



TNR

EVERY SAILOR IS A RECRUITER

VOLUME 2023 - ISSUE 1

MEET THE SSOs

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

BENIN & BACK AGAIN



Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) New Student Indoctrination (NSI) midshipman candidates salute the colors during the Cycle 1 graduation ceremony conducted inside the Midway Ceremonial Drill Hall at Recruit Training Command (RTC), June 27. Upon completion of NSI, the candidates will start their freshman year of the NROTC program at colleges and universities nationwide this fall. NSI is an indoctrination program hosted at RTC, and provides midshipmen with a common military training orientation. NSI provides basic training in five warfighting fundamentals – firefighting, damage control, seamanship, watchstanding and small arms handling and marksmanship – to begin creating basically trained and smartly disciplined future Navy and Marine Corps officers. NROTC is overseen by Commander, Naval Service Training Command (NSTC), Rear Adm. Jennifer S. Couture, which supports naval accessions training for 98 percent of the Navy’s new officers and enlisted Sailors. Photo by MC2 Nikita Custer

Cover photo by MC2 Christopher O’Grady

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Photo by MC2 Riley McDowell



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THE NAVY RESERVIST VOLUME 2023 | ISSUE 1



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



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New Navy Reserve Sailor Integration is an All Hands effort requiring consistent engagement between the new member, their Class 'A' School leadership, their Navy Reserve Center, unit chain of command, and, perhaps more critically, the individual Reserve Sailors they serve alongside.



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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_PAO@us.navy.mil. Instructions and submission criteria will be provided to help guide your entry.

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SHIPMATES.

In March, we celebrated the 108th birthday of the Navy Reserve and reflected proudly on an impressive legacy of service in the defense of our nation and the preservation of our interests, values, and way of life. While our weapons and tactics have changed over that century of service, one thing has not: the asymmetric advantage provided by our fantastic Citizen Sailors. You – and the generations of Reserve Sailors who have preceded you – maintain an ongoing and remarkable record of dedication, excellence and commitment. As it was in 1915, it is now...the warfighting-ready Sailors of the Navy Reserve stand ready to serve.

As we reflect on our accomplishments, we also recognize that we do not have the luxury of resting upon our laurels. We live in an increasingly complex and more competitive security environment, with adversaries intent on undermining our standing and the rules-based international order. This reality demands we provide a world-class, elite fighting force, and as such, our singular priority remains warfighting readiness.

As we transform how we organize, train, and mobilize our force to meet these evolving strategic challenges, we remain committed to our responsibility to recruit and retain precious talent. The time has long passed since the world viewed the Active and Reserve components as separate entities; each with their own manning, mission and priorities. We can no longer afford to think in terms of “leaving” active duty and “joining” the Reserves. Today, we focus on a continuum of service, spanning both active and reserve service. That is how we will bring the right Sailors to bear, and how we will fight and win a future conflict.

It is no secret that we face strong headwinds in recruiting given the strength of today’s labor market. However, despite employment opportunities in the broader market, the last few years have shown that many Americans seek work that provides purpose to their lives and aligns with their personal values. While the competition for talent is tough, our theory of the fight is this: the Navy Reserve is the employer of choice for those seeking challenge, purpose, and personal growth within a cohesive community of diverse and motivated individuals. And we are at General Quarters to spread that message to talented Americans yearning to serve.

To this end, we are aggressively improving how we recruit and retain our talent. In 2022, we established the Navy Recruiting Reserve Command, led by a senior TAR Officer and staff. This Command is charged with retaining Sailors transitioning from active duty for continued service in the Reserve Force, as well as recruiting new Sailors with the right skills directly into Reserve service. At the same time, we launched several initiatives to benefit Sailors and enhance the value of continued service, and created reserve-specific marketing and advertising materials to better tell the reserve story. We are also rewarding prior active

WE ARE AGGRESSIVELY IMPROVING HOW WE RECRUIT.



"WE CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO THINK IN TERMS OF 'LEAVING' ACTIVE DUTY AND 'JOINING' THE RESERVES. TODAY WE FOCUS ON A CONTINUUM OF SERVICE."


service Sailors with affiliation bonuses, while deferring candidacy for involuntary activations so new reserve Sailors have the flexibility they need during their transition from active duty to what comes next.

Understanding the important balance between the demands of our families, civilian lives and the Reserves, we also developed innovative policies to help you navigate challenges unique to reserve service. For instance, we want to simplify the ease with which you can serve

Make no mistake...each of you is critically important to our success as a peerless warfighting Force. I recognize attracting, retaining and developing a resilient, ready Force is not something that happens organically – we have to work at it. And we are. We are increasing our investment in you and your supportive families... because you deserve it. And so does our nation. Getting this right isn't a passing fancy – it's what differentiates us from every other Navy on the planet.

LETS GET BUSY.




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

RETENTION, RECRUITING AND ONBOARDING IMPROVEMENTS.




"IT IS CRITICAL THAT ALL SAILORS RECEIVE PROPER ONBOARDING, AN AREA IN WHICH WE, AS LEADERS ON THE DECKPLATES PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE."

We are now past the halfway point of the fiscal year. It's a good time to take stock of what we have accomplished and, more importantly, what is left to complete before FY24 ends. As Reserve Sailors, we have one – and only one priority: Warfighting Readiness - and the criteria by which we gauge how ready each of us is, as an individual, is to ask oneself, “Am I ready to mobilize?”

The focus of this issue is a topic of key importance to our nation's defense, and one that has gained national attention, especially in Congress: retention and recruitment. This year, each branch of the military, with the exception of the Marine Corps, fell far short of enlistment goals. And this is not the first time. Unfortunately, this is a trend we've been seeing recently, one that if not corrected will have lasting consequences on the Reserve Force, and will impact each one of us on the deckplates. For each missing billet, each one of us will stand more watches and perform more work. While there are many reasons for this trend, the biggest one is that a large group of people between the ages of 17 to 24 are ineligible to enlist due to medical and physical fitness issues, academic challenges, drug and substance abuse or criminal records. The second is that less




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

than a quarter of those eligible for military service choose to enlist. There are several reasons for this, among them a robust labor market with a national unemployment rate of 3.6%, the lowest in 54 years. Another is how the pandemic limited face to face meetings impacting recruiting members. But, there is a third reason which is harder to quantify – and that's the desire to serve in uniform. Those of us in uniform truly represent less than 1% of the population. But for those who are eligible and want to join, there have been several new initiatives deployed by Vice Adm. John Mustin to reach recruitment and retention goals.

