations. We had a production plan, clear goals in sight, a shared notion of leadership and responsibility, and a variety of incentives in addition to individual drive to succeed."

Leadership between Sailors also played a huge role in making sure everything worked smoothly as they worked toward their goal.

"Everything rises and falls on leadership," said Senior Chief Navy Career Counselor John MacPherson, director of personnel and operations at Talent Acquisition Onboarding Center Philadelphia. "So it starts from the very beginning, with a recruiter. His or her immediate leadership and everyone knowing what the mission is and what they need to accomplish to achieve success and hit their goal, followed by recognition for their hard work and efforts."

"We were writing 853 contracts every week before COVID-19," said Phillip Knauss, the director of analytics and business intelligence for NRC. "Writing contracts this year has been challenging across the services. That said we have had some good months like June when we wrote 806 contracts, which is about 95% of what we did before COVID-19. What is truly amazing is that we will meet both our active and reserve enlisted accessions missions including rating level requirements for nearly all of the 79 active and 46 reserve ratings."

"Although the pandemic and the economic response to it have significantly altered the recruiting landscape, recruiters across the nation continue to contract and ship future Sailors that the Navy needs," added Knauss. 🦋

Transformation 4.0 Aims for Efficiency, Mobility and Recruiter Agility

Story by Recruiting Command Staff Writer



▲ SAN ANTONIO – (April 22, 2021) Cadet Petty Officer 1st Class Bonnie Shannon (center), of New Orleans, a junior attending Southwest High School, joined by her fellow classmates, visited America's Navy's Virtual Reality Experience, the "Nimitz," during Navy Week held in Military City USA. (Photo by Burrell Parmer, NTAG San Antonio Public Affairs)

PENSACOLA, Fla. – (September 24, 2021) For the last few years, Navy recruiting has been going through a transformation. This transformation is in its fourth iteration as Navy Recruiting Command aims to build efficiency and mobility for its recruiters.

The biggest implementation during Transformation 4.0 has been the addition of E-talent into the pillars.

The original transformation brought with it three pillars: talent scout, assessor and onboarder. This helped match Sailors and their personalities to a job that allowed them to play to their strengths. But with the onset of COVID-19 and the changes it brought to the world, recruiting through social media became a necessity. To account for the emphasis on the virtual nature of the business, the pillars have been changed to virtual prospecting, field acquisitions and onboarding. E-talent teams were developed to pursue leads generated through marketing and advertising, Navy.com, social media, and phone centers, and thoroughly develop these leads and provide immediate hand offs to recruiters.

"E-talent teams are robust at each district, and social media is the way of the future," said Master Chief Heather Charara, National Chief Recruiter. "Having skill sets that

pertain to the virtual world is key, and it's where we need to focus our efforts."

While the biggest change is the implementation of E-talent into the pillars, other changes include possibly reducing the number of Talent Acquisition Onboarding Centers and standardizing some of the primary leadership roles across the nation, new tablets, laptops, apps, better videos, better presentations, and additional e-tools to help recruiters stay connected and mobile anywhere at any time. These tools keep recruiters equipped with the latest technologies and software.

"We finished Transformation 3.0 in December 2020, so we have spent the last eight to nine months seeing how those changes played out," said Charara. "What we saw is that it is not one-size-fits-all when it comes to our stations. While Transformation 4.0 will affect each station a bit differently, I don't anticipate any future sweeping changes. Instead, I think it will be focused tweaks here and there depending on changes we see in particular areas."

Navy recruiting leaders have applied great thought and observation to enterprise transformation, and Charara is hoping to see these changes pan out in a positive way.

"We've researched our best practices," said Charara. "We've gotten so many people involved and we've had analysts look at everything from marketing to manning. We have involved everyone in trying to make sure that when we transform and make adjustments to the model that we are adjusting for efficiency."

Transformation 4.0 is focused on allowing recruiters to get their time back, but Charara wanted to be clear that no matter what changes get made to the structure of recruiting, it is Sailors that are making the difference.

"Recruiting is recruiting no matter what transformation model you do it in," said Charara. "Recruiters are out here each and every day making a difference. The processes we are putting in place will make things more efficient, but the actual art of finding someone to join the Navy still lies on the backs of Sailors, and on their ability to sell the Navy. Transformation doesn't sell the Navy. Legacy doesn't sell the Navy. Recruiters sell the Navy."

"Everything that we are doing for transformation, every decision we make is to make things easier for the recruiters ... to give them more tools for their tool box," said Charara. "To allow them to be more efficient, to allow them to utilize what their best mode is to be successful, and to give them their time back so they can be successful in their personal lives as well." 🦋

NROTC Prep Program Seeks to Expand Diversity of Navy's Officer Corps



Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) New Student Indoctrination (NSI) midshipman candidates raise their right hands during a graduation ceremony conducted inside the Midway Ceremonial Hall at Recruit Training Command (RTC), July 22. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Nick Scott)

GREAT LAKES, Ill. – (August 11, 2021) The Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) has a recruiting program in its arsenal that is already working to build a more diverse and inclusive officer corps.

The NROTC Preparatory Program (NPP) is expanding NROTC opportunities to produce a more capable and representative Naval Officer Corps by collaborating with educational institutions to enhance underserved or disadvantaged scholarship applicants' academic, moral, mental and physical foundations to prepare them for success in the NROTC program.

Since 2019, the program has expanded scholarship opportunities to deserving students who might be overlooked due to a lack of opportunity or resources in their communities. NPP is currently being offered at 19 universities across the United States through a partnership between NROTC units and each participating university.

Under the NROTC Preparatory Scholarship Reservations (NPSR) program, interested high school students may apply for one-year university or privately funded scholarships to support room, board and tuition while enrolled in a university NPP.

Capt. Christopher Adams, deputy commander for NROTC at Naval Service Training Command (NSTC), said the program is designed to improve midshipman candidates' academic and life

skills to prepare them for the rigorous NROTC academic program.

"This expanded relationship between the Navy and the schools that host preparatory programs offers a performance-based pathway for midshipman candidates to earn NROTC scholarships," said Adams.

The heart of the NPSR program is the host universities' year-long commitment to provide students, who show great potential via grades, character and extra-curricular activities but might lack standardized test scores or advanced high school courses, the educational foundation necessary for success in the NROTC program and Navy. The program's objective is to expand NROTC scholarship opportunities by accessing this untapped talent and potential.

The Navy reserves a percentage of NROTC scholarships for midshipman candidates who complete university NPPs. The Navy helps to identify candidates and screens them to ensure they meet NROTC requirements before beginning the prep program. Most universities also require applicants to complete summer NROTC indoctrination training in Great Lakes, Illinois.

Hall said universities and their NROTC units partner together to run NPP. That partnership has resulted in more than 130 students who are currently attending the program this school year.

For Midshipman 4th Class Gary Powers, 19, from

Portsmouth, Virginia, and a freshman at Regent University, NPP changed his life.

"I was basically homeless and living in a motel when I received the [NPP] scholarship from Regent," said Powers. "I had a 2.0 GPA out of high school and completed the prep year with a 3.1 GPA."

Powers is now concentrating on getting through school and NROTC, graduating and being commissioned as an ensign. He credited retired Marine Corps Master Gunnery Sgt. John Cordero for finding and mentoring him through his year attending the prep program.

Cordero is the assistant director for recruitment of all students at Regent.

"I had one of my recruiters at Powers' high school and he asked him what his plans were," said Cordero. "Powers said he wanted to join the Navy but didn't think he was qualified. My recruiter then pointed him to the NPP and after a couple of boards and interviews, we got him the NPP Scholarship."

