

# TNR

## MENTORSHIP IN MOTION

VOLUME 2022 - ISSUE 2

TOPGUN LEGACY

-

PAYING IT FORWARD

-

BRADFORD'S STORY





**THIS PAGE Midway commemoration ceremony-** The 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Midway commemoration ceremony took place at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C., June 6. Guests included retired Chief Yeoman Bill Norberg, a Battle of Midway veteran stationed aboard USS Enterprise, and National Capital Region Sailors. The wreath was placed at the monument to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Midway victory and honor those who served. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Abigayle Lutz)

**COVER Mentorship in Motion-** Commander Samuel Hoard has never forgotten the moment he heard a speech by Admiral Jeremy Michael Boorda, the 25th Chief of Naval Operations, as a Seaman Apprentice in a crowded gymnasium in Burlington, Washington. Since then he has gone on to become Commanding Officer of Navy Reserve Center (NRC) New York City (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Arthurgwain Marquez).

# TNR

## LEADERSHIP

Vice Adm. John B. Mustin  
Chief of Navy Reserve  
Commander, Navy Reserve Force

Rear Adm. John Schommer  
Deputy Commander, Navy Reserve Force  
Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command

Rear Adm. Bradley Dunham  
Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve  
Deputy Commander, Naval Air Forces

Rear Adm. Greg Emery  
Commander, Naval Information Force Reserve  
Deputy Commander, Naval Information Forces

## TNR STAFF

Lt. Cmdr. Amber Lewis  
Force Public Affairs Officer, Editor in Chief

Lt. Bryce Baswell  
Deputy Force Public Affairs Officer, Senior Editor

Lt. Chelsea Cannaday  
Assistant Public Affairs Officer, Staff Editor

Chief Mass Communication Specialist Scott Wichmann  
Managing Editor, Art Director

Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Raymond Maddocks  
Associate Editor, Layout and Design

Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Arthurgwain L. Marquez  
Contributing Staff

Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Tyra M. Campbell  
Contributing Staff

This is an authorized quarterly Department of Defense publication for members of the DoD. Contents of "The Navy Reservist" (TNR) are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the DoD, or the U.S. Navy. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command public affairs office. Provide all feedback and questions to our new email [CNRF\\_PA0@us.navy.mil](mailto:CNRF_PA0@us.navy.mil).

**SUBMISSIONS:** TNR is always looking for submissions that display the work Navy Reserve Sailors are doing around the force. To submit a photo or story, email us at our new address [CNRF\\_PA0@us.navy.mil](mailto:CNRF_PA0@us.navy.mil). Instructions and submission criteria will be provided to help guide your entry.

**ARCHIVE AND NEWS:** Current and past issues of TNR are available at: [www.navyreserve.navy.mil](http://www.navyreserve.navy.mil). Follow the Navy Reserve on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. Additional Navy Reserve news can be found on the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service (DVIDS) at: <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/CNRF>.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS TO TNR:** Selected Reserve and Training and Administration of the Reserve Sailors can opt-in/opt-out of receiving TNR by entering requests at: <https://private.navyreserve.navy.mil/locker/TNRSubscription> (CAC required). For the general public and those who do not have CAC enabled access, annual subscriptions are available. Send your name and address to our new email [CNRF\\_PA0@us.navy.mil](mailto:CNRF_PA0@us.navy.mil) (NOTE: subscriptions for current non-DOD members will require an annual renewal; they do not automatically update).

TNR Magazine, COMNAVRESFORCOM (NOOP)  
1915 Forrestal Drive, Norfolk, VA 23551-4615  
(757) 445-8500

## THE NAVY RESERVIST VOLUME 2022 | ISSUE 2



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

## FEATURES



### 16 MENTORSHIP IN MOTION

Cmdr. Samuel Hoard, recently Commanding Officer of NRC New York City, has never forgotten where he came from. He knows what it's like to overcome challenges, recognize and seize opportunities and navigate through a large, complex organization.



### 20 MAKING MAVERICKS

Capt. Brian "Ferg" Ferguson has spent a significant portion of his career involved with air-to-air combat training exercises. It's this expertise that led him to be chosen to fill the role of the Navy's technical advisor for TOP GUN: Maverick.



### 24 PAYING IT FORWARD

CNAFR shore, sea and Selected Reserve Sailors of the Year share the advice that helped them succeed and excel.



### 26 TRAINING FUTURE LEADERS

Capt. Marie Gannon and Capt. Janet Wessels have been invaluable in the development of the Professional Development Program created by Navy Reserve, NMFSC.



### 28 BRADFORD'S STORY

LS1 Mary Bradford had struggled with mental health issues earlier in her career, and now she shares her story in the hopes that she can inspire others to seek help like she did.



### 32 EXPEDITIONARY FUELING ON THE MOVE

Navy and Marine Corps expeditionary forces joined up at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst to integrate and train.

## DEPARTMENTS

2 FROM THE TOP

4 BLUF: 2022 FIGHTING INSTRUCTIONS

6 AROUND THE FORCE

12 PROFILES IN PROFESSIONALISM



# FROM THE TOP

Shipmates,

In May, I issued the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions 2022 (NRFI 2022), and they serve as a rallying cry for every one of us to prepare – mentally, physically, and spiritually – for the terrible realities we would face in combat with a peer competitor. Our number one, and only, priority remains WARFIGHTING READINESS.

In recent editions of TNR, I have relayed the tremendous progress we have made since the first version of the Fighting Instructions were issued in 2020. I remain immensely proud of what we, as a team, have accomplished in the past 18-months. Yet we're far from done in our transformation – not only do we have much more to do, but we must pursue our modernization with a sense of urgency. The global security environment continues to evolve; the forces that seek to reshape the international rules-based order have only amplified and added coherency to their efforts. As a result, our generational transformation of the Navy Reserve to provide strategic depth for high-end warfare must – and will – evolve rapidly.

To ensure we are ready to deliver peerless warfighting readiness on Day One, we must press forward urgently with our efforts to forge a Force designed, trained, and ready to fight – confidently and boldly – in sustained, multi-domain combat operations. By 2025, we will adjust our Force design to best position the Navy Reserve to contribute to a high-end fight; our distributed Force will be properly trained for their mobilization billets; and we will master mass mobilizing, rapidly, at scale. By 2027, our Force will be fully interoperable with the Fleets (our Navy centers of gravity), and will be lethal, resilient, sustainable, survivable, agile and responsive.

NRFI 2022 also introduces a fourth line of effort, “Develop the Force.” You, our Sailors, are the Navy’s asymmetric advantage. I am fully committed to recruiting and retaining a widely diverse and superbly talented workforce, and to educating, training, and resourcing you to excel and ultimately to prevail in competition, crisis and conflict. A Reserve Force optimized for high-end warfighting demands inclusion and equity, dignity and respect, and a culture in which we all embrace ownership and ingenuity to reinforce the simple, unifying concept that our commands will take care of themselves and their people. “Develop the Force” will

**"Our number one, and only, priority remains WARFIGHTING READINESS."**



be laser focused on achieving this end-state. Navy Chiefs, this particular initiative is right in your wheelhouse – I'm counting on you to bring our vision to reality.

Shipmates, we are training for war. That is why our Navy Reserve Force exists, and why the American taxpayers continue to fund the Guard and Reserve. Your task is simple: read NRFI 2022 in its entirety and then get to work; we need all hands on deck, training for the mission, challenging the status quo, and innovating to develop warfighting-ready reserve Sailors. We must work together to ensure our future Force will be profound, professional, and formidable. Remember, warfighting readiness is our only priority.

Every day I am inspired by the talent I see across our great Force. To that end, I am pleased to announce our 2021 Navy Reserve Sailor of the Year, YN1 Jasmyn Phinizy. While there could be only one selection, I know YN1 Phinizy and the other finalists represent every one of our reserve Sailors doing phenomenal work, every day, in every theater around the globe. You each exemplify the very best our Force has to offer, and exactly what our Fleet Commanders demand: talented, capable, dedicated, warfighting-ready sailors with a clear-eyed resolve to compete, deter, and win today. Keep charging, Team!

Let's get busy.



*[Signature]*

Vice Adm. John B. Mustin  
Chief of Navy Reserve  
Commander, Navy Reserve Force



Hello Shipmates and welcome to Summer!

I want to start by congratulating our Reserve Sailor of the Year and the finalists for 2021 Navy Reserve Sailor of the Year.

Yeoman 1st Class Jasmyn L. Phinizy, Reserve Sailor of the Year, Navy Reserve Region Readiness and Mobilization Command Jacksonville, Florida.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician 1st Class William J. Eisenhart, Navy Reserve Expeditionary Exploitation Unit (EXU) One, from Alexandria, Virginia.

Master-at-Arms 1st Class Nicholette A. Parrish, Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) SEAL Team Eighteen, from Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Aviation Electrician's Mate 1st Class Jessica M. Placek, Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 56, from Suffolk, Virginia.

Utilitiesman 1st Class Kyle W. Werner, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) Two Two, from Conroe, Texas.

These five Sailors demonstrate, through their accomplishments, the caliber of individuals in the Navy Reserve. They represent the culture, heritage, and work ethic that is the foundation of our Warfighting Readiness; they are diverse, educated, well-trained, and motivated to support the nation's defense strategy. They exemplify “sustained and superior performance”, that sets them above their peers in this highly competitive event. And it represents their future trajectory as leaders.

“Alice: Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?”

The Cheshire Cat: That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.

Alice: I don't much care where.

The Cheshire Cat: Then it doesn't much matter which way you go.

This quote, from Lewis Carroll's book “Alice in Wonderland”, illustrates the importance of having clearly defined goals. Because in life, you are going to get to a destination - but is it where you want to go?

The RSOY finalists got here through intent, focus on goals, and hard work – sweat-equity. Achieving goals is very much like watching a movie that starts at the end of the story and goes on to show the hero's journey toward it. And it starts with you writing down what you wish to accomplish – your “North Star”, and

breaking large goals into small objectives so you can start achieving them one at a time. Ask where do you see yourself in five, 10 or 20 years? What are your major goals? And break them down into small objectives. Have you completed required courses such as Professional Military Knowledge Eligibility Exam (PMK-EE) for your rank? Do you regularly review the precepts for your rating, that by the way, is a really good outline for career management in itself. Have you reached out to people who want to see you succeed such as trusted family and friends, mentors, your Chief, and your command career counselor for advice and guidance? The Career Development Board and Mid-Term Counseling are good outlines of what you wish to achieve. Career management is like preventive maintenance on a car; you have to maintain it regularly to keep it running at its peak. Managing your career is no different. We can break down goal-setting by asking ourselves five questions:

1. Have I clearly defined the goals I want to achieve?
2. What do I need to do, through training, materials and education, to realize my dreams?
3. What support from family and friends, teachers, chain of command, the Chiefs Mess, Command Career Counselor, and mentors, can help me in my quest?
4. Am I breaking down big goals and dreams into smaller objectives, with specific timelines so I can measure their progress?
5. Am I tracking my progress daily and am I sharing my successes as well as my challenges with people who want to see me succeed?

If we aren't working to make ourselves better each day, then we're allowing ourselves to get worse. As the RSOY nominees demonstrate, the striving for excellence is not an accident but a series of daily habits by those determined to achieve their dreams. A series of habits make up our daily routine. Isn't it a good idea to develop those that help us realize our dreams?