First, let's look at recruitment, which is the accession of civilians into the Reserve Force. Vice Adm. John Mustin recently stood up Navy Recruiting Reserve Command to increase accession of civilians without prior military service, known as New Accession Training (NATs). Previously, recruitment efforts focused on Active Duty accessions. Historically, recruits come into boot camp right after graduating high school and, although this continues, the age limit for joining has been extended to age 39. Those coming in will still attend the same training in boot camp with their younger counterparts but also bring with them education, career, family and life experience, adding to the depth and diversity of our Reserve Force. As an incentive, there is a \$20,000 bonus authorized for NATs and Prior Service (PS) Sailors who affiliate with the SELRES before 30 Sept 2023.

The second aspect is retention. It is a good fit for a Sailor to transition to the Navy Reserve after completing their Active Duty tour, bringing with them all the skills and experience, as well as technical continuity and deckplate leadership. In fact, almost half of Reserve Sailors come from Active Duty. To raise awareness of the benefits from AD to RC transition, Adm. Mike Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations and Vice Adm. John Mustin have recorded a message played during Transition Assistance Program (TAP) events to let Sailors know they can pursue family, college and career goals while still serving and taking advantage of several benefits by continuing to serve. The second retention program is the high-year tenure (HYT) waiver that many Sailors are taking advantage of, extending their service for another year.

In both programs, it is critical that all Sailors receive proper onboarding, an area in which we, as leaders on the deckplates, play a crucial role so that our new Sailors are integrated, on station, and Ready on Day One. Each of us should be familiar with the brand new New Reserve Sailor onboarding page.

Shifting rudder, I'd like to congratulate those Sailors who were promoted to Senior and Master Chief. As we can see, the quotas are limited so having your evals and personnel record in shape is one of many factors in promotions. **Career management is the responsibility of each Sailor and I highly recommend you take action.**

KEEP PUSHING FORWARD SHIPMATES!

PFA RESET

NAVADMIN 042/23 announced a reset for Physical Fitness Assessment failures for all Active Component and Reserve Component Sailors for any failures prior to fiscal year 2023. Commanding Officers are empowered to restore their personnel's retention and advancement recommendations to allow those Sailors to reenlist, negotiate for orders, and even promote.

KEY POINTS

- The Navy is in a challenging recruiting environment and is taking every opportunity to allow Sailors to "Stay Navy." Resetting PFA failures could allow up to 1,500 Sailors to continue serving.
- This one-time reset to zero will not change any other records (like PRIMS, fitness reports or evaluations), but will empower commanding officers to restore a Sailor's retention and advancement recommendation using a special evaluation.

Q WHAT IF I ALREADY HAVE A SEPARATION OR APPROVED RETIREMENT SET FOR BEFORE 30 APR 23?

A Enlisted personnel who have a separation or approved retirement due to the current PFA policy that occur on or before 30 April 2023 may cancel their orders.

Q DOES THIS RESET MEAN I CAN TAKE THE NAVY-WIDE ADVANCEMENT EXAM?

A In order to be eligible to take the next NWAE, Sailors impacted by this reset must request and obtain a special evaluation from their Commanding Officer that restores their retention and advancement recommendations.

HYT PLUS

NAVADMIN 288/22 announced a two-year HYT Plus Pilot Program, meaning commands may not separate or involuntarily transfer active component Sailors to the Fleet Reserve due to high-year tenure guidance that was previously in effect.

KEY POINTS

- This policy change allows Sailors remaining on active duty beyond high-year tenure gates to apply for new jobs through the MyNavy Assignment portal or extend at their current command to complete a full tour even if they go beyond the high-year tenure threshold for their pay grade.
- These changes apply to Sailors serving in the Active Component (AC) and Training and Administration of Reserve (TAR) in all paygrades and ratings (with the exception of Command Master Chief, Command Senior Chief and nuclear trained E9), and Selected Reserve (SELRES, drill with pay). These changes also apply to Individual Ready Reserve Sailors in Voluntary Training Units if E6 or below.

Q WHAT IF SAILORS WANT TO SEPARATE ANYWAYS?

A Sailors who desire to separate may do so at their enlisted end of service date. Suspension of HYT provides an opportunity for Sailors to continue to serve but does not require them to do so. However, as HYT is suspended, it is no longer a reason for involuntary separation, therefore, Sailors who separate after 1 March 2023 will not be entitled to ISP.

Q DOES THIS EFFECT GAPS AT SEA?

A The Navy expects the policy will create fewer gaps-at-sea as compared to the expected number of gaps at sea without this new high-year tenure policy. Sailors who otherwise would have left the Navy due to high-year tenure will now be able to stay in the Navy. Some of those Sailors may remain on sea duty or return to sea duty to complete a full sea tour, filling sea duty billets that would have been gapped without this policy.

AROUND THE FORCE



CNR HOLDS ALL-HANDS AT SIXTH FLEET HQ

LOCATION: NAPLES, ITALY

Chief of Navy Reserve, Commander Navy Reserve Force Vice Adm. John B. Mustin delivers remarks during a Naval Reserve all-hands call at the U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa and U.S. Sixth Fleet (NAVEUR/NAF/SIXHFLT) headquarters, Feb. 9, 2023. NAVEUR-NAF operates U.S. naval forces in the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) areas of responsibility. U.S. Sixth Fleet is permanently assigned to NAVEUR-NAF, and employs maritime forces through the full spectrum of joint and naval operations.



PARSONS, WWII WAVE CELEBRATES 102 YEARS

LOCATION: PITTSBURGH

Julia Parsons, who served in the Navy during WWII as a member of the Navy WAVES, (Women Accepted for Emergency Service), celebrated her 102nd birthday at an open house party. Navy Reserve Sailors from Navy Reserve Center (NRC) Pittsburgh and Sailors from Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Pittsburgh spent time with Parsons and presented her with a command coin.



CNR SPEAKS AT CRADLE OF AVATION

LOCATION: LONG ISLAND, NY

Vice Adm. John Mustin, Chief of Navy Reserve and Commander, Navy Reserve Force, speaks at ADDAPT's Long Island Business Development Town Hall, held at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City, NJ., March 31, 2023. Rep. Nick LaLota (NY-01), Member House Armed Services Committee, Robert Sopp, Executive Vice President and General Manager of AAR Corporation, Donna Linke-Klein, Senior Product Line Director of BAE Systems, and Walker Potts, Executive Director of The Naval and Maritime Consortium also attended the event.



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CHANGE OF COMMAND CFLSW, FORT WORTH

LOCATION: FORT WORTH, TX

Capt. Ian Hawley was relieved by Capt. Dan Pugh as Commander, Fleet Logistics Support Wing (CFLSW) in a ceremony at the Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 59 "Lone Star Express" hangar at Naval Air Station (NAS) Joint Reserve Base (JRB) Fort Worth, Texas, Jan. 12. Fleet Logistics Support Wing (FLSW) Sailors, friends and family traveled from around the country to join in congratulating Hawley on his successful tour and 26-year naval career, as well as celebrating the beginning of Pugh's tour as CFLSW.