Powers said he is looking toward the surface Navy and being a ship's officer. He also said he would like to be a public affairs officer.

Partner University Programs

Each participating university has its own unique NPP. All universities provide scholarships for tuition, fees, room and board for the preparatory year. Upon prep year completion, the NROTC scholarship supports tuition, books and fees for up to 40 months of benefits (up to a five-year total benefit).

Some universities provide additional NPSR benefits that include:

- Academic or study-skills mentoring and education counseling
- Association with NROTC units
- Dedicated physical fitness training
- Focused preparatory or educational skills courses
- Additional scholarships up to full room and board funded for the entire five years
- Various scholarships for alternate candidates

The following universities are offering NROTC preparatory scholarships for academic year 21/22:

Arizona State University; Fordham University; Illinois

Institute of Technology; Miami of Ohio University; Notre Dame; Norwich; Old Dominion University; Regent University; San Diego State University; Savannah State University; Southern University; SUNY Maritime; Tuskegee University; University of Arizona; University of Idaho; University of Maine; University of Maryland; Baltimore County; University of Memphis; University of San Diego.

University program-specific applications and information can be found on host university websites or by contacting the respective university's Naval Science departments.

Who is qualified for NPP?

Demonstrations of future Navy leadership potential include but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Leadership and participation in a variety of school, extracurricular, community or similar activities, particularly those with a charitable or public service purpose;
- (2) Receipt of civic or similar awards;
- (3) A history of a drive to succeed by excelling in school, sports,

overcoming personal adversity, or the presence of other compelling factors, indicating that the student has a desire to succeed and the ability to overcome barriers; and

- (4) Being regarded as a role model by teachers and peers at their high school.

Not all the above factors need to be present. The intent is to provide additional opportunities to all who, for any of the above or similar reasons, demonstrate the potential for future success as a naval officer.

NPSR Program Requirements

To be eligible for an NPSR follow-on NROTC scholarship, the Navy requires applicants to meet all the requirements for national scholarships except ACT/SAT minimums. Unlike academic resume/test-score-based scholarships, program scholarships are awarded based on demonstrated preparatory program performance. Participating universities may establish more restrictive program academic requirements, including minimum SAT/ACT scores.

For more information about NPSR, visit: <https://www.netc.navy.mil/Commands/Naval-Service-Training-Command/NROTC/NPSR/>

General NROTC requirements can be found at: <https://www.netc.navy.mil/Commands/Naval-Service-Training-Command/NROTC/Requirements> Additional university benefits provided to all NROTC students:

<https://www.netc.navy.mil/Commands/Naval-Service-Training-Command/NROTC/Additional-Benefits>

For more information about NROTC, visit: <https://www.nrotc.navy.mil/> or <https://www.facebook.com/>

Learn More



▲ A Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) New Student Indoctrination (NSI) midshipman candidate receives preparatory instruction before beginning a drill competition inside the Midway Ceremonial Hall at Recruit Training Command (RTC), July 20. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Amber Weingart)

CNRC and Sea Cadets Partner to Develop America's Youth

Story by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Cody Anderson,
Navy Recruiting Command



▲ U.S. Naval Sea Cadets Corps Fort McHenry Division cadets participate in a pull-up challenge as part of the Navy's virtual reality asset the "Nimitz" during the Navy Promotional Days (NPD) Baltimore. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Diana Quinlan)

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – (September 15, 2021) Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (NRC) Rear Adm. Dennis Velez recently released his 15 priorities for his second year in charge of NRC. Among them is more engagement with the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps (NSCC).

"We recognize that the Sea Cadets is a youth organization dedicated to developing individuals with a high propensity to serve," said Velez. "Through presence and engagement with local Naval Sea Cadet units, we hope to serve and strengthen the bonds within our communities."

Velez's vision is that the leadership at each Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) directly engages with the leadership of any NSCC unit that falls within their area of responsibility, so a direct channel of communication is established between them. Through this engagement, NSCC units would be able to leverage local naval recruiting stations (NRS) for support and

volunteers when needed. NRC encourages Sailors volunteering their time to consider their local NSCC as an option to give back in their communities.

"The opportunity for our Sea Cadets to interact with Navy recruiters gives our young men and women a great opportunity to learn about the Navy, and to get motivated about it, and learn what it would be like to serve," said Rear Adm. (ret.) Andrew Lennon, executive director of NSCC. "We've got 400 Sea Cadet units around the country that are just super engaged with our communities, with our American Legion posts, Veterans of Foreign War posts and Navy posts; and our adult volunteers are always looking for opportunities for our cadets to get engaged in the community. First and foremost, I want our Sea Cadets to have fun and enjoy what they're doing, to feel good about being part of the Sea Cadet team! If we can have our young men and women challenge themselves and become better and more

confident people - it will help them become better adults."

The NSCC is a nationally recognized military youth leadership development program with more than 400 units throughout the United States, Alaska, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and Guam. The organization's core values mirror those promoted by the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Coast Guard and reflect their mission and vision. The organization also actively trains its participants in the customs and courtesies of the Navy along with basic seamanship, watch standing protocol and physical fitness. Also included under the Naval Sea Cadet Corps umbrella is their junior program, the League Cadet Corps, for youth ages 10 to 13.

Basic acclimation to the military is one of the many benefits that participation in the Sea Cadets provides. Cadets who enlist in the armed services are often eligible for military advanced pay-grade programs, which can result in advancement of two pay grades in some services. The Sea Cadets program has also had a positive impact on some prospective special programs' applicants, with more than 10 percent of the midshipmen at the U.S. Naval Academy being former Sea Cadets.

Although the program is designed around developing the youth involved, the volunteers also mutually benefit.

Lt. Cmdr. Rolando Machado Jr. has intermittently volunteered with the organization for more than seven years and he believes the symbiotic dedication to the program by both volunteers and students results in reciprocating gains.

"Engaging with Sea Cadets is one of the most inspiring things I do for community service. These students have a desire to better themselves, dedicating time outside of school to develop skills that will be applicable as adults," said Machado. "The biggest personal return for me is when their eyes light up and you can see that they now see themselves in you. That is what it's really about. Once I become a role model for them and they can see themselves wearing my rank, or having my responsibility as a Naval Officer, I know that this path, which may have seemed insurmountable for them before, is now possible and attainable for them. And that is really the genesis for them to someday be my relief leading Sailors at sea."

While some Sailors have engaged with NSCC during their career, others are experiencing their first opportunities to volunteer with the organization. Sonar Technician (Surface) 1st Class Shea Fehringer, a member of NRC's First Class Petty Officer Association (FCPOA), began volunteering with the local Sea Cadet division, BB-43 USS Tennessee. She said she initially got involved because she was

looking for a way to have a positive impact on teenagers and possible future Sailors.

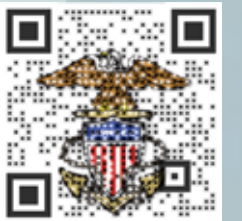
"The reason I reached out to the Sea Cadets as a CNRC FCPOA member was to give our Sailors an opportunity to volunteer in a leadership role with the possibility of becoming more involved as a drill instructor within the program," said Fehringer. "Through volunteering, the Sea Cadets can learn about what the actual Navy is like. We can tell them what deployments are like, what the different rates are and what opportunities and experiences Sailors get from being active duty."

While many who have served might be more likely to volunteer with the program, prior service is not a requirement, leaving some Sea Cadet squadrons without the real-life experience of Sailors who have been to the fleet. With a new commitment to the program being emphasized by NRC, members of the Sea Cadets are looking forward to more direct engagement with their active-duty components. For Sea Cadet Lt. j.g. Andrea Thomas, the commanding officer of Fort McHenry Division and Training Ship Constellation, the support from headquarters represents an investment in the future.