Now, let's talk about career management, which ties in with goal-setting. I am concerned that many of our E-3 to E-5 Sailors are not advancing, mainly because they have not completed PMK-EE, which is a requirement to be eligible to take the Navy Wide Advancement Exam (NWAE). This is negatively impacting our Warfighting Readiness. One of the ways we develop the Force is by training, preparing, and retaining our Sailors for increased tasks, responsibilities and expanded leadership roles. The fact that many cannot advance creates gaps in our operational requirements, leaving some billets, mainly in the lower ranks, overmanned while others go undermanned, and it opens up for the loss of personnel from high year tenure. That Sailors do not promote means that they are withholding billets, preventing others from advancing into that rank as they themselves would advance in their own careers. For the upcoming NWAE, I encourage you to start early and complete your PMK-EE by June 30 in order to be eligible for the exam in August.

Now let's shift rudder and talk about a different, more sobering subject: bullying. Bullying is defined as abuse and mistreatment of someone by another who is stronger.

Abuse of another human being goes against our Navy Ethos and has no place in our organization. The Navy Reserve's Culture of Safety as defined by the fourth line of effort in the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions: Develop the Force, underscores that each Sailor is respected, valued, and has a voice. Words are powerful. Let's make sure that our words are edifying – that they encourage and inspire others to better themselves, to share their concerns and challenges without judgement or stigma, rather than the opposite, which at worse, is humiliation - the breaking of someone's spirit. Be the leader and person you want others to be to you.

Let me close out by encouraging you to have fun while staying safe as we head into the Critical Days of Summer. Thank you and and your families for what you do each day to keep our nation safe.

Keep Pushing Forward!



*[Signature]*

Master Chief Petty Officer Tracy Hunt  
Navy Reserve 17th Force Master Chief





# BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT

Vice Adm. John B. Mustin, Chief of Navy Reserve and Commander, Navy Reserve Force, released the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions (NRFI) 2022 on May 17. In addition to updating the Force on the three lines of effort (LOE) to Design, Train and Mobilize the Force with a relentless focus on warfighting readiness, NRFI 2022 announces a fourth LOE – Develop the Force. The Fighting Instructions are Mustin’s action plan driving the Navy Reserve to fully attain and maintain the warfighting credibility and relevance required for today and in the future.

“Since I published the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions 2020, the forces that seek to reshape the international rules-based order have amplified and added coherency to their efforts,” Mustin said. “To counter these existential threats, and realize and defend our American values, we must accelerate pursuit and achievement of peerless warfighting readiness. To ensure that readiness we must transform the Navy Reserve to deliver a force that is designed, trained, and ready to fight and win – confidently and boldly – in sustained, multi-domain combat operations.”

## Develop the Force Introduction

Announcing the new LOE, Mustin noted that “Our Sailors are our asymmetric advantage. It is contingent upon us to focus on inclusion and equity allowing our Navy Reserve to harness our entire diverse team of Sailors and civilians to maximize our warfighting capability and readiness. We promote a positive culture of dignity and respect by living our Navy’s core values of honor, courage, and commitment. We will enable and empower our Sailors, embrace ownership and ingenuity, and reinforce the simple, unifying concept that Sailors and commands will take care of themselves and their people, all the while removing barriers constraining our warfighting advantage.”

The LOE was initiated to deliver against that vision and to align the Force with the Chief of Naval Operations’ “Get Real, Get Better” initiative. Specific actions are already underway.

Mustin also noted achievements under the LOE’s outlined in NRFI 2020.

## Design the Force Accomplishments

Major achievements under this LOE followed the designation of the Chief of Navy Reserve as a Resource Sponsor in August 2020, empowered to establish and modify its contribution to the Total Force, gaining parity on reserve issues in the Navy budget. Branches centralizing accession program management, direct assignments and mobilization billet fit and fill support, and Major Command Boards to select the best and most fully qualified captains for command are also now in place. Administrative burdens were reduced such as thoughtfully eliminating the number of Navy Reserve Readiness Units by 28%; mobilization readiness and billet fit-fill improved by reducing Cross-Assigned Out and In-Assignment Processing assignments; and nomenclature changes were implemented standardizing and aligning naming conventions across the Force. The team also developed and piloted a Total Force manpower management process to measure, analyze, and improve billet requirement definition.

## Train the Force Accomplishments

Chief among the Train the Force LOE actions over the last 18 months was new mobilization and personnel pillar metrics measuring warfighting readiness and identifying certification and qualification data sources feeding the training pillar. A new Reserve Program Director (RPD) instruction defines roles and responsibilities of RPDs, and a review of all Navy Reserve-owned training courses and creation of new courses increased warfighting readiness.

## Mobilize the Force Accomplishments

The Mobilize the Force efforts established activation/mobilization processing capacity in all six Regional Readiness and Mobilization Commands, Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, Naval Air Reserve Force and Naval Special Warfare Command. Training for activation/mobilization was standardized and command and control of the mobilization authority was centralized under the Navy Reserve. The new mass activation processes were tested during major exercises during fiscal years 2021 and 2022. An Annual Readiness Questionnaire was also developed to track and improve mobilization readiness.

## NRFI 2022 Way Forward

Continued efforts to identify and deliver Navy warfighting capabilities best suited for the Reserve Component, delivered at reduced costs and within acceptable risk for warfighting readiness remains the focus of the Design the Force LOE, now led by Rear Adm. Theodore LeClair.

Train the Force ongoing efforts will focus on preparing Navy Reserve Sailors for their mobilization/warfighting assignments, ensuring all Reserve Sailors are trained, ready to activate and fight and win on “Day One.” Continually assessing Fleet training and credentialing requirements, and designing and delivering training to address readiness demand will also be part of Rear Adm. Robert Clark’s responsibilities as he takes leadership of this LOE.

New Mobilize the Force Flag Champion Rear Adm. John Schommer will further enhance and employ rapid activation and mobilization processes such as Distributed Activation and Mobilization-to-Billet to ensure delivery of a Reserve force ready to respond to crisis or conflict. Continual monitoring and streamlining all accompanying activation and transaction process will ensure the successful, rapid mobilization and employment of Reserve Sailors.

Develop the Force under Rear Adm. Nancy Lecore’s leadership will inculcate a culture of excellence throughout the Force to maximize warfighting readiness. The new LOE also reinforces Navy core values and signature behaviors, aims to eliminate destructive behaviors, and emphasize Sailor and family wellness and readiness. Improving methods of educating, recruiting, retaining, and promoting our Sailors, and ensuring Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) are fully integrated throughout all personnel processes will also be part of her charge.

Specific actions to achieve the purpose of each LOE are included in the NRFI 2022 ALNAVRESFOR, which can be read in its entirety here.

“In this era of strategic competition, we must be ready,” Mustin said in his concluding remarks. “The Navy Reserve’s role as a critical enabler and a source of strategic depth is our organizational mandate. Our Navy and our joint forces are counting on each of you to contribute to assuring our allies and partners, deterring our competitors, and decisively competing and winning across the spectrum of conflict, in all domains, when called upon. *Warfighting readiness is our only priority.*”



# NAVY RESERVE FIGHTING INSTRUCTIONS

DESIGN // TRAIN // MOBILIZE // DEVELOP

CNR’s Fighting Instructions call on Reserve Sailors and units to focus efforts on warfighting readiness. This directive affects every Reserve Sailor. *Are you ready to fight on Day One?*

## DESIGN THE FORCE

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

## TRAIN THE FORCE

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

## MOBILIZE THE FORCE

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

## DEVELOP THE FORCE

Implement improvements in Sailor development, talent management, and quality of life issues. Reinforce signature behaviors, eliminate destructive behaviors, and emphasize Sailor wellness. Increase retention and recruiting efforts, especially in high-demand fields. Deliver better access to benefits and enhanced family support services.

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

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





# AROUND THE FORCE

## Chief of Navy Reserve Announces the 2021 Navy Reserve Sailor of the Year

By Chief of Navy Reserve Public Affairs

Vice Adm. John B. Mustin, Chief of Navy Reserve and Commander, Navy Reserve Force, announced Yeoman 1st Class Jasmyn L. Phinizy of Navy Reserve Region Readiness and Mobilization Command Jacksonville as the 2021 Navy Reserve Sailor of the Year (RSOY), May 20, 2022. Phinizy, from Jacksonville, FL, was selected from five finalists as the fiscal year 2021's top Reserve enlisted Sailor during a ceremony at the Navy Museum's Cold War Gallery on the Washington, D.C. Navy Yard, which was also livestreamed.

As a result of her selection, Phinizy will be recommended to the Chief of Naval Personnel for meritorious advancement to the rank of chief petty officer per OPNAVINST 1700.10P, Navy Sailor of the Year Program.

The announcement was the culmination of the 2021 RSOY week in Washington, D.C., from May 16 to 20, 2022, held in-person for the first time in two years.

The additional 2021 Navy Reserve Sailor of the Year finalists were:

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician 1st Class William J. Eisenhart, Navy Reserve Expeditionary Exploitation Unit (EXU) One, from Alexandria, Va.;

Master-at-Arms 1st Class Nicholette A. Parrish, Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) SEAL Team Eighteen, from Virginia Beach, Va.; Aviation Electrician's Mate 1st Class Jessica M. Placek, Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 56, from Suffolk, Va. and;

Utilitiesman 1st Class Kyle W. Werner, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) Two Two, from Conroe, Tx.

Ceremony hosts Rear Adm. John A. Schommer, Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command and Deputy Commander, Navy Reserve Force, and Navy Reserve Force Master Chief Tracy L. Hunt (SW/EXW/AW) were joined by master of ceremony and 2021 RSOY Chief Naval Aircrewman (Mechanical) Kody Sims, and 2019 Reserve Sailor of the Year, now Senior Chief Naval Aircrewman (Mechanical) Amanda Rodgers. During his remarks, Schommer recognized Sims and Rodgers by asking the audience to formally applaud them in-person since both of their ceremonies were held virtually.

Leading up to the ceremony, a team of senior enlisted leaders chaired by Hunt conducted a rigorous selection process and ultimately made the recommendation for the finalist to Mustin.

According to Hunt, the selection was no easy task. "Each of the candidates was the absolute top of their commands, equal in so many respects, and the epitome of warfighting-ready Sailors...ready on Day One," Hunt said. "I'm so proud of their professionalism, mission-focus, dedication to training and service to our country. The entire board is better for



having spent the last week with each of these superior Sailors."

Following his remarks, Hunt introduced Schommer, who re-emphasized the excellence of the finalists.

"We have over 12,000 First Class Petty Officers in the Reserve force. A very rigorous process narrowed that field down to five, and today, to just one," Schommer said. "Although there will be only one selection this morning, all of you have distinguished yourselves from thousands of other Reserve Sailors doing great work...in every theater around the globe...24/7...365 days a year. You exemplify the best our Reserve force has to offer...and exactly what our fleet commanders demand: talented, capable, dedicated, warfighting-ready Sailors with a clear-eyed resolve to compete, deter, and win today. I take comfort in knowing these impressive Sailors will be a part of the leadership of the Navy reserve in the critical years ahead...and will drive the generational transformation of our force."