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AROUND THE FORCE

FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

NEW NAVY RESERVE SAILOR INTEGRATION IS AN ALL HANDS EFFORT

BY: CNRFC PUBLIC AFFAIRS

For new Navy Reserve Sailors, the earliest moments and first impressions are crucial.

Results of a recent Navy Reserve exit survey suggest that 46% of SELRES were somewhat dissatisfied with their Reserve experience. Some of that stems from challenges, delays and communication breakdowns during their initial onboarding into the Reserve component.

As a result, Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command N113 Accessions Onboarding Team recently created a comprehensive new onboarding resource to improve the experience of new affiliates and to bridge the gap to reach incoming SELRES with the tools they need to navigate those first critical days.

These resources are located CAC-free at:
<https://www.navyreserve.navy.mil/Onboarding/>

Just as every Sailor is a Recruiter, every SELRES Sailor is an ambassador for the Navy Reserve and can enhance the process for new Reserve Sailor integration, simply by being aware of — and by widely sharing — the onboarding resources available.



Class ‘A’ School to Navy Reserve Center

Unfortunately, it is in the gap between the ‘A’ school and the NRC where many SELRES Sailors get lost in transition between active and Reserve components.

When NAT recruits enter Navy boot camp at Recruit Training Command Great Lakes, they learn how to follow orders and behave in a reactive way.

Once having completed basic Navy Enlisted Rating training, graduating ‘A’ school and being released from active duty, newly-minted NAT Sailors soon learn that, in order to meet their Reserve requirement, their behavior has to be far more proactive.

NAT Sailors learn how to be great followers during A-School. Next, the NRC needs to take those followers and begin to build them up into our future Navy leaders. Proper onboarding is the foundation.

Navy Reserve Center to Navy Reserve Unit

Shortly after connecting and affiliating with their NRC, Sailors will begin to drill with their Navy Reserve Unit or gaining command. Consistent contact, communication, and stewardship of new SELRES at the command level leads to effective unit management and faster, more seamless mission engagement.

New SELRES will need to work with their NRC to find and contact their unit point of contact, and they will need to know how and where to find their official IDT Unit orders.

Locating Navy Reserve Unit Orders

Navy Reserve unit orders are located in a system called Navy Reserve Force Manpower Tools:
<https://rfmt.private.navyreserve.navy.mil/#/>

A step-by-step video here will give New SELRES a guide to finding Reserve Unit Orders in RMFT: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s04wyJWETps>

Now What?

Once NRC and unit communications have been established and the new SELRES knows the DWE schedule, location, uniform, times, travel and expectations, the real onboarding can begin.

Solid, proactive Navy Reserve unit leadership and mentorship at the deck plate level are critical. Those new to the Navy may be overwhelmed by the Reserve requirements, Navy customs, and terminology.

Unit leaders: Urge your new SELRES to take it one thing at a time, and encourage them to ask questions. Be responsive, be flexible, demonstrate proactive leadership skills and anticipate the needs of your people.

ONE OF THE BIGGEST, AND MOST AVOIDABLE, PITFALLS FACED BY NEW RESERVE SAILORS IS THE FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE.

Those with prior active duty service may struggle to adapt to the differences of the Reserve component. Serving in the Navy Reserve is different from serving on active duty and has its own unique terminology, requirements, online systems and demands.

***Unit leaders:** Help prior service Sailors find a mentor in the unit who can help guide them through the differences in the Reserve component.*

Communicate, Know and Meet Requirements, and Prioritize

A few key principles will ensure a new Sailor’s success in the Navy Reserve. These should also be consistently modeled, emphasized, and reinforced at the unit leadership level to ensure that no one is in the dark.

Communication

One of the biggest, and most avoidable, pitfalls faced by new Reserve Sailors is the failure to communicate.



It is the Reserve Sailor’s responsibility to inform leadership about information that will influence a Sailor’s Navy Reserve readiness or ability to participate in scheduled drills or other orders. This includes major life events such as relocations, changes in civilian career, or changes in health, to name a few.

It is the Reserve Sailor’s responsibility to update address information annually in NSIPS or as soon as it changes. Official correspondence will be sent to the Sailor’s contact information on file in NSIPS.

Know and Meet Requirements

Sailors must know the requirements in order to fulfill them. The Navy Reserve Onboarding Website provides information for use by all new members of the Navy Reserve Force. Its contents are designed to help Sailors navigate as they begin their Reserve career.



Reserve Sailors will face a multitude of competing life priorities, like family, personal life, civilian job or career, educational pursuits and a Navy Reserve career. Mentorship is one way we can help each other and develop our force together.

Unit-level DWE Onboarding Prioritization

Unit leaders: Does your unit have a “welcome aboard” packet? Use the resources located at <https://www.navyreserve.navy.mil/> to craft your own onboarding kit packet and save bookmark the onboarding webpage to assist new individual Reserve Sailors who may have questions centering on the beginning of their own Navy Reserve journey.

Priority Number One is Always Warfighting Readiness
We must always remember that the overarching goal of efficient and effective Reserve Sailor onboarding is to get each and every new SELRES Sailor trained to their warfighting billet as soon as possible.

As a Reserve Force, if we continue to demonstrate an omnipresent mindset of — and unambiguous focus on — warfighting readiness, we will generate the combat power and critical strategic depth the Navy requires to prevail in conflict in an era of strategic competition.

That's our job, and why we exist.

For the latest news and updates across the Reserve Force, visit the official Navy Reserve website: <https://www.navyreserve.navy.mil/> and follow the U.S. Navy Reserve on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.