"Sea and League Cadets is an excellent youth organization for both young men and women to learn and demonstrate leadership skills, build confidence within themselves, learn their strengths and receive opportunities for improvement," said Thomas. "Investing in our young people helps benefit a better future for all of us."

To find a Sea Cadets unit in your area, see ways in which you can get involved, or to learn more about the volunteer opportunities with the Sea Cadets, visit www.seacadets.org.

Volunteer Now



▲ A U.S. Naval Sea Cadets Corps Fort McHenry Division cadet uses the Navy's virtual reality asset the "Nimitz" during the Navy Promotional Days (NPD) Baltimore. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Diana Quinlan)





U.S. NAVY RESERVE



Profiles in Professionalism: HT2 Olga Perozocarrero

Story by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Raymond Maddocks, Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command Public Affairs

maintain hope and act to make a change for the better; to be different from others; to cancel the toxic culture and normalize doing the right thing; to get to know your Sailors and be approachable,” said Perozocarrero. “Protect each other how we would protect our brothers and sisters.”

Perozocarrero currently works as a transition assistant at the career transition office in Millington, Tennessee. She not only enjoys her job, but also says it contributes to a culture of excellence because it gives her the opportunity to help others.

“I enjoy speaking with Sailors,” said Perozocarrero. “Making extra efforts to help Sailors start their new journeys when transitioning from Active Duty to Reserves makes my job feel more meaningful.”

Another way Perozocarrero contributes to the culture of excellence is through her collateral duties. She is on her unit’s honor guard team and is a SAPR victim’s advocate, duties that she is happy to fulfill and takes very seriously.

“It’s satisfying to render honors to Veterans, Retirees, and Active-Duty members who have served this country,” said Perozocarrero. “As a SAPR victim’s advocate, I enjoy encouraging, supporting and helping victims find their strength to take their power back and continue to live the best life they can possibly live.”

Perozocarrero strives every day to represent the values that CNO wants all Sailors to exemplify. 🦋

NORFOLK, Va. – (Sep. 1, 2021) In November, 2019, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael M. Gilday released a NAVADMIN calling for a culture of excellence, focusing existing Navy core values to transform behavior, norms and culture.

Promoting positive behavior and healthy norms among Navy Sailors is something Hull Maintenance Technician 2nd Class Olga Perozocarrero has been doing for a while now.

“I have written over 20 video scripts and acted them out,” said Perozocarrero. “I filmed them at my current and last two commands to train Sailors on domestic violence, DUI, drug abuse, suicide prevention and sexual assault.”

A culture of excellence is not something Perozocarrero leaves at work, but is something she maintains awareness of at all times and takes very seriously.

“A culture of excellence means to be brave and have the courage to speak up when you see something wrong; to

America’s Navy Completes Promotional Days Baltimore

Story and photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Diana Quinlan, Navy Talent Acquisition Group Philadelphia

BALTIMORE – (September 14, 2021) America’s Navy and Navy Recruiting Command hosted Navy Promotional Days (NPD) Baltimore, September 7 – 11, as part of the Navy’s national search for the best and brightest students who have what it takes to excel in high-demand, cutting-edge fields.

Throughout the weeklong visit, NPD team, composed of NRC officers and Sailors assigned to Navy Talent Acquisition Group Philadelphia, visited University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Mergenthaler High School, Morgan State University, and held a drill with the American Legion’s Sea Cadets, Fort McHenry Division to promote awareness of career opportunities in the Navy.

During the visits to the schools, officers and enlisted Sailors spoke on a variety of topics in classroom presentations including education and scholarships benefits offered by the Navy. The NPDs also featured an immersive virtual reality experience, housed in a massive 18-wheeler truck, named the Nimitz, which allowed

participants to experience a virtual reality Navy SEAL mission of piloting a high-speed special warfare combatant craft (SWCC).

“As an instructor here, I try to explain the Navy to the students, but having Sailors and the Nimitz experience here actually demonstrates the whole concept of what the service is about,” said retired Fire Controlman 1st Class Michael Wilkinson, a naval science instructor at Mergenthaler High School’s Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps. “Having the Navy visit our school is a great awareness tool for the community and the students. Interacting with the active duty Sailors and officers educates these kids on what they can do with their future, and showcases the opportunities that the service has to offer. The event also brought awareness to some of the local teachers about the Navy, and the kids are enjoying themselves. They had fun, and even my cadets said they enjoyed driving the boat and doing the simulator.”

Nearly 500 high school students got a chance to experience the virtual reality assets, speak with the Navy representatives, ask questions, and share their aspirations for the future.

NRC’s Office of Outreach and Diversity representatives also held Lean Six Sigma workshops, providing White Belt certifications to college students. Lean Six Sigma is a program that focuses on reducing process variations and enhancing process control, while driving out waste and promoting work standardization and flow.



▲ Capt. Herb Lacy, a native of Bowie, Md., a representative of the United States Naval Academy, speaks to Mergenthaler Vocational-Technical High School students about career opportunities in America’s Navy during the Navy Promotional Days (NPD) Baltimore.

“While at UMBC and at Morgan State, we had a great opportunity to work directly with the students on Lean Six Sigma White Belt certifications,” shared Lt. Anel Tavira, a native of Gainesville, Ga., a program manager assigned to NRC’s Office of Outreach and Diversity. “The workshops were a great success with more than 70 students getting certified between three interactive events, hopefully helping them get started on the road to success, and motivating them to seek the next level of certification in the program.”

The NPD wrapped up with the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Fort McHenry Division drill session, held at Severna Park, Maryland. Cadets, ages between 10 and 17, participated in the Sailor-led physical training, experienced the “Nimitz,” and spoke with enlisted and officers about first-hand experiences in the fleet.

“This opportunity for our Sea Cadets to interact with Navy recruiters offers our young men and women a great opportunity to learn about the Navy, to get motivated about it, and learn what it would be like to serve,” said retired Rear Adm. Andrew Lennon, executive director, USNSCC. “We have 400 Sea Cadet units around the country, and our adult volunteers are always looking for opportunities for our cadets to get engaged. It is my hope that we will leave today a little bit more educated, and we will have a much better appreciation for what our Navy does; and I want our Sea Cadets to challenge themselves and become better and more confident people as it will help them become better adults.” 🦋

Future Sailors Enlist at NASCAR Race

Story and photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Benjamin Dobbs, Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Pittsburgh



▲ Future Sailors and recruiters from Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Pittsburgh pose for a photo at the Go Bowling at the Watkins Glen NASCAR Cup Series race prior to a mass enlistment ceremony.

WATKINS GLEN, N.Y. – (August 8, 2021) Thirty future Sailors from Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Pittsburgh took the oath of enlistment at the Go Bowling at The Glen, NASCAR Xfinity Series race August 8.

NTAG Pittsburgh's commanding officer Cmdr. Brandon Smith, from Sperry, Oklahoma, administered the oath in front of a live television audience. He spoke with the future Sailors and emphasized the importance of taking the oath with them.

"For all of you who are going to stay in the Navy past one tour, you will take the oath multiple times," Smith said. "Every time you take the oath it means something, whether you take it on a NASCAR race track, whether you take it at MEPS, your ship, squadron or submarine or wherever you are in the Navy."

The crowd cheered on the future Sailors after they took the oath and as they exited the track.

The future Sailors were escorted by Navy Counselor 1st Class Mark Tobias, from Hammondsport, New York.

"It was an amazing opportunity for them and me just being part of their lives and the

next change that they take," said Tobias. "Watching them transform from a civilian to a military member is very rewarding and it's probably the best part of this job."