After the announcement, Phinizy presented her own remarks. "It is humbling and an honor to be chosen as Reserve Sailor of the Year. The reason is that you want to show your junior Sailors that no matter what adversity they come from, or what platform they serve on, or what rate they serve in, all things are possible. I can be an example to my Sailors and a guide for them to take the torch and teach other Sailors in their career path.

"Find someone who you can trust, someone who will give you honest feedback and can assist you in getting through a difficult time, and someone who cares. Leadership starts with you. If you do the right thing, regardless of the recognition, your Sailors will follow."

Late Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Elmo Zumwalt and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Jack Whittet initiated the Sailor of the Year program in 1972 to recognize outstanding Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Sailors. The program was later expanded to honor the top Shore and Reserve Force Sailors of the Year.

## KEEN EDGE 22

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class William Sykes, U.S. 10th Fleet Public Affairs

Navy Reserve Sailors played an integral role at U.S. Fleet Cyber Command/ U.S. 10th Fleet (FCC/C10F) during Keen Edge 22, a bilateral command post exercise involving U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) and the Japan Joint Staff, Jan. 26 through Feb. 3.

Approximately 30 Navy Reserve Force personnel from 10 states, assigned to C10F, provided executive-level support during Keen Edge 22 at FCC/C10F's and INDOPACOM's headquarters.

The training increased warfighting readiness and enhanced active-duty forces' ability to deliver advanced cyber, cryptologic and electronic warfare capabilities to the Navy. Forging a shared understanding of processes during an exercise scenario also paves the way for seamless integration when tackling real-world issues.

"During this exercise, we have a lot of operational expertise that has come together on this watch floor, the Maritime Space Cyber Fires and Effects Coordination Cell," said Lt. Maxwell Brown, NR C10F Navy Information Operations Command Hawaii. "Essentially, we are coordinating capabilities to ensure successful integration with operational maneuvers."



Throughout FCC/C10F headquarters, Navy Reserve Sailors are involved in many areas, contributing a unique blend of civilian and military backgrounds. In the case of the cyber and IT fields, many Reserve Sailors have related, full-time jobs in the private sector, which strengthens public/private partnerships, bolstering innovation in the cyber domain.

"Reserve Sailors are a vital force multiplier," said Rear Adm. Stephen Donald, vice commander, FCC/C10F. "Their ability to surge — along with their diverse expertise and experiences — expand our capabilities during steady state operations and crisis situations. That is a key capability, given the dynamic and global responsibilities of FCC/C10F."

Reserve Sailors have become an increasingly valuable asset to the Navy's growing cyber mission, supplying scalable augmentation for the Active Duty Force. In the case of Keen Edge, Reserve Sailors supplemented 24-hour operations.

"In the battle watch, we are the 10th Fleet central operations hub for the maritime operations watch," said Lt. Cmdr. Michelangelo Vaccaro, a battle watch captain assigned to NR 10th Fleet Headquarters. "We are liaising with multiple other staffs around the clock to provide direction from higher headquarters to our subordinate commands, and we are relaying information back to higher headquarters on completion of tasks and execution of missions."

C10F has 29 Navy Reserve commands, accounting for more than 1,300 Navy Reserve Sailors who are trained and ready to support cyberspace missions.

FCC is responsible for Navy information network operations, offensive and defensive cyberspace operations, space operations and signals intelligence. C10F is the operational arm of Fleet Cyber Command and executes its mission through a task force structure similar to other warfare commanders. In this role, C10F provides support of Navy and joint missions in cyber/networks, cryptologic/signals intelligence and space.



# The Heart of an LCS Sailor

By Captain Ray Gherardini, Navy Reserve Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 2

Arriving at Naval Station Mayport on October 3, 2021, Operations Specialist (OS) 3rd Class Chaurice Smothers came with a mission, and with a professional goal in mind.

As a Reserve Sailor assigned to Navy Reserve Littoral Combat Ship Squadron (LCSRON) 2's Maintenance Execution Team (MET) ALPHA Fort Worth (FTW), she volunteered for 90-day Active Duty for Training (ADT) orders in support of LCSRON 2.

Her mission: to provide maintenance and watchstanding support aboard the squadron's ships. Her goal: to earn an Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) qualification.

Qualifying ESWS is a daunting endeavor that takes hours upon hours of research and learning, studying, and then demonstrating a vast amount of required knowledge on a written test followed by an oral board. Obtaining an ESWS qualification is difficult and demanding for any active-duty Sailor under normal circumstances, let alone a SELRES Sailor with only 90 days to accomplish this monumental professional milestone.

Despite the obstacles in front of her, Smothers had a plan and was laser-focused on departing Naval Station Mayport with her ESWS pin. On paper, the plan seemed simple; she would spend all of her free time on the ship working on her qualification. Little did she know how much time it would consume during her three-month duty period.

Upon checking in to LCSRON 2, Smothers was assigned to USS Detroit (LCS 7). Aboard Detroit, her Leading First Class Petty Officer (FCPO) happened to be the crew's ESWS coordinator, and once he was aware of Smothers' goal, he was equally committed to helping her achieve it.

"My FCPO and my departmental senior chief could not have been more supportive of me earning my ESWS pin," said

Smothers. "They made sure I stayed focused on the program and were literally calling Sailors from other departments to help me study. I honestly could not have accomplished this without all of their help and support."

USS Detroit was in a Continuous Maintenance Availability (CMAV) period during the three months Smothers was assigned. She spent hours supporting

various training evolutions, including a navigation mobility exercise during which she assisted Detroit's navigator and conducted numerous maintenance spot checks. Smothers also earned her small-arms weapons qualifications and was able to qualify and stand Officer of the Deck (OOD) in-port.

Working side-by-side with active duty Sailors and civilian contractors to keep an LCS ready for

tasking, Navy Reserve, LCS Sailors gain valuable skills and experience not commonly available to those assigned to other Navy Reserve units. By the nature of their training and work, they are keeping themselves and our ships warfighting ready.

Opportunities to get underway, hone critical skills and earn valuable qualifications like ESWS are just some examples of the unique opportunities afforded to Navy Reserve LCS Sailors. Obtaining an ESWS pin while on orders is a worthwhile and attainable milestone.

"I could not be any prouder of Petty Officer Smothers," said Capt. David Rewkowski, Commander, Navy Reserve LCS Squadron 2. "This is a tremendous career milestone and it really shows her character and grit. She is the perfect example of the type of Sailor we recruit in [the] LCS [community] – someone dedicated to achieving and maintaining our Force's competitive edge, but also with the absolute drive and determination to accomplish something to better themselves and their Navy career."



# A Legacy of Service

By Cmdr. Nicolas Melendez, REDCOM Everett public affairs

When Ensign Erin Omberg reported to Officer Development School (ODS) in Newport, Rhode Island, earlier this year, King Hall may have seemed familiar to her. When she checked into Navy Reserve Center Minneapolis for her first drill weekend, she may have experienced some déjà vu as well. Both of these locations were places that her father, Cmdr. (Ret.) Clarence Omberg, had spoken about. At 38-years old, Omberg, a finance director in her civilian career, decided to apply for a commission in the Navy Supply Corps.

"I needed to find out if the Navy is for me, with no external pressures, so I just called an 800 number and talked to a recruiter while waiting for my commuter bus," Omberg said.

After deciding that the Navy was, indeed, for her, Omberg attended ODS and was commissioned with her father administering the oath of service in early 2022. Omberg is now assigned to Navy Reserve Commander, Naval Forces Japan (NR CNFJ), based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Military service has been a big part of my life," Omberg said. "My dad, grandfather, great grandfather, uncles, aunts, have all served. I finally listened to that little voice in my head and joined the Navy."

Omberg's father served as a Surface Warfare Officer in Vietnam and also served at the same NR CNFH Minneapolis-based unit where she is stationed now. Her great grandfather was a World War I Army veteran. Her aunt was in the Navy Reserve's Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) program during World War II. Her great uncle joined the Navy at 17-years old and died in the Philippines



during World War II. This family legacy encouraged Omberg to submit a commissioning package.

Omberg holds a bachelor's degree from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, and an M.B.A. (Finance) from Augsburg University in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Managing million-dollar budgets as the finance director of a Minneapolis-based marketing and advertising firm gives her a solid background to be a supply officer, but she acknowledges that Navy Supply and the corporate world do have some differences.

"The skillsets that qualified me for this job are my formal education, real world leadership and managerial experience," Omberg said. "I know how to manage a budget and people. I just have to learn how to be a Sailor. I'm a student again. The problem solving certainly translates from civilian to service, but the processes are probably different, and I'll learn those. I'm challenging myself and enjoying following in the footsteps of family."





# Suicide Prevention:

## Navy Sailor Assistance and Intercept for Life (SAIL)

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Waldrop, Navy Reserve Region Readiness and Mobilization Command Norfolk

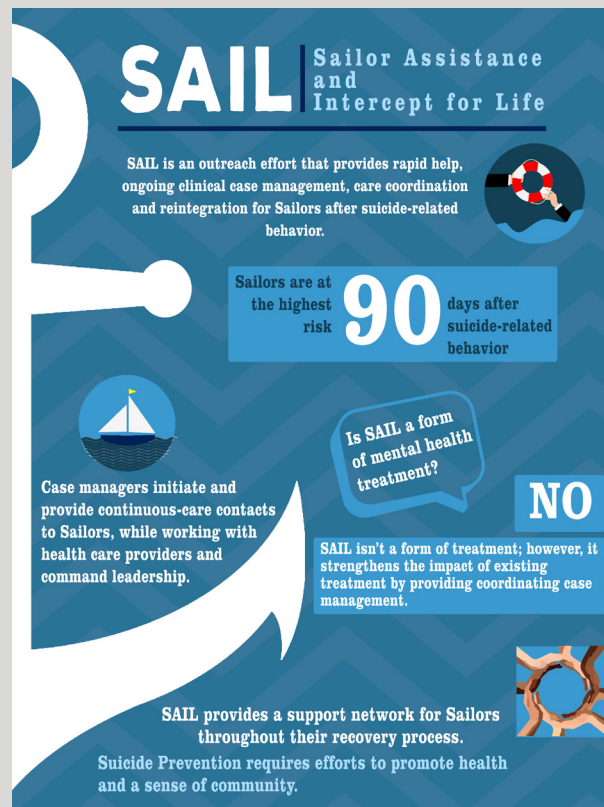
Sailors taking their own lives through suicide is one of the United States Navy's top three causes of death annually. Suicidal ideation and suicide attempts are still something many Sailors find difficult to discuss or admit to, due to the perceived stigma attached to seeking care for mental health.

"It's very different from the way it was years ago. Back when I came in, you just didn't talk about those things," said Chief Logistics Specialist Barbara Pagan, Navy Reserve Region Readiness and Mobilization Command (REDCOM) Norfolk, Suicide Prevention Coordinator. "The Navy has moved away from it, but the stigma is still there. A lot of people aren't open to discussing it, and a lot of it stems from the way things were where they grew up. When you come into the Navy, it's a completely different type of home and family, so you are trying to break [Sailors] away from those habits."

Many Sailors who have suicidal thoughts or struggles refuse to seek help. When asked, they believe they will receive the help they need, but are also afraid of being treated differently, losing the trust of their leadership, and having their careers negatively impacted.