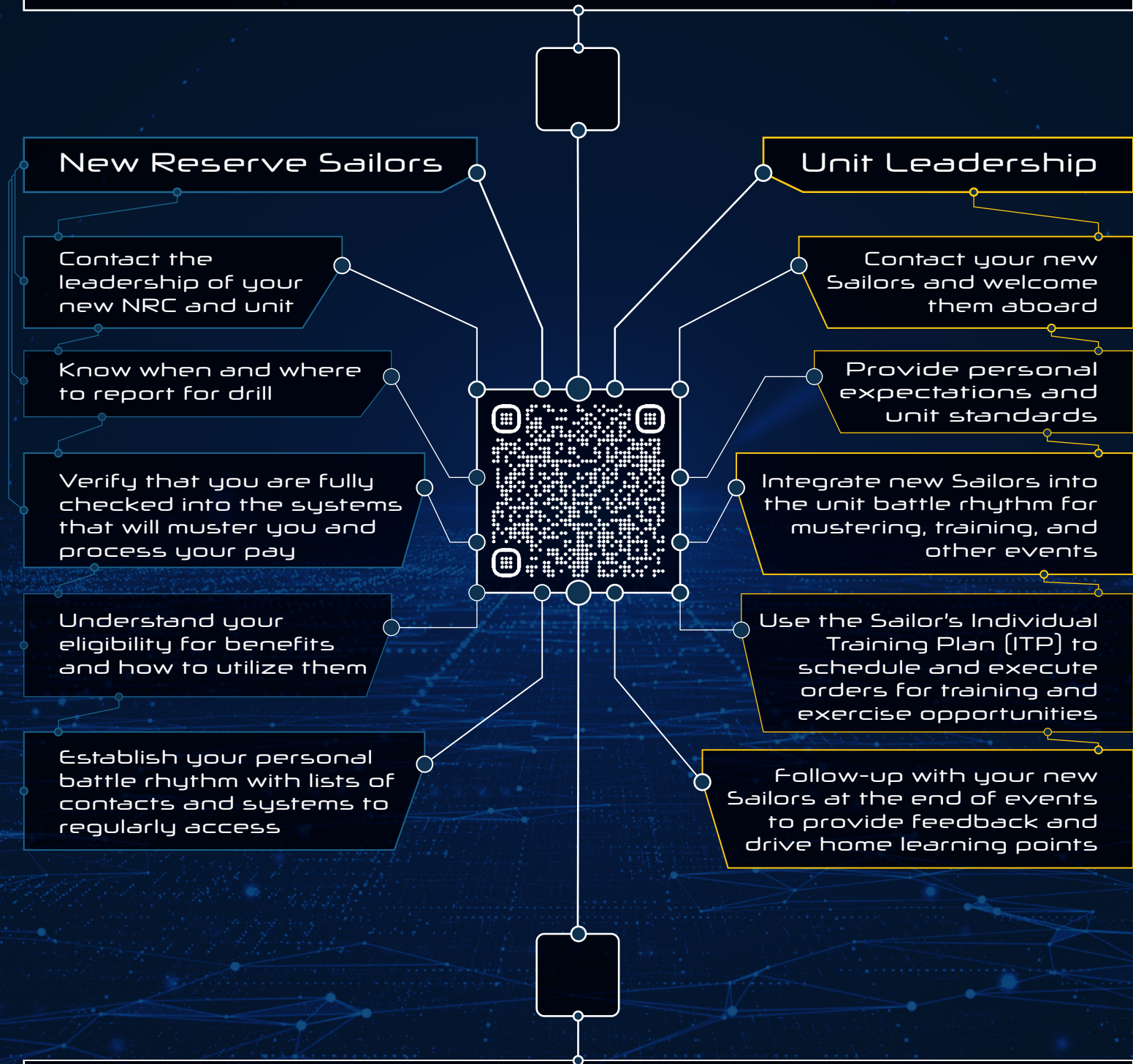
Top 6 “Need-to-Know” Items for NAT Sailors:

1. All NAT Sailors MUST report to their assigned NRC in the appropriate uniform the next working day after departing A-School regardless of whether their NRC has established contact with them or not.
2. NAT Sailors are NOT authorized any type leave while in transit to their NRC. NAT Sailors MUST report directly to the NRC no matter the situation.
3. Upon reporting to the NRC, NAT Sailors MUST have endorsed orders, medical/dental records, travel itinerary and A/C School certificates of completion.
4. NAT Sailors MUST notify NRC and N113 NAT Team if they are missing any required documents for check-in or any uniform items.
5. NAT gain to the NRC is not a rushed process, therefore it WILL take a few days.
6. If NAT Sailor does not have contact with NRC upon arrival, NAT will need to call NRC CDO to ensure contact is made and to verify contact was made with NRC.



ONBOARDING CHART TO SUCCESS

New Navy Reserve Sailors face many challenges as they initially onboard into the Reserve Force. Two-way engagement is critical to the success of both the individual Sailor and the unit at large.



Becoming warfighting ready is a process. Use your chain of command, plan ahead and when I doubt - ask the question!

RECRUIT-ERS OF THE YEAR (ROY)

NRRC's ROYs Tackle NAVET Medical & Enlisted Veteran Recruiting Mission

BY: JORDAN SMITH, NRRC PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Navy Recruiting Reserve Recruiters of the Year (ROY)—Reserve Enlisted ROY: Navy Counselor 1st Class Erin Murphy, Navy Reserve Prior Service Recruiter from NRRC Site NE Norfolk, and Reserve Officer ROY: Lt. Cmdr. Mary Sweeney, medical officer recruiter of prior service site DC—helped the recruiting enterprise make the FY22 NAVET Medical Goal and Veteran Recruiting Goals during unprecedented times.

Both Sweeney and Murphy credit teamwork to their respective achievements.

“The NRRC team collaboration got us over the finish line,” said Sweeney. “We have an amazing group of people working on the NAVET medical mission and we could not have achieved this without each and every one of them!”

Murphy echoed Sweeney’s sentiment.

“We have an amazing group of people working on the NAVET medical mission and we could not have achieved this without each and every one of them!”



“Our chain of command has stressed the importance of perseverance and innovation in the face of adversity,” said Murphy. “Due to this emphasis on collaboration and dedication to our mission, we were able to push through as a team and accomplish this feat together.”

Deciding to join the Navy Reserve can be a pivotal moment in a person’s Navy career, so Sweeney said she arms applicants with as much information as possible.

“I will never tell you I can’t talk to you – even if it’s better for you to affiliate with the IRR or VTU and I don’t get credit,” said Sweeney. “Everyone deserves to get all the information so they can make the best decision for themselves and their loved ones.”

Murphy has a similar philosophy, and was instrumental in meeting her team’s overall goals while maintaining and exceeding her Prior Service mission goal.

“Everyone deserves to get all the information so they can make the best decision for themselves and their loved ones.”



“I have always made the alignment of my Sailor’s professional and personal goals to the Navy Reserve my #1 priority,” said Murphy. “I was able to help 30 Prior Service leaders affiliate with the Navy Reserve and overall affected 45% of my station’s attainments for FY22.”

“Retaining Officers and Enlisted professionals from Active Duty to the Navy Reserve enables a ready and resilient force,” said Murphy.

The Every Sailor is a Recruiter initiative is gaining momentum and there are active and reserve service members educating separating Sailors on how to apply for the Reserve through the Command Career Counselor and C-way program.

“I am passionate about showing our Sailors how they can explore their civilian ventures while still serving and continuing their naval careers,” said Murphy. “I overcame these challenges through networking and sharing my first-hand experience with transitioning from active duty as well as the

“I am passionate about showing our Sailors how they can explore their civilian ventures while still serving and continuing their naval careers.”



experiences of the Sailors I have had the privilege of helping do the same.”