Future Sailor Dylan Andrews, from Mansfield, Pennsylvania, was joined by his family to watch him take the oath.

"It's very important," said Andrews. "I feel that my service to my country is going to be one of the highest accolades of my of my life and to do it in front of millions of people on TV is just a step up."

Andrews is joining the Navy to become an Information System Technician. Information systems technicians design, install, operate, and maintain state-of-the-art information systems.

Some very notable athletes also made the trip to Watkins Glen and the future Sailors were surprised by to see them in attendance.

NBA legend Michael Jordan was there to watch Bubba Wallace drive the number 23 car for Jordan's 23XI Racing team. Jordan walked on to the track to greet fans before race.

Watkins Glen native and 2020 Olympian Olivia Coffey was an Honorary Official at the race. Coffey was part of the women's eight rowing team in Tokyo.

Eye on the Field



▲ PENSACOLA, Fla. – (April 28, 2021) Chief Navy Career Counselor Jason Lewis (left) and Chief Personnel Specialist Ismael Zendejas present a check for \$2,000 to representatives of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Northwest Florida on behalf of the Navy Recruiting Orientation Unit Chief Petty Officer Association. (Courtesy photo)

► CHICAGO – (June 20, 2021) Master Chief Navy Counselor Jermaine Brown had the opportunity to attend his son's, Yeoman Seaman Recruit Jaden Brown, graduation ceremony at RTC Great Lakes. (Courtesy photo)



Eye on the Fleet



▲ BERENICE, Egypt – (August 12, 2021) Capt. Joseph Baggett, commanding officer of guided-missile cruiser USS Monterey (CG 61), left, Vice Adm. Ahmed Khaled Hassan Saeed, commander of the Egyptian Naval Force, center, and Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT), U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), far right, walk together during a tour of the ship in Berenice. (Photo by Seaman Apprentice Chelsea Palmer)

► DJIBOUTI – (August 13, 2021) U.S. Navy Hospitalman Lionel Dejesus, from Bronx, N.Y., assigned to Michaud Expeditionary Medical Facility, prepares COVID-19 vaccine supplies for a COVID-19 vaccine administration on base (Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Jacob Sippel)

Mobile Engagement Vehicles Deploy Nationwide



Story by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Tyler C. Priestley, Navy Recruiting Command Public Affairs

▲ Sailors, assigned to Navy Talent Acquisition Group Philadelphia, man a recruiting setup and a new Mobile Engagement Vehicle during the Salute the Troops Night held at the Subaru Park Stadium. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Diana Quinlan)

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – (July 21, 2021) Navy recruiting experienced many challenges this past year and a half while operating under a pandemic. Recruiters needed to be flexible, which meant having the right tools, at the right place, at the right time. Commander, Navy Recruiting Command Rear Adm. Dennis Velez acknowledged that need in his second year priorities when he called for the release and employment of mobile engagement vehicles (MEV).

MEVs are currently in the process of being distributed to each Navy Talent Acquisition

Group (NTAG) across the nation. MEVs are vans equipped with tools for recruiters to implement in their day-to-day efforts. MEVs are currently being shipped out with a tent, display table and flags, ready to be set up at any event to aid recruiters.

“The custom MEV setups serve as an integral part of the display that will greatly add value to on-site recruiting,” said Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Daniel Gonzalez, N93 creative graphic designer.

The idea for the MEVs stems from the Nimitz 18-wheeler currently being used by recruiters across the nation to engage with

audiences. The Nimitz has features that include digital data capture, a virtual reality mission, photo opportunities and more.

“The Nimitz is one asset and it is in high demand from coast to coast,” said Cmdr. Scott Milliet, NRC advertising and marketing operations officer. “Sometimes the Nimitz is just too large to bring to events. MEVs allow recruiters to expand efforts of the Nimitz with more availability to the NTAGs and access to more locations and venues.”

One of the first NTAGs to get use of the MEV is NTAG New England. They began their use of the MEV by picking it up in

Millington and driving it back to their home base. Along the way they made social media posts using #PATRIOT to build a following. They stopped at various landmarks in the Northeast and shared their experience with their followers.

“We also started a planning calendar to track and ensure constant use at venues where recruiters can interact with our target audience across New England,” said Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joshua Wahl, public affairs officer for NTAG New England. “We have a close relationship with the USS Constitution and also continue to focus the MEV usage in communities with limited exposure to Navy opportunities.”

“The custom MEV setups serve as an integral part of the display that will greatly add value to on-site recruiting”

NTAG New England will often bring the MEV to the USS Constitution. Together they help align opportunities and amplify their message to the public. Recently, they held a Medical Corps commissioning ceremony aboard the USS Constitution and they plan to have many more events with the ship in the future.

While the deployment of the MEVs is still in the early stages, there is already brainstorming going on behind the scenes for an MEV 2.0. The MEV 2.0 would take the MEVs from the NTAGs and enhance their capabilities. This could include things such as installing some type of monitor that could be visible from the back once the doors are open. Enhancements like this could have potential to further help recruiters and their mission.

[Learn More](#)



▼ Mobile Engagement Vehicles parked outside Commander, Navy Recruiting Command. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Tyler C. Priestley)



New Orleans Recruiter Receives Highest Recruiting Award in the Nation



Story and photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Eric Garst, Navy Talent Acquisition Group New Orleans

▲ Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class Jameson Guerrero displays some of his recruiting accolades from Navy Talent Acquisition Group New Orleans and earned the rare Centurion Award, among other awards and titles.

NEW ORLEANS – (June 29, 2021) Despite the various challenges that recruiters faced over this past year, Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class Jameson Guerrero was able to push past them and accomplish his goal of achieving the coveted Centurion Award.

"I have been a recruiter for over eight years, and I have never seen anyone work harder than him," said Damage Controlman 1st Class William Huddleson.

Guerrero has been stationed at Navy Recruiting Station Baton Rouge for three years, with his role expanding during COVID. In order to qualify for the Centurion Award, a recruiter must achieve 100 net contracts during their current recruiting tour.

"Everything I have set my mind to in this command I have accomplished," said Guerrero. "Except for one thing – becoming part of the Career Recruiting Force, but I do have a package submitted."

"Jameson is a good leader. He trained me when I first got here, and he still continues to train me," said Damage Controlman 1st Class Elizabeth Lacoste. "He takes time out of his personal life to make sure we are in shape and successful."

Guerrero is now thriving following recent changes to DoD Transgender policies and he is driven by the support of his peers

and leadership. Increased participation in PRIDE Month events is now a key feature in NTAG New Orleans' recruiting effort.

"He is a super good Sailor and motivated. He opened my mind as an individual and gave me perspective on the whole community," said Navy Counselor 1st Class Kade Henderson. "I think he is very courageous for what he has done."

"We are all in the Navy. One team, one fight," said Guerrero. "So I want people to understand that I work for that."

Guerrero was recognized with the coveted Centurion Award on June 21st at Naval Operational Support Center Gulfport during a recent Leading Petty Officer Conference.

"Petty Officer Guerrero is one of my best Sailors and a top-notch recruiter, he has put in 101 contracts so far and is still charging," said NTAG New Orleans Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Chris Brown. "He is going to make an awesome Career Recruiter once selected. It was so great to see him use his 'Centurion Sword' to cut our NTAG New Orleans Rainbow Pride cake. The smile on his face lit up the room and motivated all his peers to try and earn 100 contracts themselves. He is a true leader and an example of how diversity makes our Navy team stronger." 🦋

Share This Story



NTAG San Antonio Welcomes Simoni, Bids Farewell to Files

Story and photo by Burrell Parmer, Navy Talent Acquisition Group San Antonio

AUSTIN, Texas - (Aug. 11, 2021) A new commanding officer took command of Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) San Antonio during a Change of Command & Retirement Ceremony held at the Frank Fickett Scout Training and Service Center.