"When someone does come forward and is recovering from suicidal ideation or an attempt, it all comes down to environment," said Pagan. "It's very important to have compassion and understanding that we are all human and all have struggles. Leaders need to be aware of this fact and to have the conversation with the department prior to the Sailor's return. It's important to treat them normally and be understanding of the struggle they are facing."

There are many different avenues for a Sailor to receive help when dealing with thoughts of suicide, and there are programs in place to get them the help they need. The Navy Sailor Assistance and Intercept for Life (SAIL) is a program Sailors are automatically referred to by the command when they come forward seeking help. It is an evidence-based



intervention that provides rapid assistance, ongoing risk assessment, care coordination, and reintegration assistance.

"Navy Region Mid-Atlantic seems to have a consistent knowledge gap of the SAIL program throughout the region," said Pagan. "Most of our coordinators throughout the region aren't familiar with the program or its purpose. They have been exposed to it but lack the knowledge or experience to understand it."

Pagan mentioned that REDCOM Norfolk's suicide prevention team is creating and disseminating a recurring training with SAIL as the lead topic, providing additional knowledge to the region's Suicide Prevention Coordinators.

"The SAIL program is an important tool for the Navy in providing proper assistance and getting our Sailors the help they need," said Pagan. "We need our Reserve Force to be properly taken care of and given the help they need in order to maintain mission readiness."

Additional guidance for submitting SAIL referrals, including the Suicide Prevention Handbook and SAIL Commanders Toolkit, can be found on the Navy Suicide Prevention Program website: [www.suicide.navy.mil](http://www.suicide.navy.mil).

For more resources scan the QR code.



# SAIL

Sailor Assistance & Intercept for Life

*Instilling Hope. Saving Lives.*



## NRC Riverside Funeral Honor Guard Answers the Call

By Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Elizabeth Mendez, Navy Reserve Center Riverside

Navy Reserve Center (NRC) Riverside Funeral Honor Guard's mission is to be the link between surviving family members and the U.S. Navy. The funeral honor guard has not missed a funeral service in over 10 years. They are proud to serve and support family members in their time of need.

"Providing funeral honors to local families and friends that have been left behind by our fallen shipmates is one of our main missions," said Cmdr. Christian Dumlao, NRC Riverside Commanding Officer. "We consider it an honor and a privilege to provide this service, and we take this job very seriously. It's the least we can do for our brothers and sisters in arms who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our great nation."

The funeral honor guard consists of 27 members supporting funerals across San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Each member is qualified to render military honors, a duty which includes: leading the detail as officer in charge or petty officer in charge; serving as pall bearer for plane-side honors; sounding Taps as bugler; folding the U.S. national ensign; and serving as presentation officer. The team arrives on site 30-45 minutes before each service to liaise and coordinate with family members, funeral directors and other military members to guarantee a flawless ceremony. They participate in an average of 100 funeral services per month. In 2021 the team completed over 1,000 services.

"The best thing about funeral honor guard is the opportunity to sound Taps for our veterans," said Capt Phong Vu, who serves as NRC Riverside Presentation Officer. "It's an honor and proud moment to afford the opportunity to sound Taps and salute their heroic sacrifice to our great nation. Everything is done to the highest military standard. Uniforms must be clean and surpass standards. Rehearsal and practice make perfect. Military customs and the wishes of the next of kin are the foundations of our ceremonies."

One of the team's more memorable services in 2021 was for Signalman 1st Class Eugene Skaggs, who served aboard the battleship USS Oklahoma during the December 7, 1941, Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The attack on the

ship resulted in the deaths of Skaggs and 428 of his USS Oklahoma Shipmates. In 2021, Skaggs' remains were identified by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) and disinterred from one of 46 plots at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP) In Honolulu, colloquially known as the Punchbowl, for transfer to Riverside, Calif., to be laid to a dignified, final rest. The NRC Riverside Funeral Honor Guard supported his arrival at the Ontario, Calif., airport with plane-side honors and rendered full military honors at Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, Calif. on Aug. 13, 2021. The Funeral Honor Guard was honored to be trusted with the solemn responsibility of bringing home a fallen shipmate who had served honorably and faithfully.

"I joined the funeral honors team in 2017 as a junior Sailor, and it was a decision that I would recommend to any Sailor regardless of rank or experience," said Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Jose Ruiz. "In my tenure with the team, I have been exposed to a plethora of situations that have... improved my capabilities as a professional, a Sailor, a leader, and a person in general. As I have reached a position in my career where I now guide junior Sailors, I often recommend participation in the funeral honor guard. Sailors can gain valuable insight while at the same time serving and honoring those who came before us, who wore the uniform we are all so proud to wear."

There is no end date to the NRC Funeral Honor Guard mission. The funeral honor guard will always be ready and standing by to support — anytime, anywhere.

"It is one of my greatest honors to serve alongside my shipmates, to give these families peace of mind after their loved ones have passed," said Cryptologic Technician Technical Seaman Payton Belle. "I love being able to work closely with my teammates who have been in longer than I have. Being a part of this team is one of the best choices I've made."



# Profiles in Professionalism



## LS1 Hermilo Simon

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jonathan Word

We live in a world run by logistics. It's important that materials and supplies get to where they need to be, or else production would come to a standstill. Without the appropriate equipment and tools in the hands of our workforce, nothing would get done. At Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, the U.S. Navy's only permanent base in Africa, that is simply not an option.

With the monumental task of feeding, sheltering, and supplying over 5,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, Camp Lemonnier needs a world-class supply department and a world-class supply department needs world-class Sailors like Logistics Specialist 1st Class Hermilo Simon, a Navy Reserve Sailor from Norfolk, Va., currently deployed to Camp Lemonnier where he is assigned to the procurement division of the supply department.

"It's a different world out here," says Simon. "It's the same supply chain, but you have to think outside the box. Every department has needs, and if you can't fill them, then really nobody can do their job."

This is Simon's first mobilization as a Navy Reserve Sailor. He says that his department is one of the best logistics shops he has ever had the pleasure of working in, and he has found himself in a position of leadership while on deployment.

"He is currently filling a Chief's role," says Lt. Cmdr. John Lina, the supply officer in the Camp Lemonnier procurement department and Simon's immediate supervisor. "So far, he has risen to every complex challenge that I have presented to him. I would say that he is a very mature Navy Reservist who is wiser beyond his years."

Before becoming a Navy Reserve Sailor, Simon served nearly six years as an active-duty Sailor. He says the Navy was able to help him achieve his goal of completing his master's degree in education with a concentration in mental health counseling. After completing his education, Simon was ready to step into his civilian career, but he was not ready to step away from the Navy.

"I did fall in love with logistics," says Simon. "It's very customer-oriented and still in line with what I do in the civilian world. You are still talking with people; you interact with them and meet new people. I like that aspect of it. I like helping."

From his fellow Sailors he met while attending the Navy Individual Augmentee Combat Training, a program Reserve Sailors attend prior to deployment, to everyone he has met on Camp Lemonnier, Simon says the bonds formed in his service are the most rewarding aspect of his Navy career. He is an active member of the camp's Diversity Team, the E6 Committee and the Command Resiliency Team.

"I am a very people-oriented person," says Simon. "I like to be part of groups; it is one of the things that has kept me in the Navy. We're seeing how we can better Camp Lemonnier and here you know what your direct impact is."

When looking at the job of a Logistics Specialist, the first thing you may see is spreadsheets full of order tracking numbers, shipping invoices, or stacks of boxes ready to be sent out, but Simon sees each service member behind the supplies he is providing them with.

"Whether it's the galley or the special forces," Simon says. "They all have supply needs, and that's what we do."

## IS1 Annie Ferguson

By Kristen McDonald, Afloat Training Group Western Pacific

Intelligence Specialist First Class Annie Ferguson embarked on her Navy Reserve enlistment over 11 years ago. Since day one, she knew she wanted to serve her country and learn a new profession. She is currently serving as an intelligence analyst in a Special Operations Command Africa Reserve unit.

IS1 Ferguson is relentlessly in pursuit of a challenge and is no stranger to firsts. She deployed as part of SOCOM's Cultural Support Teams (CST) to Afghanistan from 2013-2014, supporting Naval Special Warfare (NSW) and Army Special Forces for OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM. There, she was one of the first females in NSW to serve on the frontlines and experience combat in Afghanistan. Immediately following her CST deployment, she deployed with a SEAL Team to Iraq from 2014-2015 for OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL. She was a member of the first unit back in Iraq to navigate the emergence of ISIS with a goal to disrupt and dismantle the ISIS foothold. A year after her back-to-back military deployments, she went back to Afghanistan as a contractor to provide intelligence to target high-value terrorists.

Her deployments have highlighted the importance of protecting our homeland and our freedoms and she has since been hired as a criminal analyst for the Department of Homeland Security and is loving every minute. Her dream is to become a Federal Agent so she can continue serving her



country and community.

One of Annie's passions is teaching awareness of the struggles veterans face after returning home from combat and high-operational tempo deployments. Having faced a variety of physical, emotional, and psychological struggles herself, IS1 Ferguson promotes outdoor therapy and counseling geared toward transitioning back into the civilian world, PTSD, and depression management. She, along with countless volunteers at organizations like the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Warrior Expeditions, and One More Wave help with that transition. While it can be difficult to recuperate from deployment, organizations like these can help do this safely and smoothly.



# Lt. Cmdr. Brad Lawhon

By Leslie Hull-Ryde, Military Sealift Command Far East



A strategic sealift officer who chose to attend the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, at Kings Point, New York, because it was “the academy with the most options and best opportunities,” now claims he’s homeless.

Lt. Cmdr. Brad Lawhon has lived overseas or been stationed aboard ships, both commercial and USNS, for the last seven years.

“I have coined the phrase ‘successfully homeless,’ as I have not been able to call anywhere home,” he said.

Since he was a young boy, he knew he’d be gone from home quite a bit as he dreamed of earning his Navy wings.

“I initially wanted to be a naval aviator. That’s why I chose Kings Point, as they receive the same number of flight school seats as Annapolis,” he said.

“By my junior year of high school, I knew the Merchant Marine Academy was where I needed to go because of their motto, ‘the academy with the most options and best opportunities.’”

After completing the academy’s requisite sea terms, Lawhon says his dream of flying had wavered. By his senior year at USMMA, the call to sea had become too enticing.

“The ways things have played out in my commercial sailing and naval career I can confidently say I don’t think I would have the same unique opportunities and experiences if I was just a pilot.”

After graduation from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in 2009, he had to serve either on active duty or as a Reserve officer in one of the armed forces.

“If one chooses to sail on their merchant mariner license, which most do, then completing the service obligation as a reservist is the only viable option,” Lawhon said.

“I decided to sail and go into the Navy Reserve as a strategic sealift officer along with most of my classmates.”

Since making that career decision, Lawhon says he’s been in complete control of his career.

“In my opinion, [the mariner career path] and the SSO program allow the same flexibility, and if one can juggle both, each can greatly complement the other.

As a contract mariner, he’s served as chief mate aboard USNS Red Cloud (T-AKR 313), USNS Watson (T-AKR 310), and USNS Sisler (T-AKR 311). As a Navy Reserve officer, he’s spent time in uniform in Bahrain, Southeast Asia, and Korea.