The spirit of service was instrumental in Navy Recruiting making the NAVET Medical Goal in FY22.

“My philosophy has been and continues to be that I am here to help you,” said Sweeney. “Whether we have a spot for you or not, I will always take the time to explain your options and to make sure you understand the process going forward.”

Sweeney said helping others realize their full potential is an award in itself.

“My proudest accomplishment of the year was assisting 26 medical officers in taking the next step in their Navy careers and mentoring so many more officers in making the best decisions for themselves and their families,” said Sweeney.

ANDREA MACADANGDANG

RANK	YN2
LOCATION	VIRGINIA
COMMAND	CNRFC
CIVILIAN CAREER	NECC PROGRAM ADMIN



Sometimes, the path we set out on is just a starting point; some flexibility and well-planned redirects can land us in an even better position that we ever imagined.

In late 2019, Andrea Macadangdang had been in the Navy Reserve for five years and was about to go on her first mobilization as a Master-at-Arms 2nd Class. She felt a little unsure of herself.

This would be her first experience carrying out her duties as an MA on deployment. Unlike many Navy Reserve MAs, Macadangdang doesn't have any civilian law enforcement experience. Her civilian job was in administration working for Navy Underwater Warfare Center.

This mobilization coincided with a difficult chapter of Macadangdang's life. On top of the uncertainty of her first mobilization and the developing COVID-19 global pandemic, she was going through a divorce.

"This was going to be the first time where I would be an MA day in and day out for an extended period of time," said Macadangdang. "I was one of the few females where I was stationed, I didn't have a lot of quals, and in the back of my mind I had this big, personal life event I was dealing with. I guess I just felt like I had a chip on my shoulder." She used that feeling as motivation. She began working on her qualifications and quickly completed many of them, including dispatch and armory, working all the way up to becoming chief of the guard qualified.

"AS I GAINED MORE KNOWLEDGE, I BECAME MORE CONFIDENT."

"As I gained more knowledge, I also became more confident," said Macadangdang. "I was the first female out of my group to finish my chief of the guard qualification, and I earned my spot as one of the four section leaders."

This confidence and subject matter expertise would be crucial during an incident that occurred while she was on watch later during her deployment.

"We had a situation where someone was trying to sneak a phone onto our compound where phones were not allowed," said Macadangdang. "I was able to recognize that something was wrong, locate the hidden phone and detain the person until NCIS arrived. We have [military assets] on our compound that can't be photographed."

Macadangdang was recognized for her actions that day by the base officer in charge. But it was her proficiency at her civilian job where she earned the next set of Navy orders.

"Before I took the orders, I thought about why I had joined the Navy, and that was to make sure my kids received the benefits," said Macadangdang. "You need a certain number of months to get the G.I. bill, which I could pass to my daughter; so, I decided to take the orders."

What began as 45-day active duty for training (ADT) orders turned into year-long active duty for operational support (ADOS) orders. It was on these orders she decided to make the leap from selected reserve (SELRES) master at arms to training and administration of the reserve (TAR) yeoman. When she officially cross rated in September 2022, she had mixed emotions, but ultimately, she felt she had made the right choice.

"I was both happy and sad when my package was approved," said Macadangdang. "It was hard to take the [MA] badge off after nine years, but it's one of the best decisions I've made." Now that she is TAR she is able to work toward her future goal of becoming a human resources officer.

KAYLA GATHRIGHT

RANK	BM2
LOCATION	OREGON
COMMAND	MSRON 1
CIVILIAN CAREER	PRIVATE SECURITY



Call it serendipity or coincidence, maybe even karma. For Boatswain's Mate Second Class Kayla Gathright, in the face of prevailing winds, she prefers to call it determination, or, "having nothing to lose," that led her to the title of Miss Oregon for America Strong 2022, during the state pageant in Salem, Oregon, July 15-16, 2022.

As a Navy Reserve Sailor with 6 years of service, Gathright is currently assigned to Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron (MSRON) 1. Outside her drill schedule, she has already gotten comfortable pursuing goals outside of her comfort zone; volunteering in the community by supporting veterans organizations, working toward her college degree, all while holding down nearly full-time hours in the private sector security field. By competing in the world of pageants, she knew her entry would be a trailblazing endeavor in the face of traditional stereotypes

"Being in the military, you get comfortable with the uncomfortable," she said, comparing her Navy experiences to the bigger picture of life. "Adapt and overcome – it's something those of us in the military are familiar with; so, when I entered the pageant world, I knew that I would be facing long established perceptions of the 'flawless supermodel type.'"

In 2019, the Miss for America Strong pageant was created as part of the Mrs. American system for married women. This new pageant's goal was to provide opportunities for women who are single, divorced or widowed with no age cap, other than a minimum age of 18.

"ARE THEY GOING TO ACCEPT ME WITH ALL THESE TATTOOS?"

Gathright had been intrigued about entering, after two close friends, who are also shipmates, had participated in 2020. They enthusiastically encouraged her to try 2021. As someone who embraces fitness, she's often in the gym lifting weights before sunrise, and also has a passion for tattoos.

"I laughed at them at first...are they (the pageant judges) going to accept me with all these tattoos? There is a stereotype in pageantry, that the body – especially your skin, is a blank canvas...well, that's not me!"

Tattoo art among Sailors has a long history, dating back to the 16th century, with symbols emblematic of nautical folk lore. With downtime at port, many of the tattooed images that seafarers acquired served as records of travel and experiences, personal identity and self expression. While gaining a surge in acceptance over the past several decades, the stigma for women, especially someone entering a 'beauty pageant', still remained uncharted territory.

Though she didn't win in 2021, Gathright took the "lessons learned," and tried again this year after, serving as Miss Molalla for a year, where her role led her to meeting people at parades, neighborhood functions and civic events.

When Gathright was announced as the winner for the 2022 Oregon pageant, Granger noted that her exhilaration was obvious, but her sense of gratitude is what impressed him the most.

In mid-August, 2022, she traveled to Las Vegas, Nevada, competing in the national Miss for America Strong pageant, August 11-19. Although she finished outside the top contenders, she said the week was an amazing experience.

"Growing up... I've always been a 'Tomboy' – I hunt, I fish...I am a very avid outdoorsman," she said, describing why she fervently supports this program as her platform. "Being able to connect with other veterans and getting out in the natural elements makes a powerful impact on one's mental health, so this is another way to give back to my fellow veterans."

RICHARD SHANG

RANK	LT
LOCATION	DJIBOUTI
COMMAND	CLDI
CIVILIAN CAREER	PASTOR



The Chapel of Enduring Freedom on Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti (CLDJ), welcomed chaplain, U.S. Navy Reserve Lt. Richard Shang, a Reserve Sailor from San Jose, California.