During the ceremony, Cmdr. Michael Files, of Austin, Texas, relinquished command to Cmdr. Stephanie Simoni, of Stewartstown, Pennsylvania.

Commanding the NTAG since Nov. 12, 2020, Files was responsible for more than 220 recruiters and support personnel who assisted in making the Navy's recruitment annual mission.

His area of responsibility included two Talent Acquisition Onboarding Centers and 34 Navy Recruiting Stations/Navy Officer Recruiting Stations spread throughout 144,000 square miles of Texas territory, spanning from Waco, west to Midland/Odessa, southwest towards El Paso, southeast along the Rio Grande Valley, and west of College Station.

Capt. Anthony Bayungan, commodore, Region West, Navy Recruiting Command, officiated the ceremony.

"This is one of the most rewarding experiences in Cmdr. Files' life," said Bayungan. "Many officers go through their entire career never taking command and it takes a very special kind of person to step up and shoulder that responsibility. This shows character, dedication and sacrifice, which Cmdr. Files has done twice."

Remarking on his tenure as commanding officer and his career, Files thanked many

who have guided him to this moment.

"It is fitting that this ceremony is occurring at the Frank Fickett Center," said Files, who was awarded the National Eagle Scout Association's Outstanding Eagle Scout Award. "Without a doubt, I know that my involvement with scouts fortified my foundation."

Under Files' command, the NTAG shipped 2,968 highly qualified young men and women for service in America's Navy and Navy Reserve from more than 1,100 high schools and universities within Central and South Texas. For his superior performance of duty, he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal by Bayungan.

Simoni, a surface warfare officer, thanked all for attending the ceremony and for Files' service.

"I would like to thank all the planners and participants for all their hard work in putting this ceremony together," said Simoni, who previously served as NTAG San Antonio's executive officer. "I am absolutely humbled to serve as your commanding officer and honored to lead this great team of men and women."

Additionally, she thanked Bayungan for the training and mentorship that he provided her and her team during his visit to NTAG San Antonio, and for the trust and confidence that he placed in her to lead the officers, chief petty officers, Sailors, and civilians under her command.

Following the Change of Command Ceremony, Files retired from America's Navy with 24 years of faithful and honorable service. 🦋

◀ Cmdr. Stephanie Simoni (center), of Stewartstown, Pennsylvania, assumed command of Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) San Antonio from Cmdr. Michael Files (right), of Austin, Texas, during a Change of Command & Retirement Ceremony held at the Frank Fickett Scout Training and Service Center.

Cardinal Company, Cardinal Division – Keeping St. Louis Legacy Alive

Story and photos by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Chris Williamson, Navy Talent Acquisition Group Mid America



▲ Navy Talent Acquisition Group (Mid America personnel and future Sailors with the 63rd Annual Cardinal Company march to Busch Stadium for an enlisted swear-in ceremony.

ST. LOUIS – (August 25, 2021) Sixty future Sailors from the local St. Louis area took the oath of enlistment at Busch Stadium, Aug. 25, 2021.

This group of future Sailors is known as the “Cardinal Company” and has been a long-standing tradition in St. Louis. Cardinal Company received its moniker after the St. Louis Cardinals, who together with Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Mid America and the St. Louis Navy League, have sponsored the group annually since 1958.

To kick off the day’s events, the future Sailors assembled in front of NTAG Mid America headquarters, with NTAG Mid America personnel and color guard, to march through the streets of St. Louis to Busch Stadium. Once everyone made it through stadium security, they headed to their designated positions to conduct the swear-in ceremony.

Administering the oath of enlistment in front of home plate was Rear Adm. Brian Corey, Program Executive Officer for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons.

“It is a pleasure to be back in St. Louis,” said Corey, who grew up in Granite City, Illinois, just a few miles northeast of Busch Stadium. “It is an honor to swear in these future Sailors and I wish them the best of

luck and smooth sailing as they become members of the world’s finest Navy.”

After Corey enlisted the Cardinal Company into the Navy, NTAG Mid America personnel lined the outer edge of the field and observed the national anthem with NTAG Mid America’s color guard. Once the national anthem was complete, Corey stepped onto the pitcher’s mound and threw the ceremonial first pitch prior to the St. Louis Cardinals versus Detroit Tigers game.

Normally, the Cardinal Company would ship out to Recruit Training Command (RTC) after the baseball game and complete Navy boot camp as a recruit division. However, since there are still COVID-19 constraints and mitigations in place, NTAG Mid America felt it would be best not to ship a large group of future Sailors at one time. So, the command chose to have one group of future Sailors swear-in on the field – Cardinal Company – and a sponsored recruit division at boot camp – Cardinal Division.

In order to keep the Cardinal Company/Division legacy alive, and with a seamless transition, Cardinal Company turned over the Cardinal Division pennant they marched with to the two recruit division commanders (RDC) charged with leading the division – Chief Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Handling)

Ricardo Rodriguez and Operations Specialist 1st Class Gabriel Doby.

Rodriguez and Doby were ecstatic when they received word that they would be leading this year’s Cardinal Division.

“It’s an amazing opportunity to get to experience something as important as Cardinal Company,” said Doby. “As soon as chief and I found out we would be pushing Cardinal Division and going down to St. Louis to be part of Cardinal Company, we basically hopped in our cars and started driving.”

Traditionally, Cardinal Company is composed entirely of men since they go through boot camp together. But, since the Cardinal Company is not shipping out to RTC, for the first time in 63 years, the company was able to be comprised of both men and women.

“I think it’s great that Cardinal Company is able to be a more diverse group of future Sailors,” said Chief Navy Counselor Daniel Hearn, onboarding director of NTAG Mid America. “Even though Cardinal Division will be an all-male division, it’s important to recognize the women today who contributed to the Cardinal Company and Cardinal Division legacy.”

In fact, since there was no swear-in ceremony last year due to the pandemic, NTAG Mid America saw fit to sponsor an all-female division as the 62nd Annual Recruit Cardinal Division. The group of women performed extremely well, graduating towards the top of their training group, and were led by two St. Louis-native RDCs.

This year’s Cardinal Division can expect to

first go through a militarization phase, where they are introduced to military bearing, drill and inspections. They will also take basic classes related to getting ready for operating out in the fleet.

The next phase the division will go through is Sailorization, where they will learn the bread-and-butter skills necessary for that of an enlisted Sailor. These include skills such as firefighting, line handling and weapons familiarity.

Finally, the last week of boot camp will include their final evaluation phase, official physical fitness assessment, final inspections preparing for review and graduation, and the final crucible event – Battle Stations, where they will hopefully earn the right to be called U.S. Navy Sailors.

Cardinal Division is the Navy’s longest-running special recruit division, with this year’s 63rd Annual Recruit Cardinal Division scheduled to graduate on Oct. 29, 2021. 🦅



▲ Rear Adm. Brian Corey, Program Executive Officer for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons, administers the oath of enlistment to future Sailors with the 63rd Annual Cardinal Company at Busch Stadium.

◀ Future Sailors with the 63rd Annual Cardinal Company prepare to swear in to the Navy at Busch Stadium.





Navy Parachute Team Leaps Into New York

Story and photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jose Madrigal, Navy Recruiting Command Public Affairs

▲ An attendee takes a photo of a member of the Navy Parachute Team coming in for a landing at Liberty State Park. The Navy Parachute Team is based in San Diego and performs aerial parachute demonstrations around the nation in support of Naval Special Warfare and Navy recruiting.