Often his reserve stints between contract-mariner assignments have extended longer than originally planned. One 45-day active-duty-for-training job jumped to 132 days overnight when he was requested for a “hot fill” executive officer billet with Military Sealift Command Office Korea.

“That decision to go out to Busan ended up lasting 13 months, encompassing three different positions, and during a month-long period, I was doing all three at once,” Lawhon said.

While in Korea, he joined the MSCO Korea office to serve as the executive officer but soon after also took on the job of director of operations and concurrently, assistant operations officer as the position was vacated while Lawhon was aboard.

His time in Korea was extended unexpectedly when the coronavirus pandemic impacted military moves, which were halted. During the prolonged stay, Lawhon worked closely with several U.S. and host nation agencies to ensure every MSC evolution adhered to strict protocols to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of the host nation population and civil service and contracted mariners.

“Working together, Chinhae was successfully reopened for vessel repairs. It was the first port in Asia to be opened back up for business for MSC,” Lawhon said.

When travel conditions allowed, he took a one-month break and then returned to USNS Sisler as chief mate.

“After taking 18-months off from sailing, I had a successful trip, especially since I earned the required sea time for my final upgrade to master mariner of unlimited tonnage,” he said.

After USNS Sisler, Lawhon took orders to Military Sealift Command Far East, where he is currently serving as a marine transportation specialist.

“I would like to sail as a captain as soon as the opportunity arises, and also, once I am done sailing, I wouldn’t mind attending grad school for international business, but I will always remain in the maritime industry.”

# MA1 Shannon Brazda

By Leslie Hull-Ryde, Military Sealift Command Far East



A Navy Reserve Sailor in Indiana ensures fallen service members and veterans receive proper military honors.

In addition to her duties as a master-at-arms, Petty Officer 1st Class Shannon Brazda volunteers as part of the Military Department of Indiana Ceremonial Unit. Specifically, she performs the National Anthem and other patriotic songs during special events, including Veterans Day and Memorial Day events, the Indy 500 and Indiana Pacers’s games. To her, the most important performance is when she is part of the military honors presented during funerals.

“It’s important that we honor and respect fallen Sailors by supporting their families with a proper burial ceremony, folding of the flag and presenting it to family members,” Brazda says.

“During funerals, I am usually the presenter, which means I present the flag to the next-of-kin. Sometimes it is a very emotional experience; however, I know it helps them with closure.”

While she’s had no formal training, Brazda has been singing since middle school. She was in choir through high school. Now, she is among a group of representatives from all services who make up the ceremonial unit, also known as MDICS.

“It’s important that we support our community this way,” she said.

“It’s an honor to sing during these important events and to sing the National Anthem in public.”

While she’s only been with Military Sealift Command for a couple of years, Brazda has been in uniform – either on



active duty or in the Navy Reserve -- almost 11 years.

“I love serving my country and want to be a part of something greater than myself.”

While not serving the Navy, Brazda works for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security with U.S. Customs and Border Protection. While she has put her talent to work as part of CBP, singing Amazing Grace during the funerals of fallen officers, one of her responsibilities for the agency is exercise planning.

As a master exercise practitioner, or MEP, Brazda plans, organizes, executes and evaluates table-top exercises, drills and other exercises for U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

“Our team works to identify areas of concern before an actual event occurs,” she said.

“We prepare in advance to help make any mission successful.”

That expertise and experience translates directly to her support of the Navy, specifically Military Sealift Command.

“We give a lot of thought to exercise planning, which my active duty counterparts benefit from. We may have different approaches, but we end up with the same result – mission accomplishment.”



# TOPGUN LEGACY: MAKING MAVERICKS WITH CAPT. BRIAN FERGUSON

By Lt. Bryce Baswell, Commander, Navy Reserve Forces  
Command Public Affairs

Art by M. L. B. Bennett

The sun rises over Nevada. A rumble rolls across the desert, but it's not the sound of a rare rainstorm. It's two U.S. Navy F/A-18 Hornets engaged in a close-range combat training exercise. One is the haze-grey color of fleet squadrons. The other sports desert camo with a red star on its tail, one of the paint schemes used by Navy Reserve adversary aircraft squadrons to mimic those used by America's adversaries.

From a long way off, the jets seem serene, like birds of prey gliding the updrafts. But up close, it's a hell storm. The jets pump out swirling vortices of scorched gases. The sound can literally be felt, and the acrid smell of jet fuel permeates the air. The two aircraft maneuver furiously, both attempting to establish positional advantage against the other. Finally, one gets the upper hand. "Copy Kill"—a successful engagement.

Capt. Brian "Ferg" Ferguson has spent a significant portion of his career involved with air-to-air combat training exercises like the one described above. Ferguson attended the Adversary Instructor Course at the Navy Fighter Weapons School, also known as TOPGUN. He also commanded the Fighting Saints of Fighter Squadron Composite Thirteen (VFC-13), based at Naval Air Station Fallon, Nevada, the same installation as TOPGUN. VFC -13 is one of the Navy Reserve adversary aircraft squadrons dedicated specifically to providing the highest quality adversary training for Navy fleet squadrons and other units, a role not provided by active duty squadrons. These and numerous other career experiences [see note below for more\*] helped make Ferguson an ideal candidate to serve as the Navy's technical advisor for TOP GUN: Maverick, Paramount Pictures' new sequel to its 1986

blockbuster-hit feature film, Top Gun. Ferguson described how he came by the job.

"Toward the end of my tour of duty as the Deputy Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve, the Chief of Staff for Commander, Naval Air Forces contacted me," said Ferguson. "He said he thought I might be the right person for the role of advisor for TOP GUN: Maverick. At first, I declined because I had been focused on so many other things professionally,

and I knew there would be many other people well-qualified for the job. However, the Chief of Staff kept ping me, and eventually my wife, Susan, was the one who changed my mind. She told me, "If they get it wrong and you had a chance to make it better that you didn't take, you'll be complaining about it for the rest of your life, and if they get it right, you'll regret that you weren't a part of it."

Ferguson served on active-duty orders for just over a year while filling the role of the Navy's technical advisor for TOP GUN:

Maverick, during which he also performed the critical role of aerial coordinator for the Naval Aviators and aircraft involved in the film.

"I wore many hats," said Ferguson. "Primary was safety. The things we did in the jets were not necessarily any more risky, complicated, or difficult than any given fleet training mission or combat duty, but they were different and required a great deal of careful and deliberate risk management. It was clear to me that any benefits the Navy hoped to gain from the film showcasing our profession to the nation and the world would be more than erased by a mishap. I also coordinated the aerial sequences, knowing the capabilities and limitations of the F/A-18 and aircrew. Tom Cruise, Jerry Bruckheimer or Joseph Kosinski would want something, and perhaps it was not attainable safely within our comfort margins. I would

work with them and the civilian aerial cinematographer to find a way to make it work safely and still be spectacular. I was also responsible for assisting with realism in the script, storyline, and uniform accuracy, minus a few scenes that were filmed prior to my arrival."

Although Ferguson stipulates that not every part of the film is 100% accurate to the realities of Naval Aviation, he says that overall, it provides an extremely realistic vision of what being a Naval Aviator is like.

"The film makes very limited use of CGI—it's almost all real-life Navy pilots in real Navy jets doing real maneuvers," Ferguson said. "We're taking the audience into the jets with us, onto the ship, and into combat. Various people who saw the film with me all said the exact same thing: "I felt like I was in the jet!"

Working on TOP GUN: Maverick was coming full circle for Ferguson. Like many others, he was inspired in a major way when he saw the original film, Top Gun, in theaters when it was first released in 1986, his



and women in America. Second, it helped remind the Naval Aviation community that we literally have the coolest job on the planet! Like every job, there are parts of it that are mundane, but the film celebrated the most thrilling parts of it and reminded people that when they look back on their time in the service, those are the parts they are going to remember, not the long hours or paperwork. Third, it helped connect much of the American public to the Navy in a way in which they hadn't been before—in a contemporary way that gives them some familiarity with what the Navy does today. I am confident that TOP GUN: Maverick will have the same effect, which is why the Navy and the Department of Defense supported the project at the highest levels."

Ferguson described more about the impact he thinks the new film will have.

"I am confident this film is going to help reenergize pride in the Naval Aviation community and the military at large. It can really pull people in and connect them to a Navy that they may not realize has been continuously involved in combat operations around the world for most of the last 30 years. This



film will bring Naval Aviation to screens in front of hundreds of millions of people and allow them to experience how it looks from the cockpit, and more importantly, what it feels like to be an aviator in the U.S. Navy."

Ferguson also discussed the critical role the Navy Reserve plays in supporting Naval Aviation and the Navy at large.

"The Navy Reserve provides a strategic depth for warfighting readiness during these times when we are challenged by near-peer adversaries. We stand ready to surge combat-capable end strength...whether the demand signal is tactical airpower, strategic lift, unmanned systems, watch-floor manning, seapower, medical support, Seabees, logistics, Naval Special Warfare, or any number of other specialties, the Navy Reserve maintains a readiness to mobilize, to fight and win anywhere in the world."

senior year of high school. He attributes watching the film, as well as seeing the Navy's Blue Angels and other Navy aircraft at airshows, to his decision to enter Naval Aviation. Now, 36 years later, he's working on film projects that will help to inspire a new generation of Naval Aviators, including another Hollywood film named Devotion, the renowned story of Naval Aviators and brothers-in-arms Jesse Brown and Tom Hudner during the Korean War, scheduled to be released in the fall of 2022. Ferguson explained the lasting legacy that films about the Navy can have.

"I think that films can have a dramatic impact," Ferguson described. "For example, the original Top Gun film did three things. First, it helped boost Navy recruiting a tremendous amount. It allowed the Navy to enjoy a massive influx of applications from some of the best and brightest young men



Ferguson offered the following advice to Navy Reserve Sailors in the early parts of their careers:

“Be proud of what you do! The Navy cannot do its job without the Navy Reserve. Take care of the person on either side of you and the person in the middle, and lean on each other. Also, listen to your Chiefs, whether you are junior enlisted or an officer.”

\*Note: Here are a few more highlights from Capt. Ferguson’s career:

Ferguson earned a bachelor’s degree in Aeronautical Science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and commissioned in the Navy through the Aviation Officer Candidate School in 1993. After completing flight school, he was assigned to fly F/A-18s. Among numerous other tours, Ferguson served as Assistant Air Operations Officer aboard USS Constellation (CV-64), in which he flew with the Vigilantes of Strike Fighter Squadron One Five One (VFA-151) and led numerous night combat missions into Iraq in F/A-18s in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He also attended the Navy Fighter Weapons School



(TOPGUN) Adversary Instructor Course. Ferguson transitioned from active duty to the Navy Reserve, in which he has continued to serve the Navy in many roles, including Commanding Officer of the Fighting Saints of Fighter Squadron Composite Thirteen (VFC-13). Ferguson currently serves as Commanding Officer of U.S. 6th Fleet’s N5/N7 unit in Naples, Italy and is also Director of the Aviation Mentoring Network for Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve. In his civilian life, Ferguson worked as a federal agent with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) where he served as a pilot, tactical team member, weapons and tactics instructor, and airborne sniper cover officer, and is now a captain for a major U.S. airline. ✈



**Photo captions**

**Top:** Capt. Brian Ferguson with actor Tom Cruise working through a complex aerial scene, NAS Fallon, NV, 2019.

**Bottom Right:** Navy Aerial Advisor Capt. Brian Ferguson and Aerial Coordinator/Lead Camera Jet Pilot Kevin LaRosa II on the set of Top Gun: Maverick by Paramount Pictures, Skydance and Jerry Bruckheimer Films.