On his first deployment as a member of the Navy Reserve, Lt. Shang wanted all residents of CLDJ, regardless of their religious beliefs, to know the chapel is open to them.

“My purpose here is to provide spiritual and emotional support, as well as the religious services,” said Shang. “It is across the spectrum. Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Seventh-day Adventist, Jehovah’s Witness, or any other denomination, if a Sailor or any other service member has needs, we will provide it ourselves, or we will help to find a connection and resources for this particular individual.”

Chaplain services are not only for religious purposes. Chaplains also provide free and confidential counseling. The Navy puts a large emphasis on mental health. It is important that service members are able to have an outlet to reduce their levels of stress and remain mission-ready emotionally as well as physically.

“Even though we are here where we have a big family,” said Shang. “We still have lots of things going on, whether it is a job back in the States, or our family members, we probably face some difficulties or challenges from time to time. We also do a lot of counseling. The counseling is one-hundred percent confidential. Everyone is welcome, and they don’t have to be afraid that anything that they said will go outside the walls.”

“MY PURPOSE HERE IS TO PROVIDE SPIRITUAL AND EMOTION SUPPORT.”

May is recognized as Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage month. Lt. Shang feels it is an important time to reflect on the contributions they have made on the history of the U.S.

Shang himself is an immigrant from Taiwan. His own experiences inspired his journey to join the U.S. Navy.

“Years back, Taiwan had a policy that all healthy males had to serve two years mandatory service in the military branches,” said Shang. “I was selected to be an army soldier, and I was stationed on a small island called Kinmen. The island is only several kilometers from the coast of China, and during our first free presidential election in 1996, the Chinese government launched a test missile on the northern and southern sides of the Taiwan Strait trying to intimidate us to stop us from holding this free election. They were not fond of the idea at all. During those couple of weeks, I was stationed on the island, and things got very, very tense. There were swarms of boats off the coast. Helicopters would conduct their air exercises overhead. I felt for the first time that war was so close. I would stay in a foxhole pretty much all day. It felt like at any moment, anything could happen. That intensity was a really challenging time for me.”

In response to what is now known as the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis, the U.S. government staged the largest display of military power projection in Asia since the Vietnam War.

“During the crisis, the U.S. sent two carrier strike groups,” said Shang. “That is a stance that the United States made. The clear message was sent to the Chinese government, and eventually they backed down. Because of that, because the 7th Fleet protected Taiwan, I think all those memories and my personal story made me decide to join the Navy. I truly believe that our military presence is a great force of stability across the world. We are literally doing the world peace-keeping project. I literally feel that is true, because that is what I experienced.”

DIRON CUNDIFF

RANK	CMDR
LOCATION	FLORIDA
COMMAND	NRC CHATTANOOGA
CIVILIAN CAREER	REGISTERED NURSE



Cmdr. Diron Cundiff, a Navy Reserve Sailor, is a staff nurse who drills at Navy Reserve Center (NRC) Chattanooga where he mentors junior officers who are new to the unit, as well as provides guidance to the officer in charge (OIC) and assistant OIC. His mission is to maximize warfighter performance through optimized medical readiness tailored to operational requirements, to enhance the readiness of the medical force, to sustain expeditionary medical capability, and to train and develop the Navy Reserve Medicine forces.

In the civilian world, he is a registered nurse at a local hospital in Chattanooga and works in the electrophysiology lab and catheterization lab. There are many times when his civilian and Navy Reserve careers work in harmony with each other.

“I have learned a lot in the different fields I have been through while working in the civilian world,” said Cundiff. “This allows me to bring back the knowledge that I gain and pass it on to Navy nurses, both reserve and active duty. Chattanooga is a very patriotic city, so the hospital is very supportive of my role as a Reserve Sailor.”

Cundiff has be exposed to many different Navy hospitals’ systems and has learned the procedures and protocols for how each hospital functions.

“It has allowed me to bring many ideas and solutions back to my civilian hospital,” said Cundiff. “The experiences I get to participate in have allowed me to grow professionally in many ways that my fellow coworkers never get a chance to experience.”

“THE HOSPITAL IS VERY SUPPORTIVE, OF MY ROLE AS A RESERVE SAILOR.”

Cundiff explained that the biggest way the two careers differ is in camaraderie. He feels like, in the Navy, there is genuine care between shipmates (coworkers).

“We as individuals do better when our shipmates do better,” said Cundiff. “Teamwork is paramount to success and morale. We uphold our duty to ‘do the right thing’ no matter the situation.”

He described that through his time in the civilian workforce, he has found it hard to discover this same kind of unity.

After completing nursing school, Cundiff joined the Navy on active duty. Following 6 years, his active duty contract was up and he decided to make the transition to the Navy Reserve.

“After my active duty time, I was not ready to completely leave everything Navy,” said Cundiff. “I had met many great shipmates during my [initial contract] and had a passion for the regimented structure of military life. It was so great to check into the reserve center and be back around people who knew Navy language. My transition to the civilian world was difficult. It did not provide the camaraderie that the Navy had. Civilian coworkers do not truly understand my Navy stories about training and duty. The Reserve quickly filled the void and it was one of the best decisions I ever made.”

He was called to active duty in 2015 after the terrorist attack on Navy Reserve Center Chattanooga, where he served as the executive officer from Nov. 2015 until June 2016.