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – (August 3, 2021) A crowd of people began to gather in New York’s Central Park. Up above, they watched as jumpers emerged from the clouds, dropping in synchronized formation, performing intricate maneuvers, and leaving smoke trails behind them.

From Aug. 3-9, elite members of the United States Navy Parachute Team (NPT) took to the skies of New York and New Jersey to help support Navy outreach through air demonstrations.

The NPT began in 1969, when Navy SEALs and Underwater Demolition Team members volunteered to perform at weekend air shows.

The NPT, the official parachute demonstration team of the United States Navy, was officially commissioned “The Leap Frogs” in 1974 by the Chief of Naval Operations with the mission to demonstrate Navy excellence throughout the United States. Since its inception, the team has

diversified and now welcomes members from all branches of Naval Special Warfare including Special Warfare Boat Operators (SWCCs), Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technicians, Navy Divers and Special Operations Parachute Riggers.

The team demonstrated Navy excellence during eight jumps in several locations that included Matthew G. Kantor Memorial Park, Lt. Michael P. Murphy Memorial Park, Liberty State Park and the world-famous Central Park in New York.

One of the most impressive and historic jumps of the week was when the Leap Frogs became the first Department of Defense-sanctioned team to jump into Central Park.

“The Leap Frogs’ events, most notably the jump into Central Park for the first time, gave New Yorkers the chance to see some of the amazing opportunities that the Navy can give,” said Master Chief Navy Counselor Audrey Dopson, Navy Talent Acquisition

Group Empire State chief recruiter. “It was an awesome opportunity to build on the relationships in our community and bring awareness to many of the special programs the Navy has to offer.”

The Sept. 11 attacks have led many current and former service members to join the military. Now, a few of them are grateful for the opportunity to give back.

“It’s an honor to be the first to jump into Central Park,” said Special Warfare

Operator 1st Class CJ Hager. “Our nation was attacked here 20 years ago, and I joined the military to bring that fight back to the enemy to the fullest extent. We are and always will be a community of warriors. This is my chance to give back to the community by inspiring others to be better.”

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Naval Special Warfare community, or if you want to learn more about the Leap Frogs, visit [Navy.com/LeapFrogs](https://www.navy.com/LeapFrogs).



▲ Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 1st Class Aaron Robinson poses for a photo with an attendee after a jump into Central Park. The Navy Parachute Team is based in San Diego and performs aerial parachute demonstrations around the nation in support of Naval Special Warfare and Navy recruiting.



▲ Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 1st Class Aaron Robinson poses for a photo with an attendee after a jump into Central Park. The Navy Parachute Team is based in San Diego and performs aerial parachute demonstrations around the nation in support of Naval Special Warfare and Navy recruiting.

Getting Back to His Roots

Story by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Kathleen Gorby,
Navy Talent Aquisition Group Miami Public Affairs



▲ (Bayamon, Puerto Rico) Enginemen 1st Class Tomas Huertas (back center) poses with family members during his son's 5th birthday party. Huertas is a Navy recruiter in Puerto Rico assigned to Navy Talent Acquisition Group Miami. (Courtesy photo)

MIAMI – (September 15, 2021) Recruiting is one of the only career fields in the Navy that can bring a Sailor back to his childhood front door. For Enginemen 1st Class Tomas Huertas, his front door was in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but he was looking to get to a home he had only been able to visit. As a Puerto Rican, he had been to the island during his youth, but he felt it calling him more and more. He never thought the Navy would open that door.

"I joined the Navy out of Philadelphia in 2012 looking to jumpstart my life," said Huertas. "After serving aboard USS Elrod (FFG 55), then with Coastal Riverine Squadron 4, I was hoping for a special warfare command but then saw orders to Puerto Rico with NTAG Miami."

The Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Miami recruiting area includes Puerto Rico. However, all potential Puerto Rico recruiters must undergo an interview entirely in Spanish.

"My first interview was horrible," said Huertas. "My Spanish was so broken. I was happy when they agreed to give me another shot."

Huertas spent the next six months studying and learning Spanish. When it came time to re-interview, he passed, and found himself with orders to Puerto Rico.

"In the beginning, my wife and I found ourselves having to adjust from life in the

continental U.S. to an island," said Huertas. "We knew family was important before that, but we found when you live on an island, all you have is family."

Even though Huertas can now speak Spanish fluently, not all Latin countries speak the same Spanish dialect and locals can hear he's not from Puerto Rico. Huertas uses his accent as an icebreaker.

"When I'm in a classroom, they can tell I didn't grow up in Puerto Rico even though that's my heritage," said Huertas. "It helps open up the class and gets them talking. It also helps me improve my Spanish."

Huertas said he has enjoyed being able to connect with family, but that's only part of what has made this a rewarding tour.

"My job is to recruit, but I see myself as more of a mentor," said Huertas. "The island has seen a tough couple of years with natural disasters like hurricanes and earthquakes. I try to help as many people as I can find a better path."

And while the Navy offers a life outside of Puerto Rico for many, Huertas is thankful that the Navy offered him a tour inside it.

"This is part of my heritage; this is where my roots come from," said Huertas. "I can say for certain, if it wasn't for the Navy, I would have never been able to learn about where I come from first hand." 🇵🇷

Father, Daughter Navy Corpsman Duo

Story and photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Jessica Vargas,
Navy Talent Acquisition Group Pacific Northwest

SEATTLE – (August 10, 2021) When MacKenzie Campbell was trying to decide what the next chapter of life would be upon her graduation from North Mason High School in Belfair, Washington, she wasn't quite sure which direction she wanted to go.

However, what she was certain of was that she was interested in healthcare, wanted a challenge, needed to get out of her comfort zone, and wanted to be successful. That's when she realized that the answer had been right in front of her the entire time. She decided to follow in her parent's footsteps and join the United States Navy as a Hospital Corpsman.

Future Sailor Mackenzie Campbell's father, Chief Hospital Corpsman Travis Campbell, has served in the Navy for 21 years and is currently assigned to Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Pacific Northwest. Her mother, Natalie Pace, joined the Navy one month after Sept. 11, 2001, and served honorably as a Hospital Corpsman until August 2006.

"The Navy was the best option for me with everything that I wanted to accomplish," said future Sailor Campbell. "Growing up, I saw first-hand what the Navy could do and how well the Navy treated my parents. I wanted to be successful in that way too."

As a Hospital Corpsman, future Sailor Campbell will assist health care professionals in providing medical care to Navy personnel and their families. They may function as clinical or specialty technicians, medical administrative personnel and healthcare providers at medical treatment facilities.

"I am really excited about becoming a Hospital Corpsman," said Mackenzie. "My parents loved being Hospital Corpsmen, so I feel like I will really connect with this job. The Navy will give me an opportunity to explore the medical field and learn what my passion is and what direction I want to take in the future."

Chief Campbell says he is incredibly proud and looks forward to serving with his daughter and welcoming her into the Navy and Corpsman community.

"I'm excited for her because she is starting her own new path," said Chief Campbell. "She had the option to do whatever she wanted after high school, and she chose to follow in our footsteps. She has always been the type of person that wants to help people. I think she definitely picked the right field for that."

Cmdr. John Hiltz, commanding officer of NTAG Pacific Northwest, administered the Oath of Enlistment to future Sailor Campbell at the special request of Chief Campbell.

"I have served with Cmdr. Hiltz for almost a year now and I wanted MacKenzie's swear-in ceremony to be something special. Something that she would never forget, and our Skipper certainly came through on that," said Chief Campbell. "Watching Cmdr. Hiltz swear in MacKenzie was very inspirational and I was grateful that he took the time out of his day to come over and do that for my daughter!"