**Middle Right:** Navy Aerial Advisor Capt. Brian Ferguson and Tom Cruise on the set of Top Gun: Maverick by Paramount Pictures, Skydance and Jerry Bruckheimer Films.

**Bottom Left:** Navy Aerial Advisor Capt. Brian Ferguson and Jerry Bruckheimer on the set of Top Gun: Maverick by Paramount Pictures, Skydance and Jerry Bruckheimer Films.



Photos courtesy of Paramount Pictures



# MENTORSHIP IN MOTION

## RESERVE OFFICER NEVER STOPS HELPING SAILORS SUCCEED

By MC2 Xiaoming Zhieng and Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command Public Affairs

Seaman Apprentice Samuel Hoard attended a speech by Adm. Jeremy Michael Boorda, the 25th Chief of Naval Operations, in a crowded gymnasium in Burlington, Washington, in the early 1990s. Boorda was notable as the first Sailor to rise from the enlisted ranks to become CNO. His story resonated deeply with Hoard, leaving an indelible mark on his career.

Seaman Apprentice Samuel Hoard is now Cmdr. Samuel Hoard, and he recently commanded Navy Reserve Center (NRC) New York City. Hoard has never forgotten when he heard Boorda speak or his own enlisted roots. He knows what it's like to overcome challenges, recognize opportunities, and try to navigate upward through a large, complex organization.

That's why he's driven by Sailor development and mentorship, a calling he's committed to seven days a week. Hoard says he feels it's a way of paying forward a debt to every Sailor who's ever helped develop him.

"I couldn't achieve everything I've done without mentors from all backgrounds," he said. "That includes peers, chief petty officers and junior Sailors."

Born in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Hoard moved to New Orleans when he was five years old and relocated to South Central Los Angeles to stay with his grandmother at age 10. Growing up in Los Angeles was tough. He lived in a rough neighborhood and bounced from school to school as he worked landscaping and odd jobs with his grandfather. When

Hoard was 15-years-old, his 25-year-old uncle, a school bus driver, was tragically murdered during a criminal case of mistaken identity. Hoard was devastated, but the memory of the good man his uncle was has never left him.

"My uncle had been a great role model," said Hoard, "Being from a single-parent home, I'd kind of caught onto his coattails. He kind of shaped the leader and resilient person I am today."

Hoard enlisted the Navy in 1993 as an undesignated Seaman and later became a Hull Maintenance Technician. He soon advanced to third class petty officer and earned both surface warfare and aviation warfare pins. Hoard took 5 to 6 college classes each semester during shipboard deployments,

obtaining his bachelor's degree from Norfolk State University. At the encouragement of his leadership, he submitted four officer packages in six years, applying through multiple officer commissioning programs such as Officer Candidate School (OCS), Seaman-to-Admiral (STA-21), and the Enlisted Commissioning Program (ECP). Finally, he was selected for the ECP.

Hoard is now President of the National Naval Officer Association (NNOA), and as an NSU Alumnus, he frequently speaks at the school. Recently, he met two fellow Navy officers there, Ensign Terrence Parks and Ensign Benin Allen, who are NNOA members. Through NNOA, the three have forged a mentor/protégé relationship. Like Hoard, Parks and Allen are also both prior-enlisted Sailors. Parks and Allen relate to Hoard as someone who understands their challenges.

"It was a big motivator and inspiration for me to see other historically black college and university grads and African-American officers, both male and female, coming to the school and talking to us," said Allen, "Cmdr. Hoard always has a smiling face."

According to Hoard, his first mentorship sessions with Parks and Allen started the same way all of his first mentorship sessions do.

"I say, 'Hey, what do you think your roadblocks are?'" said Hoard. "Because most of the time... as a leader in the military... we get in our own way. So I say, 'Hey, what are your goals? Did you write them down? Let's lay them out. Where are you at in your career? Most importantly, does your family support you in what you're trying to do? Have you communicated that? And then what's your backup plan?'"

Hoard said when building Navy leaders, it's important to identify any gaps in institutional knowledge.

"There are sometimes roadblocks and career knowledge gaps for the non-academy graduates because ROTC, HBCU and OCS officers do not have the same type of institutional network of guidance and support as academy graduates," Hoard said.

According to Hoard, it doesn't matter what someone's rank, rate, or designator is. If you're on his radar, he'll always check in to stay connected.

"I like to take care of Sailors," he said. "I'm always reaching back to enlisted Sailors even if they terminate interest in officer programs. I'm pinging them, I'm texting them, I'm emailing them. I try to be that engaged leader that maybe they haven't met yet."

Hoard says respect is foundational to his approach to Sailorization.

"I sit down with every single Sailor, no matter the rank, and tell them, 'Hey, you were a person before you came into



the military,” Hoard said. “‘You’re a person now. I’ll treat you as such.’ Given the fact that I’m from Mississippi, I call everybody ‘sir’ or ‘ma’am.’ Sometimes I slip up, whether you’re enlisted or not. ...the chiefs give me a lot harder time about that than anybody else...but it still doesn’t mean you shouldn’t be respected, right?”

Hoard’s sense of commitment extends to Sailors transitioning out of the Navy as well, regardless of the circumstances.

“I am here to grow leaders personally and professionally, and even if they get out of the Navy, I say, ‘Hey, here’s my card,’” he said. “‘Let me know if you need a reference. Let me know if you need me to call somebody.’ I still tell them, ‘Hey, I’m here for you. It didn’t work out, but it is not the end of life as you know it. Everything happens for a reason, and I’m here to support you.’”

Hoard acknowledged a natural tie-in between his mentorship approach and Navy programs like, “Get Real, Get Better” and the Navy Reserve “develop” line of effort outlined in the Chief of Navy Reserve 2022 Navy Reserve Fighting Instruction.

“‘Get Real, Get Better’ is all about that,” said Hoard. “Understand what you know, and when you don’t know something, reach out and never be afraid to say, ‘Look, I



Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Arthurgwain Marquez



## Cmdr. Hoard's mentorship checklist

- What are your goals?
- Have you written your goals down?
- What do you think your roadblocks are?
- Where are you at in your career?
- Does your family support you in what you're trying to do?
- Have you communicated that?
- What is your backup plan?

apologize but I’m not tracking that.” Feel me? It’s okay to do that. And after we get real, we will reset and move forward to get better.” ✂

For more information on the Navy’s Get Real, Get Better program, scar the QR code below.



To find out more about the 2022 Navy Reserve Fighting Instruction scan the QR code below.





# PAYING IT FORWARD

## CNAFR SAILORS OF THE YEAR SHARE ADVICE FOR JUNIOR SAILORS

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Chelsea Milburn, CNAFR Public Affairs

"Make listening a priority. Remember that it took many people to get you to this point. You are representing all the Sailors that you lead and the leaders that mentor and place you in positions to succeed.

Try and bring a positive attitude every day. A positive attitude can spread and even be the driving force to help all others around have a better outlook on the "how" to approach any tasking that is encountered. It's also an ingredient that is needed to positively effect the command culture and its climate.

Surround yourself with positive people that you have mutual desires to support each other's success. These are the people that are going to help push you through the tough, exhausted, or less than motivated times and who are genuinely invested in trying to make any situation better. The same people will be honest with you at times that you need them to, even if it is not what you want to hear, and help you see the opportunity for growth."

**Aviation Machinist's Mate 1st Class (AD1) Kenny Young  
Fighter Composite Squadron (VFC) 12  
CNAFR Shore Sailor of the Year:**

"I tell my fellow First Classes and junior Sailors to never stop trying to be better. Know your 'why.' Have pride in yourself and in your abilities. As Nipsey Hustle said, 'Luck is just bein' prepared at all times, so when the door opens you're ready.'

I give [my Sailors] a quote which I live by; "Instead of working for the gold at the end of the road, value the process and see that the road has been paved with gold all along."

The team is everything. Never be above the less favorable jobs because shared adversity is one of the best catalysts for building a strong bond amongst a team.

Be humble and respectful. No matter what rank, race, age, gender, or anything, respect people; they keep our Navy running. It takes nothing out of your day to be kind.

CNAFR Command Master Chief Tom Lintz said he was impressed with the level of leadership and professionalism of all the candidates across the three competitive categories.

"These Sailors, our SOYs, certainly know what it takes to be successful," said Lintz. "It's clear by their advice each cares about the future of their shipmates and our Navy. These leaders are doing exactly what is needed every day, winning! Each is leading within their commands, each has invested in developing the technical and institutional knowledge of Sailors, while focusing on warfighting readiness and sustainment."

# REDCOM Fort Worth Welcomes Returning Warriors at Returning Warrior Workshop New Orleans

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Lawrence Davis, Navy Region Southeast Reserve Component Command Fort Worth Public Affairs

On a warm Friday evening in New Orleans, casually-dressed Navy Reserve Sailors received heartfelt greetings from event facilitators as they arrived at a luxury hotel located on the corner of The Big Easy's famed Bourbon Street for Returning Warrior Workshop (RWW) New Orleans 2022.

A component of the Department of Defense Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP), RWW is designed to promote the well-being of active and Navy Reserve Sailors returning from deployments and individual augments, also known as mobilizations.

Twenty-four returning warriors, each accompanied by a guest, approached a blue-clothed table where Personnel Specialist 1st Class Craig Wingate sat neatly dressed in civilian attire typing behind a laptop. Wingate, a Training and Administration of the Reserve (TAR) Sailor assigned at Navy Reserve Region Readiness and Mobilization Command Fort Worth (REDCOM FW), welcomed them with a smile as he marked the members and their guests present.

Wingate confirmed he had copies of their orders on file, and after answering questions, guided them towards the hotel ballroom-area where a full dinner spread awaited.

"These folks made great sacrifices leaving their families and friends to go off and defend our nation," said Wingate. "I volunteer to work at these events to express my appreciation for my shipmates and each of their contributions."

For the next couple of days, the warriors and their guests partook in an all-expenses paid retreat as professional counselors, military family support experts, and various resource providers engaged them with therapeutic activities and presentations.

"This is really an opportunity for our members to focus on certain important issues that are often put on the back burner," said Roxy Carrillo, REDCOM FW's YRRP specialist who coordinated the RWW event. "Topics such as mental health, spiritual toughness, and resiliency are at the core of this weekend. Equipping our Sailors and families with tools, resources and strategies to face the various challenges of reintegration increases the mission readiness and overall strength of our Navy Reserve Force."

Each of the warriors, their guests, and facilitators sat at round tables in the hotel ballroom where they engaged in conversations, got to know each other, and shared their individual experiences.