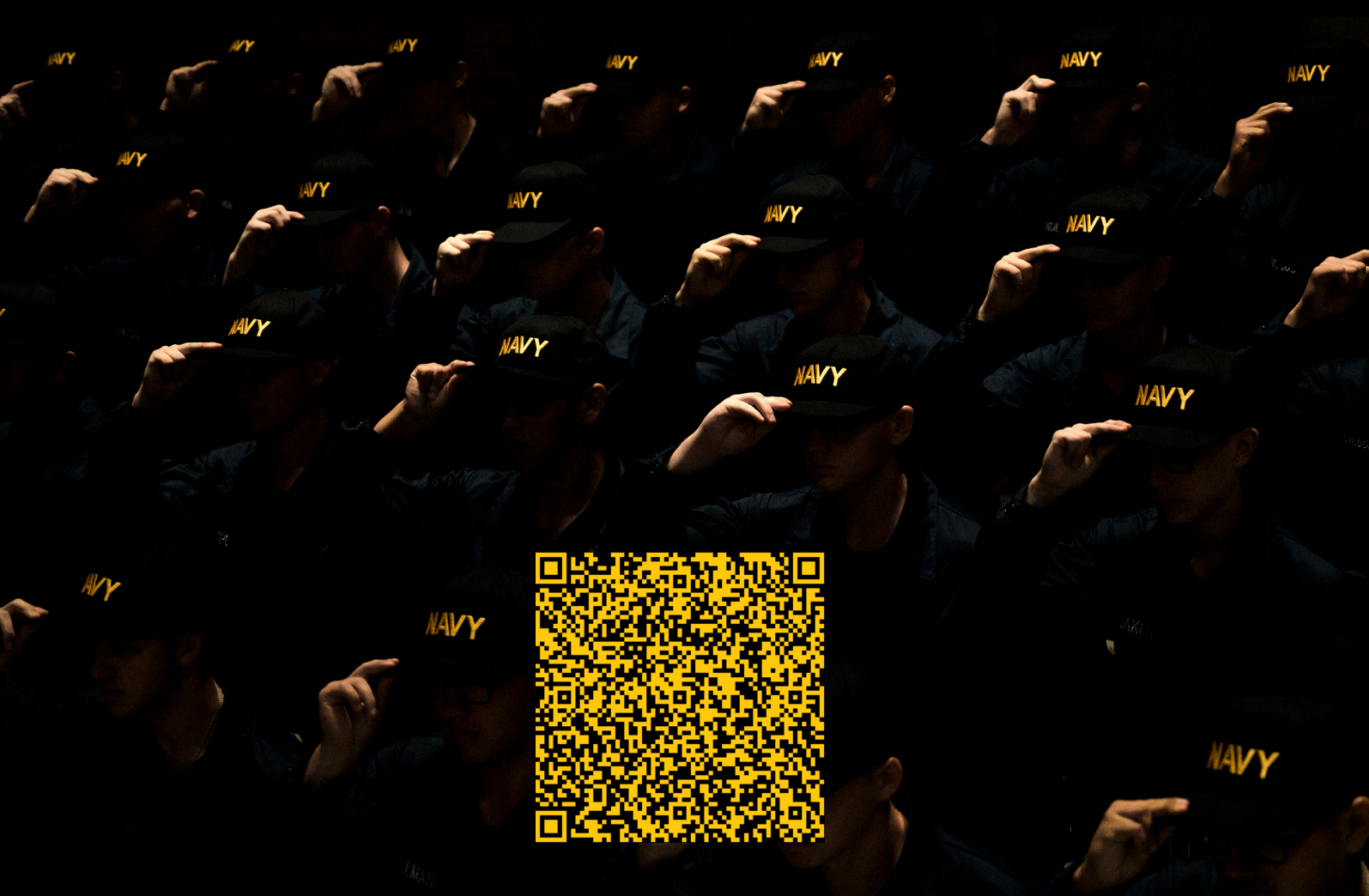
“Being chosen to come on board as XO at NRC Chattanooga was a real honor and filled a huge gap that myself and many other selected reserve Sailors [SELRES] were having at NRC Chattanooga,” said Cundiff. “Immediately after the attack, we wanted to do anything we could to help our shipmates who served at the NRC. It was a very frustrating time, so when I got the phone call from our commanding officer asking how I felt about coming aboard, I was grateful.”

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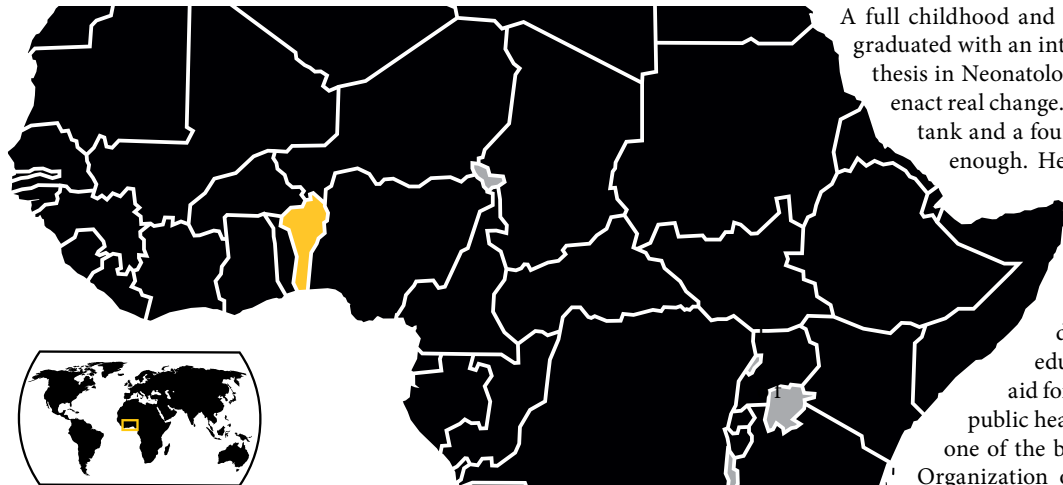
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FROM BENIN & BACK AGAIN

BY: MC1 CAMERON C. EDY

The pediatric intensive-care unit (ICU) housed a single oxygen tank, few beds, and a lot of children in need.

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Agossou Marcellin, at the time a General Medical Practitioner in Benin, had an impossible decision to make. Nine hours earlier, he'd admitted a seven-year-old girl with severe anemia – a complication of malaria contracted days before. Worse, the accompanying fever was boiling her, causing seizures. He treated the malaria, but without a blood transfusion, she would remain in critical condition. Her mother couldn't afford the four-dollar cost, the father was nowhere to be seen, and Marcellin had no way to pay for it himself. To delay the inevitable, he hooked her to the tank, infusing her wearied blood with needed oxygen and she stabilized. For nine hours he waited for a blood transfusion that never came. Instead, a man burst into the ward carrying his six-year-old son, the boy's lungs wracked with respiratory issues and in desperate need of air.

So, the impossible choice had to be made. Does Marcellin keep the girl on oxygen, giving her time for a transfusion that may never come? Or does he switch the tank to the boy, and hope the girl stabilizes on her own?

But he'd done this before. In the neonatal intensive care unit, they would share a single oxygen tank between multiple infants, rotating between babies and watching them go from blue to pink before switching to the next. Theoretically, the same could be done for the six and seven year olds.

He switched the tank to the boy, but before he could turn his head back, the girl spiraled. He frantically hooked her up again, and began chest compressions. Without oxygen, the boy stopped breathing. They both died.

"I was devastated," Marcellin said. "I felt like I failed. My goal has always been to save lives, yet my hands were tied – I was furious and I couldn't do it anymore. So I decided I had to actually deal with the situation, not just the symptoms."

Marcellin was raised in Cotonou, the capital of Benin, a child surrounded by family, friends, and a community so close he calls them brother and sister. He was happy. When talking about his childhood, his Benin accent thickens and you can hear the smile in his voice. Yet, he was quick to mention the difficulties that accompanied the joy. Time and time again, disease struck. His brother was struck with malaria, but had no medication combat it. The difficulty in providing care, from emergency transport to the price of medicine, haunted him. A dream – what he would call a mission - began to form.