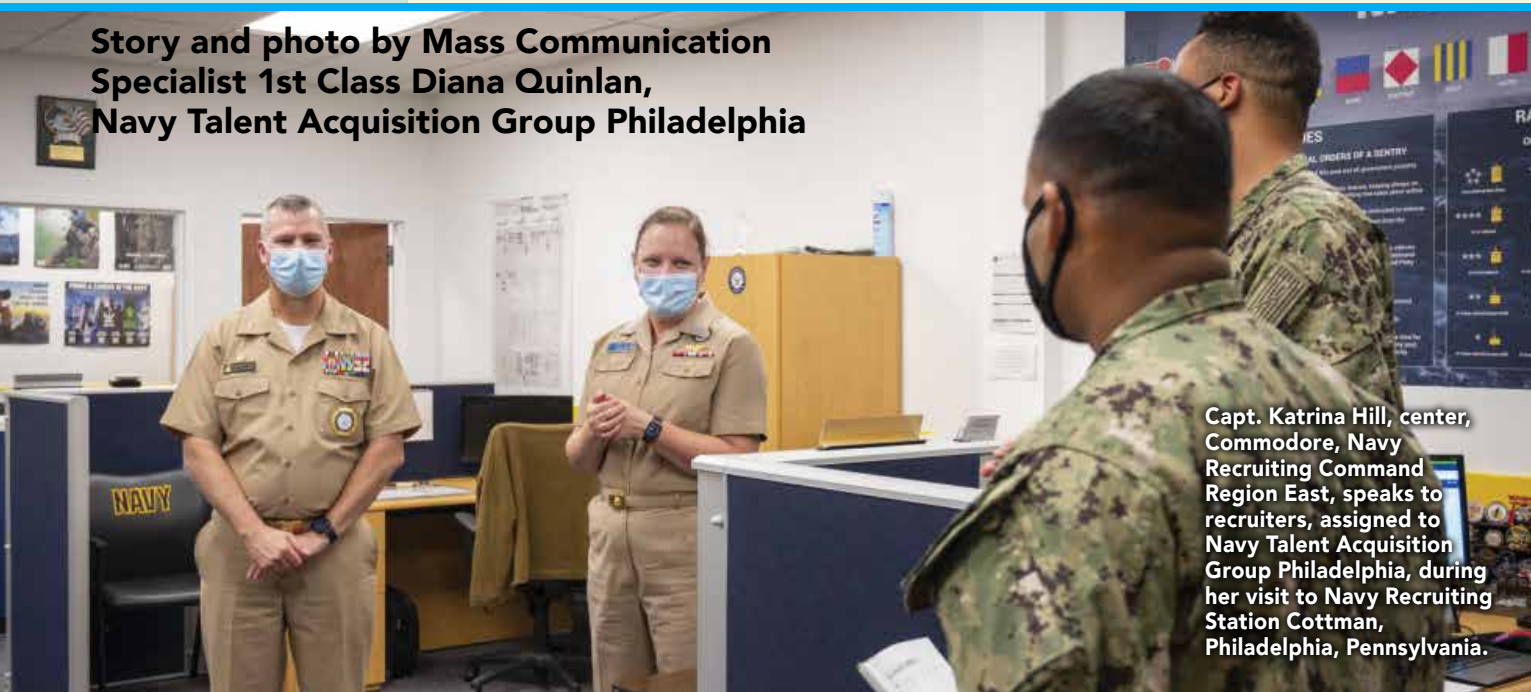
Future Sailor Campbell departed for basic training at Recruit Training Command on Aug. 10. Upon graduating from basic training, she will attend Hospital Corpsman "A" school in San Antonio, Texas. 🇺🇸



◀ Cmdr. John Hiltz, commanding officer of Navy Talent Acquisition Group Pacific Northwest (left), future Sailor Mackenzie Campbell, and Chief Hospital Corpsman Travis Campbell pose for a photo after future Sailor Campbell's swearing-in ceremony at Military Entrance Processing Station Seattle.

Commodore Region East Visits NTAG Philadelphia

Story and photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Diana Quinlan, Navy Talent Acquisition Group Philadelphia



Capt. Katrina Hill, center, Commodore, Navy Recruiting Command Region East, speaks to recruiters, assigned to Navy Talent Acquisition Group Philadelphia, during her visit to Navy Recruiting Station Cottman, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

PHILADELPHIA – (August 3, 2021) Commodore, Navy Recruiting Command Region East, Capt. Katrina “Kati” Hill, a native of Westminster, Maryland, visited Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Philadelphia Aug. 3-5.

Hill’s three-day visit was filled with travels to multiple Navy recruiting stations, included a virtual all-hands call, a meeting with future Sailors in the Delayed Entry Program, and a visit to Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) Fort Dix.

While meeting with local Sailors, Hill discussed the future of Navy recruiting, process improvements, future goals, as well as a variety of challenges, including the effects of COVID-19 on current recruiting efforts.

“With Region East headquarters located in Millington, it’s important to me to do regular circulation among the NTAGs to find out how production is going, to check on our Sailors, and to see what the local situation is like,” said Hill. “I am proud to see how resilient our Sailors are as we’ve been recruiting in a COVID environment for over a year and a half now. We’ve been through an election, civil unrest and a lot of changes in our country over the last year. And what I’ve seen on this visit so far, is how well we’ve adapted to things like virtual recruiting, to schools being closed, and the challenges of prospecting in a COVID environment. I’m incredibly proud of our people and how well they’re doing with all the challenges that have been put in their way, and I think that’s an attribution to the leadership here in Philly.”

As part of her visit to MEPS Fort Meade, the Commodore had an opportunity to answer questions and speak at length to the local classifiers - men and women responsible for assigning the proper Navy job to the applicants.

“It’s nice to see that the higher leadership can actually come and see what our jobs are on a day-to-day basis,” said Interior Communications Electrician 1st Class Serwaa

Mitchell, a Navy classifier assigned to NTAG Philadelphia. “A lot of people think that we just give people jobs, but there is so much more to it—performing background research, conducting the vetting process, the list goes on. It’s important that they [the upper leadership] know how much work actually goes into being a classifier, as well as which processes work and which are giving us troubles, so the Commodore can help us address some of the potential issues.”

“Recruiters teach me every time I get an opportunity to spend time with them,” shared Hill. “I’m a Navy pilot, and most of my career has been spent around aviation. With this being my first tour in recruiting, getting to meet with the folks who are actually doing the job is always a very rewarding experience. It helps me make better decisions from the region’s headquarters standpoint.”

Hill also touched on the new challenges that recruiters face today, stating that the current competition is no longer just other branches of the military, but a rise in recruiting efforts for civilian industries.

“What I’ve heard a lot on this trip, and what I’ve heard around the country as I travel, is we’re starting to see competition from other hospitality industries that are looking for a labor force right now,” explained Hill. “I think we all have to think hard about how we sell the Navy to people who are looking for a career.”

According to Hill, it’s good to have this competition as it drives recruiting commands to do better, crediting as a competitive advantage the opportunities and the adventure that the Navy offers compared to the other industries, in addition to “the great sense of service, of giving back to the community and to our country, which helps us convince people to want to join our Navy team.”

NTAG Pacific Northwest Awards \$350K HPSP Scholarship to Oregon Student

Story by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Jessica Vargas, Navy Talent Acquisition Group Pacific Northwest

COEUR D’ALENE, Idaho – (June 21, 2021) Stephen Christensen, a native of Jacksonville, Oregon, was recently awarded a Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP) scholarship during a presentation ceremony at Veterans Memorial Park in Coeur D’Alene, Idaho.

The HPSP scholarship, valued at \$350,000, pays full-tuition, a monthly stipend exceeding \$2,300, and a \$20,000 signing bonus in return for a 3 or 4-year commitment to serve as a Navy physician. Physicians serve as Commissioned Naval Medical Officers.