"What makes this weekend so amazing for every one of these Sailors, their family members and loved ones is that we've invited all of them to come and tell their story, and we see those stories as sacred," said Dr. David Anderson, a licensed counselor and professional speaker who served as the event's master of ceremonies. "Whether it's good stuff or not-so-good stuff, generally that's what stories are made of, right? So, for them to have the opportunity to come and sit around those tables and share their stories with fellow Sailors, their battle buddies, those people who are right there in the trenches with them, that's what makes this event so special."

For Reserve Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Sheila Badgerow, who mobilized for 11 months to New York City in support of the

Navy's COVID-19 relief effort, the RWW had added significance as she reunited with her sister, Cynthia Porter, her father, and other family members for the first time in more than 20 years.

"We'd kept in contact with each other, but it was just the timing of life, our work, and other obligations that made it to where we could never get on the same page," said Badgerow. "This was a very emotional reunion. My dad lives in the Philippines so, I hope this won't be the last time I'll see them. I'm just cherishing the moment and taking things a day at a time."

Several guest speakers gave presentations to the members in attendance. The speakers included former Navy Hospital Corpsman Dr. Catherine Warren, who revealed her struggles as a young, single mother in the military; Mrs. Katherine Alexandrou, who emphasized the importance of recognizing that "as the Sailor serves, so does the family"; retired Navy Capt. Mr. Christopher Staeheli, who discussed operational stress control; as well as Mr. Mario Campa, who spoke about strengthening families, and multiple others.

"There's been a lot of really great information shared," said Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Shawn Carrier, who was mobilized for a year to the naval shipyards in Portsmouth, Virginia, during the pandemic. "Every deployment is going to affect service members and their families in some way, so, this program gave us the opportunity to interact with others who've had similar experiences. By sharing stories of what each of us has experienced and learning how to overcome obstacles, we gain a sense that it's going to be okay. The Navy has resources available to help us, and we're all here for each other."

Reserve Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Alyscia Watson-Key, who mobilized for 11 months to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, shared her excitement in having the opportunity to access all of the resources available as well as to spend time with her husband over the weekend in New Orleans.

"I'm definitely excited about going out in town and experiencing the culture of New Orleans," said Watson-Key. "The event has been very interactive. Everybody has been very friendly and willing to help, and it's really great to have that support system. When we leave here, we're going to have phone numbers and email addresses and the ability to reach out to people who can assist along the way. We're all going through something, and although it may be different, it's the same in a lot of ways."

The three-day workshop concluded as the returning warriors and their guests in attendance were treated to breakfast and inspirational words from Reserve Navy Chaplain Lt. Cmdr. Elias Paulk, assigned as the supervisory chaplain for Commander, Naval Surface Forces Atlantic.

Paulk spoke about spiritual toughness and likened it to the process of forging a steel sword, explaining that it is the heat and hammer that shape and strengthen it.

"Toughness is the ability to take a hit and keep going, tapping all of the sources of strength and resilience," said Paulk. "Spiritual toughness is the ability to adhere to beliefs, principles, and values needed to persevere and prevail."



When Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve (CNAFR) announced its three Sailors of the Year (SOYs) for the shore, sea and Selected Reserve categories at the CNAFR SOY dinner at the Bluewater Boathouse Seafood Grill in San Diego Feb 3., all three SOYs took a moment to express their gratitude toward those who had given them advice and support throughout their respective careers. After reflecting on their journeys to becoming SOYs, they chose to pay the support they received forward by offering advice to junior Sailors hoping to one day be in their shoes. Read each of their comments below:

**Aviation Electrician's Mate 1st Class (AE1) Jessica Placek  
Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 56  
CNAFR Selected Reserve Sailor of the Year:**

"Always be your true self. Qualifications, accomplishments, etc, all speak to someone on paper, but interactions are really what define what someone takes away. We all have different ideas and outlooks. That is what makes our diverse Navy so great.

Embrace the opportunities provided to you in life, whether it be personal or professional, to grow both personally and professionally.

Use your growth to fuel others, and encourage them to do the same.

Be kind to each other and yourself. Know your strengths and acknowledge your limitations, be humble."

**Aviation Machinist's Mate 1st Class (AD1) Benjamin Teitsort  
Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 58  
CNAFR Sea Sailor of the Year:**



# Training Future Leaders For Navy Reserve Medicine

By Cmdr. Michael D. Bay, Navy Reserve Navy Medical Forces Support Command

Navy Reserve Naval Medical Forces Support Command created the Professional Development Program in September 2018. The goal of the program is to develop courses to improve professionalism and educate officer and enlisted Sailors on various leadership topics.

These training sessions, in conjunction with operational medical training, work towards fulfilling the mission of NR NMFSC which is to produce and upgrade Navy Medicine's personnel through leadership, and through operational, professional, and occupational education and training solutions.

Two Sailors who have been invaluable to this effort are Capt. Marie Gannon and Capt. Janet Wessels.

Gannon has served as the director of the program since its inception in 2018 and developed the program from the

ground up. Using existing leadership development initiatives Gannon and her team were able to work with subject matter experts to develop relevant, up-to-date courses for Navy Medicine leaders.

"The goal is to offer resources and strategies for successful transition into their leadership roles while being mindful of character and providing opportunities for connections within the enterprise," said Gannon, whose passion for leadership development attracted leaders from across the spectrum of military medicine who have enthusiastically contributed their time and expertise.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to be able to collaborate with Navy's finest leaders to develop programs to help Sailors excel and meet critical leadership and positional responsibilities," said Gannon.

One of the Sailors Gannon collaborated with is Wessels, who joined the Professional Development Program in March 2021 and worked closely with Gannon to develop several highly successful training programs prior to assuming the role of program director in August 2021.

Gannon, Wessels, and their team developed a number of courses and events in support of their leadership development goal, such as the Transition to Senior Leader (TTSL) symposium. TTSL is a 2-day symposium designed to provide training in leadership skills such as coaching, holding crucial conversations, emotional intelligence, resiliency and team building.

The success of these symposiums prompted Gannon and Wessels to seek out and capture knowledge from senior officer and enlisted leaders in the form of a "Leadership Pearls" video library. To date, six video recordings of retired flag officers and senior enlisted leaders have been generated, with each speaker offering pearls of wisdom from their experiences to foster leadership growth.

The professional development team is currently developing a 2-day NRM Orientation course which will become required training for all new direct commissioned officers and new enlisted accessions. This virtual course

will orient new members to NRM and cover topics such as various NRM platforms and their missions, Global Health Engagement, Reserve Programs: description, mission, billet requirements, and more.







# BRADFORD'S STORY

## A SAILOR'S EXPERIENCE WITH SACRIFICE, STRUGGLE, AND SEEKING HELP TO OVERCOME

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Lawrence Davis, Navy Reserve Region Readiness and Mobilization Command Fort Worth Public Affairs

This is her story.

“My struggle with mental health began around 2013, during the last years of Perform to Serve (PTS),” said Bradford. “I never imagined I’d be told I could no longer be an Operations Specialist (OS).”

Bradford explained that because some Navy ratings had year groups that were overmanned and some undermanned, the PTS program presented affected Sailors who wanted to continue their service the opportunity to convert to another rate. The OS rating for Bradford’s year group was one of several affected by this process.

“I loved my job, and I was good at it,” she said. “Back then, I questioned why a high performer, like me, had to switch rates? I was given the choice of taking a job in either engineering or supply. As much as I believed

I could do great as a logistics specialist, I couldn’t shake the feeling that my dream had been shattered.”

“I was also going through a divorce,” she shared. “I had dreamt as a child, how it would be when I grew up and had my own family. So, I felt like I had failed when I couldn’t save my marriage.”

Bradford shares a daughter with her former spouse. During their divorce, she was faced with making tough decisions regarding custody of their child and her career.

“It was a major blow for me to allow my ex-husband to be her primary caretaker as I continued my career,” said Bradford. “It’s a choice that affects me to this day. I absolutely love my mini me. But, I felt it was important, as a mother and as a woman, to set a positive example for her by continuing to serve.”

Bradford recognized how overwhelming stress as a result of her circumstances was taking its toll on her mental state, manifesting in the form of depression and anxiety. She noticed it was affecting multiple aspects of her personal and professional life.

“I felt defeated,” she said. “Everything I had worked for to establish myself had been lost. I consider myself to be really good at solving problems, but I could not find an answer to my own. I had hit a wall.”

She knew something had to be done.

“I took the first step to get myself help,” Bradford explained. “I started by using an online talk therapy service because I was worried if anyone found out I’d be treated differently at work. It was helpful, but I felt I needed someone who could more closely relate to my struggles as a young woman in the Navy.”

She decided to go to base medical. After an evaluation, Bradford received a referral to be seen by a behavioral health therapist who regularly provides treatment for military service members.

“They were very understanding and personable,” said Bradford. “I’ve learned that experiencing emotions is completely normal. It’s a natural part of life, and reaching out for help is actually a sign of courage and inner strength. It is not a sign of weakness.”

Bradford encourages service members who may be experiencing stressful situations to seek help, and for all Sailors to look after one another.

“Don’t be ashamed to let your shipmates know when you’re having a hard time,” said Bradford. “Your performance decreases when you’re unable to focus on the mission. In some cases, that can result in someone’s injury or even death. Also, if you notice your shipmate seems overly stressed, say something so your leadership is able to get that Sailor the help they need and deserve.”

She praised her leadership for the care and support they’ve shown her along the way.

“I’m thankful to be surrounded by leaders who have supported me as I continue to work at improving and maintaining my mental health,” said Bradford. “I can’t stress enough how important it is for everyone to promote the mental health resources the Navy provides. Make sure pamphlets and flyers are placed in general locations so Sailors have easy access to them. Share stories of your experiences to help normalize going through human struggles and discuss

what your healthy coping strategies are.”

If you are experiencing symptoms related to mental health, seek help by contacting your medical provider, command Psychological Health Outreach Program coordinator, or speak to a confidential counselor at Military OneSource (1-800-342-9647). ✂

### AVAILABLE RESOURCES:

**MILITARY  
ONE SOURCE**

**Military One Source**  
1-800-342-9647

[VETERANSCRISISLINE.NET](https://veteranscrisisline.net)

**Veterans  
Crisis Line**  
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

**Veteran's Crisis Line**  
1-800-273-8255

[VETERANSCRISISLINE.NET](https://veteranscrisisline.net)

**Safe  
Helpline**  
Sexual Assault Support for the DoD Community

**DoD Safe Helpline**  
1-877-995-5247

[SAFEHELPLINE.ORG](https://safehelpline.org)

**RAINN**

**Rape, Abuse, & Incest  
National Network**

1-800-656-4673

[RAINN.ORG](https://rainn.org)

**NATIONAL  
DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE  
HOTLINE**

**National Domestic Violence  
Hotline**

1-800-799-7233

**PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH  
OUTREACH PROGRAM**

**Psychological Outreach Program**

866-578-7467

[FACEBOOK.COM/BUMEDPHOP](https://facebook.com/bumedphop)

**NATIONAL  
SUICIDE  
PREVENTION  
LIFELINE**  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

**National Suicide Prevention  
Hotline**

1-800-273-8255

**CHAPLAIN CORPS**

**Chaplain Hotline for Reserve  
Sailors**

757-322-5650



# REDCOM Fort Worth Victim Advocates Raise Awareness with SAPR 5K

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Lawrence Davis, Navy Region Southeast Reserve Component Command Fort Worth Public Affairs



Navy Reserve Region Readiness and Mobilization Command Fort Worth Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocate (SAPR VA) team hosted a SAPR 5K command event at the Airfield Falls Trailhead & Conservation Park, April 29.