Cmdr. John Hiltz, commanding officer of Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Pacific Northwest traveled to Idaho from Seattle, Washington to formally recognize this achievement and present the “big check” to Christensen in front of friends and family.

“It is such a distinct privilege to be able to recognize and celebrate Stephen’s selection as a future Navy physician. In a competitive process, his genuine calling to serve others stood out. To see the pride in the eyes of his friends and family only validated our selection, and I look forward to serving with him.”

Chief Navy Counselor John Liston, NTAG Pacific Northwest’s Medical Programs Officer Recruiter was also at the ceremony to present the scholarship. He played a critical role in assisting Christensen with the application process.

“He is one of 196 students in the nation that will receive the HPSP scholarship this year,” said Chief Liston. “Christensen is such a good young man and I am so excited for him. I’ve been in recruiting for almost 10 years now and my favorite part is seeing the Navy change people’s lives. Seeing where applicants start and what they go on to achieve is amazing.”

Christensen, a Northwest Nazarene University graduate, said he feels fortunate to have been selected for this prestigious scholarship.

“When I found out I was selected for the HPSP, I was overjoyed,” said Christensen. “To have the opportunity to pursue two callings in my life, medicine and military service, overwhelmed me. This scholarship helps alleviate all the stress that finances



can play on medical students’ mental health. It also gives me a renewed purpose and motivation in my studies, knowing that each hour I put into school will allow me to better serve our country.”

Christensen, the first in his family to obtain a college degree, continues his family’s legacy of naval service.

“I decided to join the Navy due to a desire to serve my country, be a part of a team, and because of a family history of service in the branch,” said Christensen. “My grandfather entered the Navy after college as an officer and did his training in San Diego where he met my grandmother. He was stationed in Japan in 1956 which is where my father was born. My parents told me my great-great-grandfather served as the camp commandant of San Diego Harbor during World War II.”

Christensen will attend Liberty University College of Osteopathic Medicine. Upon graduation he will be commissioned as an officer in the United States Navy.

“I know joining the Navy will push me out of my comfort zone, show me new places, and give me a platform to reach unique people. This next chapter in life, simply put, excites me. I get to wake up every day knowing that I have a goal to strive for and a bright future with the Navy.”

▲ Chief Navy Counselor John Liston, Navy Talent Acquisition Group Pacific Northwest’s Medical Programs Officer Recruiter (far left) and Cmdr. John Hiltz, commanding officer of Navy Talent Acquisition Group Pacific Northwest (far right) present a \$350,000 Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP) scholarship to Stephen Christensen, a native of Jacksonville, Oregon, who is accompanied by his girlfriend, Bridgett Ball. (Photo by Electronics Technician (Nuclear) 1st Class Austin Crow)

Code Creation Leads to Lead Generation

Story by Navy Recruiter Staff Writer



▲ Lt. Siddharth Swaminathan from Birmingham, Alabama. (Courtesy photo)

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – (September 16, 2021) When Lt. Siddharth Swaminathan, officer in charge of Talent Acquisition Onboarding Center Cleveland, received a Pro-No Pro list (a list of people who were and were not selected for Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps [NROTC]) request, he had no idea it would lead him down a path of ones and zeros.

Swaminathan saw the potential for something amazing. What if applicants for Officer Candidate School, NROTC, and the Naval Academy, who weren't selected for the officer program, and who hadn't already joined the military could be identified and contacted regarding their interest in joining the Navy in some other capacity?

It was a question that would take Swaminathan 50 hours of code generation

to answer, but that ended in the production of 20,000 leads for recruiters across the nation.

"We had the Pro-No Pro list, but we didn't know if any of these people were already in the Navy," said Swaminathan. "We also had a list of the 500,000 people currently serving in the military, but it would have taken forever to put those lists together and filter out leads."

So Swaminathan created a code to do it for him.

"It is unfortunate that these applicants weren't accepted into their respective officer programs, but that doesn't mean we need to lose them completely," said Swaminathan. "These are high quality, talented individuals who already have the propensity to join the military. And the Navy encourages its enlisted community to apply for officer programs, so the future these applicants' desire is still a possibility."

"The creation of this program filled a gap in Navy recruiting that now allows applicants to be re-engaged," said Mike Buehl, general manager for Navy.com. "This is something that we haven't thought of in the past. Now we have the possibility to fit the people into any of our other great opportunities."

With over 50 hours of programing provided by Swaminathan, Navy Recruiting Command will now be able to easily access these leads effective immediately via Salesforce.

"Utilizing Salesforce we should be able to start seeing and measuring the success of contracts easily within the next 90 days," said Lt. Cmdr. Anthony Chase, Navy Recruiting Region East operations officer. "I am positive that there will be a drastic decrease in the key performance indicator of 'contact to contract' for the filter of Total Test Category Upper/Nuke Field when looking at this list."

Swaminathan has only been in recruiting since March and has already left his mark.

"I am the first in my family to serve," said Swaminathan. "The Navy has given me so much. It has allowed me to see the world; given me friendships that will last a lifetime; a career and a family. Leaving this legacy that will possibly give that chance to others is the least I can do." 🇺🇸

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Recruiter Spotlight

Every week, a selected Navy Talent Acquisition Group chooses one Sailor with a special story to tell. We are highlighting them here so people across the country can see who our recruiters truly are. To learn more about these extraordinary Sailors, visit our website at www.cnrc.navy.mil.

June



Hull Technician 1st Class Gavin Takata



Damage Controlman 1st Class Andrew BasBas



Damage Controlman 1st Class Casey Dean



Naval Aircrewman (Helicopter) 2nd Class Katherine Knox

July



Chief Hospital Corpsman Marvin B. Guzman



Lieutenant Commander Sam Chiang



Equipment Operator 1st Class Kevin Rambaud



Gas Turbine System Technician 2nd Class Dakota Wiltshire-Wallace



Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class Lawrence Wilson

August



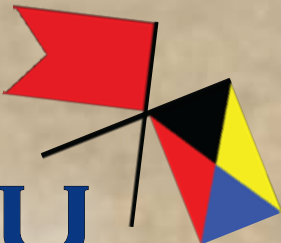
Fire Controlman 1st Class Ellizar Abalos



Operations Specialist 1st Class Melioner Gacuya



Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuel) 1st Class Joseph Chinedu



BRAVO ZULU

As part of a new initiative, Rear Admiral Dennis Velez would like to offer a Bravo Zulu to the following individuals for performing exceptionally during an unique time in Navy Recruiting.

- LCDR Luke Harber - NRC HQ
- NCC Gustafson - NTAG Northern Plains
- CDR Jeremy Watkins - NTAG New England
- Lt. Westpfahl - NRC HQ
- CMDCM Roberto Venegas - NTAG Southwest
- NCCM Jayson Whalen - NTAG Southwest
- NCC Gerhard - NTAG Philadelphia
- Lt. Desmarais - NTAG Philadelphia
- Lt. Jarvis - NTAG Philadelphia
- MM1 Sparrow - NRC HQ
- FC1 Kim - NTAG Mid-America
- NC1 Larson - NTAG PACNORWEST
- NC1 Perfetto - NTAG Ohio River Valley
- GM1 Threatt - NTAG Richmond
- RS2 Brooks - NTAG Pacific
- ABE2 Alexander - NTAG Miami
- OS1 King - NTAG Richmond
- ABH1 Tate - NTAG Carolina
- CE2 Velacruz - NTAG PACNORWEST
- MC1 Corey Green - NSA Mid-South



E-7 and senior



Civilian



E-6 and junior

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