The event, designed to raise awareness about sexual violence and educate Sailors on how to prevent it, was one of several initiatives set forth by REDCOM FW SAPR VA team this month.

“April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and our theme this year is to ‘Empower, Respect and Protect,’” said REDCOM FW Lead SAPR VA Chief Personnel Specialist Erick Okewa. “The turnout here today was great! The command came out and participated in a fun way, and we were able to really emphasize to all of our Sailors that they are never alone. The Navy has various resources available to anyone dealing with sexual assault.”

Before Sailors began their 5K run, jog or walk, REDCOM FW SAPR VA team engaged with all in attendance by sharing information about direct and indirect bystander intervention and restricted and unrestricted reporting, and the team identified multiple SAPR and medical services points of contact both for the command and around the base.

“My advice to anyone who experienced or witnessed sexual assault is to speak up about it,” said Yeoman 1st Class Artriliscia Ingram, a command SAPR VA. “If you see something that looks like it has the potential to escalate into sexual assault, you can intervene through direct action by just going up and taking one of the people involved out of the

situation. You can apply indirect action either by deflecting attention, distracting, or calling for help.”

Participants received information pamphlets and donned SAPR-themed trinkets which included symbolic teal ribbon pins and bead necklaces.

“With the beads and pins and all of the items that were handed out, we’re kind of like a walking advertisement, whether we’re on or off base, to always be vigilant, to always be mindful,” said Yeoman 1st Class Juanita Armstrong. “So, this is something that if people come up to us and say ‘Hey, what is this for?’ that gives us an opening and an opportunity to spread the word.”

As the event concluded, participants shared their thoughts on the effectiveness in the method of delivering the message.

“This was an excellent way to bring us all together, get people involved, and spread knowledge of what to do if we encounter a sexual assault situation,” said Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class Robert Alvizo. “I haven’t ever experienced a situation like that, but I feel if something does come up, I’ll know what to do because of events like these.”

“I really enjoyed participating in the event, but more importantly, this gave us all an opportunity to reflect on the seriousness of sexual assault and reminded us of our obligation to prevent and respond when necessary,” said Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Jennifer Casimir.



## TAR Instructor Pilots, Students Assist Civilian Aircraft in Distress

By Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve Public Affairs

Late last year, two Training and Administration of the Reserve (TAR) Navy Instructor Pilots (IPs) and two active-duty Student Naval Aviators (SNA) with the “Rangers” of Training Squadron (VT) 28 in Corpus Christi, Texas, responded to a civilian aircraft in distress and assisted the civilian pilot with navigation to help him safely descend and land at Mustang Beach Airport (KRAS).

At approximately 1:40 p.m. Dec. 13, 2021, Corpus Christi International Airport air traffic control (Corpus Approach) received a distress call from a privately-owned Piper Cherokee declaring an emergency, that they were above the clouds and unable to navigate through them to land safely. Air traffic control then contacted the nearby VT-28 pilots, who were conducting formation training in two T-6B Texan II training aircraft over Corpus Christi Bay, to see if they could get a visual on a clear area for the Piper Cherokee to get below the clouds.

TAR IPs Lt. Cmdr. David Indiveri of Succasunna, New Jersey, and Lt. Billy Morse of Tucson, Arizona and active duty SNAs Marine Corps 1st Lt. Casey Joehnk of Port Orchard, Washington; and Ens. Christophe Theodore of San Francisco quickly found a suitable area for an emergency Visual Flight Rules (VFR) descent and notified Corpus Approach. They were then asked to proceed to the distressed aircraft and guide the pilot to the opening in the clouds about six miles north of Naval Air Station Corpus Christi. Once they gained visual contact with the aircraft, they matched airspeed and guided the pilot to the cloud opening after which he was able to safely descend and land at KRAS.

“In the military, when someone asks for help, you’re always willing,” Indiveri said. “There wasn’t much thinking

about it. We made a safe judgment call, flew over the field, and watched him land safely.”

Theodore is a student pilot who is only two flights away from completing his primary flight training.

“This was a pretty unique experience to get to help someone during primary,” Theodore said. “We get into Naval aviation to help people, but it’s very exciting to do something that helps this early in our training. It’s very fulfilling.”

“While our primary role here is training future Naval Aviators, when emergencies arise, our pilots stand ready to answer the call,” Cmdr. Brian Higgins, commanding officer of VT-28. “This is the second time in less than a month that our crews have answered that call to assist pilots in distress and potentially saved the lives of our fellow civilian aviators who share these skies with us every day. I am extremely proud of the Ranger flight crews and am glad they were the ones who got the call, because true to our squadron motto, ‘Rangers Lead the Way.’”

At the time of the rescue, pilots from VT-28 had recently been involved in helping another civilian pilot in distress. On Nov. 15, similar VT-28 crews assisted a Coast Guard helicopter and a civilian vessel with a search and rescue mission helping locate and rescue a civilian pilot after a crash landing in Copano Bay in Rockport, Texas.

VT-28 is one of two primary training squadrons attached to Training Air Wing Four in Corpus Christi, Texas, under the Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA). Currently, 90 TAR personnel and more than 280 Selected Reservist Sailors provide 23% of production and 22% of flight hours supporting the CNATRA mission.



# Expeditionary Fueling on the Move

By Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist RJ Stratchko, Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group Public Affairs

A brisk evening during golden hour. Reserve Sailors and Marines put in the practice of setting up, tearing down, and moving locations, all in an effort to get sets and reps in for when it's go time to move fuel.

The blue-green teams of the Navy and Marine Corps expeditionary forces from Navy Cargo Handling Battalion EIGHT (NCHB-8) expeditionary fuels team and Marine Corps 6th Engineer Support Battalion Bulk Fuels Team, joined up at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, to integrate and train in coordination to focus on a concept of employment



experimentation with the Expeditionary Fuel Dispensing System–Small (EFDS-S).

“We’re here to have our Sailors get their hands on the equipment, and we have some experience with this setup,” said Lt. Frank Peterson, NCHB-8 Expeditionary Fuels Company. “We have subject matter experts here that can help with training to rapidly deploy this and to be able to move it around quickly. It’s a good opportunity for us to work together, where we can see things that the Marines are doing that we can incorporate into our processes — and vice versa. We’re focusing on future missions that may require us to work closely together, and this is an opportunity to work out any kinks with that integrated structure.”

Exercises like this demonstrate the interoperability of the Reserve force and the ability to integrate with other services,

reinforcing a culture of learning and increasing warfighting readiness.

“For us, it shows us how the marines set up their bulk fuels systems,” said Operations Specialist 1st Class Harry Carney, NCHB-8 Expeditionary Fuels Company. “Essentially, we do the same exact thing they do. It gives us a different perspective of how another branch does what we do. It defiantly helps us get lessons learned. After a while, it shows that we can work with other branches and do the exact same thing and get the job done.”

The expeditionary forces of the Navy and Marine Corps train no matter what the weather conditions are. Training in bulk fuels while sleeping in tents is another weekend for these Sailors and Marines.

“Coming from a ship it’s definitely a lot different,” said Carney. “Working in an environment of rain and snow is an experience you need. Working in bulk fuels is different anyway, so it’s a good way to open your eyes with these experiences, especially as an operations specialist.”

The U.S. Navy’s ability to conduct integrated operations around the globe across the full spectrum of military operations is a core requirement for maintaining maritime superiority during this era of strategic competition.

Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG) provides dynamic logistics support to the joint force across the spectrum of conflict from peacetime support to major combat operations. NAVELSG rearms, refuels, and resupplies the fleet when and where needed to reinforce maritime lethality and support the Navy Expeditionary Combat Force efforts to clear, secure, build, and protect in the littorals.



# Reserve Sailors Take the Lead During Largest Maritime Exercise in Africa

By Lt. Mathuel Browne

Navy Reserve Sailors from across the nation arrived in West Africa in early March to take the helm of exercise Obangame Express 2022 (OE22), the largest multinational maritime exercise in Africa.

Among the group, Navy Reserve unit members supporting Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa N5 West Africa (CNE-CNA N5 Africa West), led the organizing for OE22 alongside African partner nations.

The annual exercise, held from March 6 to 18, is one of three African regional Express-series exercises sponsored by U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and facilitated by U.S. Naval Forces Africa-U.S. Sixth Fleet (NAVAF/SIXTHFLT). This year was the eleventh iteration of the exercise, which focuses on the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean. Thirty-two nations were present, as well as representatives from Interpol, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and other international and interagency partners.

The exercise also included Navy Reserve Sailors from U.S. Naval Forces Africa, U.S. Naval Air Systems Command, and U.S. Sixth Fleet who worked throughout five exercise zones alongside active duty and civilian counterparts.

“This year we have about 50 Reserve Sailors —with 29 from my unit—supporting OE22 in a wide variety of roles,” said Capt. Thaison Do, commanding officer, NR CNE-CNA N5 Africa West, and exercise director, OE22. “Our unit has had a representative at each of the exercise planning events since early last year to understand what the command and our African partner’s goals were for the exercise.”

OE22 is designed to improve regional cooperation, maritime domain awareness, information-sharing practices, and the collective capabilities of participating nations to counter sea-based illicit activity within the region.

Throughout the exercise, Do’s unit deployed country teams to 16 West African countries during the exercise’s two-week execution period with his team serving as the Main Exercise Control Group from Dakar, Senegal, the host country for OE22.

“Building the relationships with our African partners is very important in the long run,” said Cmdr. Tom Hess, Senegal team lead, logistics liason and unit member of NR CNE-CNA

N5 Africa West. “If we ever needed help supporting a mission in the region sometime in the future, we know we have strong relations with contacts who view us warmly.”

Exercises such as OE22 provide a unique readiness opportunity for Navy Reserve Sailors to work alongside active duty and foreign military personnel to execute training evolutions and rehearse for potential real-world scenarios.

“Working with our African partners allows our team to become local experts, allowing us to better support needs in the region,” said Do. “Being involved in such a large exercise ensures that we are developing the capabilities to lead, act, organize, and respond to situations they may face in the fleet.”

For Navy Reserve Sailors, this year’s exercise was an opportunity to gain a wealth of experience.

“I have participated in every iteration of Obangame Express in some capacity since 2018,” said Cmdr. Richard Martucci, commanding officer, Office of Naval Intelligence - Nimitz Washington. “I believe my past experiences have set me up for success as the NAVAf assessor for OE22. I’m responsible for providing a strategic, operational, and tactical assessment of OE22. My experience allows me to provide U.S., allied, and partner-nation senior leaders with recommendations on a way forward.”

The two-week exercise showcased the skills and expertise Navy Reserve Sailors bring to the force on day one.







PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
Lancaster, PA  
Permit #299

**FOR THE LATEST  
NEWS, LINKS,  
AND RESOURCES,  
VISIT THE  
OFFICIAL NAVY  
RESERVE  
WEBSITE!**



**SCAN THIS QR CODE  
OR VISIT  
[navyreserve.navy.mil](https://navyreserve.navy.mil)**