A full childhood and seven years of medical school later, he graduated with an internship in pediatric care and a doctoral thesis in Neonatology care. He saved lives, yet struggled to enact real change. Then, two children died over an oxygen tank and a four-dollar blood transfusion. Enough was enough. He applied for a student visa, boarded a plane, and flew halfway across the world in search of a solution.

"I felt powerless, and I knew I needed resources," Marcellin said. "That's why decided to go to the U.S. – not only to educate myself more, but to build a network aid for my home... At first, I wanted to go into public health on an international scale, work with one of the big organizations like the World Health Organization or United Nations – just advocate for Benin. But once I got to the U.S. I realized the best way I could build a network was to start practicing medicine. That way, I can build a network of physicians, hospitals, and volunteers, and channel those resources and aid back home."

Being knowledgeable and battle-tested doesn't guarantee a spot in American medicine. First, Marcellin had to take the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE), which he passed. Then he applied for medical residency, which he was denied. In his words, "less than 1% of international applicants from [non-U.S. accredited] medical schools are accepted, and most acceptances go to the big medical-education countries, like Nigeria, India, and other Asian countries."

Worse, he could only apply once a year – for someone who measures days in lives lost, the patience required was crippling. He pressed on, and at 28 years old and desperate for change, he applied for, got accepted to, and is currently studying at the University of Kansas, working towards earning a doctorate degree in Pharmacy. On the surface, it feels like a step down. Two short years ago, he was a practicing doctor.

But his mission was never just to be a doctor. It was to save Benin and African lives.

Actually, being a civilian doctor wasn't the only career Marcellin contemplated. Back in Benin, he'd been interested in joining the army – he had friends in the military, it offered steady pay, and as a medical officer he'd be that much closer to the echelons of society that could enact change. But the Benin Army recruits sporadically, and by the time the recruitment window had come, he'd already decided to leave. But the military – more specifically, the idea of service in a tangible way, still played in his mind. So, while taking the USMLE tests and applying for medical residency, he joined the U.S. Navy Reserve.



"I FELT SO POWERLESS. AND I KNEW I NEEDED RESOURCES."

– HM1 MARCELLIN

The U.S. Navy Reserve offers a myriad of benefits, a choice of deployment and training locations, and for immigrants, it's a concrete path toward full citizenship. What makes Marcellin's enlistment fascinating is what he does after joining the Navy Reserve. He deploys overseas. In the middle of getting his doctorate and paying his way through school, he deploys to Africa – first to Djibouti, then to Madagascar, to Kenya in 2022, and finally to Benin. What's more, he's a hospital corpsman, a rate whose ethos demands they "do no harm." They're uniquely dedicated to improving the lives of Sailors and those the U.S. Navy supports overseas – like Benin.

So, in 2023, Marcellin volunteered to support exercise Obangame Express 2023. Officially, he's the medical support for the U.S., partner and ally service members operating in Benin. Unofficially, and arguably more importantly, he's a four-language regional translator, a cultural liaison, and a spokesperson for both Benin and the U.S. Navy.

This next part is multi-faceted – up until now, the focus had been on Marcellin's medicine. While medicine has been his vector, it's not his goal – that's saving lives. Hence why when asked about his support for the exercise in Benin, he doesn't mention medicine.

Instead, he talks about maritime security.

Obangame Expres 2023, at its core, is about reinforcing Western Africa and reducing illicit maritime activity; i.e. piracy, smuggling, and terrorism. These intrusions are not just dangerous nuisances to civilians at-sea – they cripple economies. Piracy reduces profit. Smuggling reduces tariffs. Terrorism reduces trade. No trade, no tariffs, no profit – no money for infrastructure, education or medicine. No money for a four-dollar blood transfusion, or extra oxygen tanks.

This money will inevitably either flow through, or stop in the Gulf of Guinea. The Gulf is vast – stretching from Senegal to Angola and covering approximately 6,000 km of coastline, it is one of the world's critical shipping zones. Everything from oil and gas to goods from central and southern Africa flow through this region, along with the approximately 1,500 fishing vessels, tankers, and cargo ships dotting its waters on a daily basis. The waters are one of Western Africa's most important economic assets, and accordingly, one of its most exploited by illicit actors. This sentiment is expressed at every turn by each of the major players in the exercise, and was reiterated by U.S. Navy Cmdr. Tim Meyer, an exercise-zone lead and Marcellin's officer in charge during the exercise.

"[This exercise] provides an excellent opportunity to strengthen regional cooperation and share tactics, techniques and procedures for addressing maritime security challenges," Meyer emphasized. "It's by building these enduring relationships and increasing interoperability that maritime security in the region will be maintained and improved."

On Marcellin, Meyer doubled down.

"His participation in this iteration of Obangame Express in Benin has been instrumental for establishing new relationships, as well as strengthening current ones," Meyer said. "His ability to communicate in the local languages assisted in facilitating in-depth information exchanges. His knowledge of the local area and customs has allowed the team ease of access to accomplish the mission and integrate with partner nation personnel at a deep level... communication and interoperability."



But Obangame Express 2023 is not just Africa. Many western countries are participating in the exercise. They each have technology, equipment, and military power to spare, but no context in which to deploy it. Sailors like Marcellin give them that critical context. Equally important, Sailors like Marcellin help unite four continents in a human, personal way.

"The first day in country, we went to the Benin Maritime Operations Center [the overall command-and-control of the regional maritime domain] and met the Benin Navy team," Marcellin said. "They're speaking English to the other guys, but then I turn and start speaking French [Benin's official language]. Instant surprise, an American speaking French! I say, 'What, you don't see my name?' And they say 'Yeah! We were wondering if you were from Benin!' From there, the room went from stiff to pure excitement. It helps. It helps move our agenda, to get things done."

And the bridge-building doesn't stop there.

"Then we go to downtown, to get some good Benin food, and the people see my name – Agossou," he said. "People are coming up, asking me where I'm from, and I laugh and say here! I'm from here! This is a Benin name. I can feel the change – they feel like there's affiliation. I think it helps strengthen that relationship. I'm happy being able to help in this way, to achieve that overall mission."

Marcellin is now a man of two homes – Benin and the U.S. He's served both. He's brought his sister and mother to the U.S., and has regularly visited the five relatives remaining in Benin – not to mention that community he loved dearly growing up. He's visited Africa too many times to count, on and off mission, but when asked, he said this assignment during Obangame Express 2023 was special.

"This is a real sense of fulfillment," he exhaled. "I think I have reached my goal, at least partly. Being able to come back, to be helpful, not only to the U.S. but to African nations too – I feel like I'm doing something good, something to be proud of, to be satisfied with. It's a feeling of achievement."

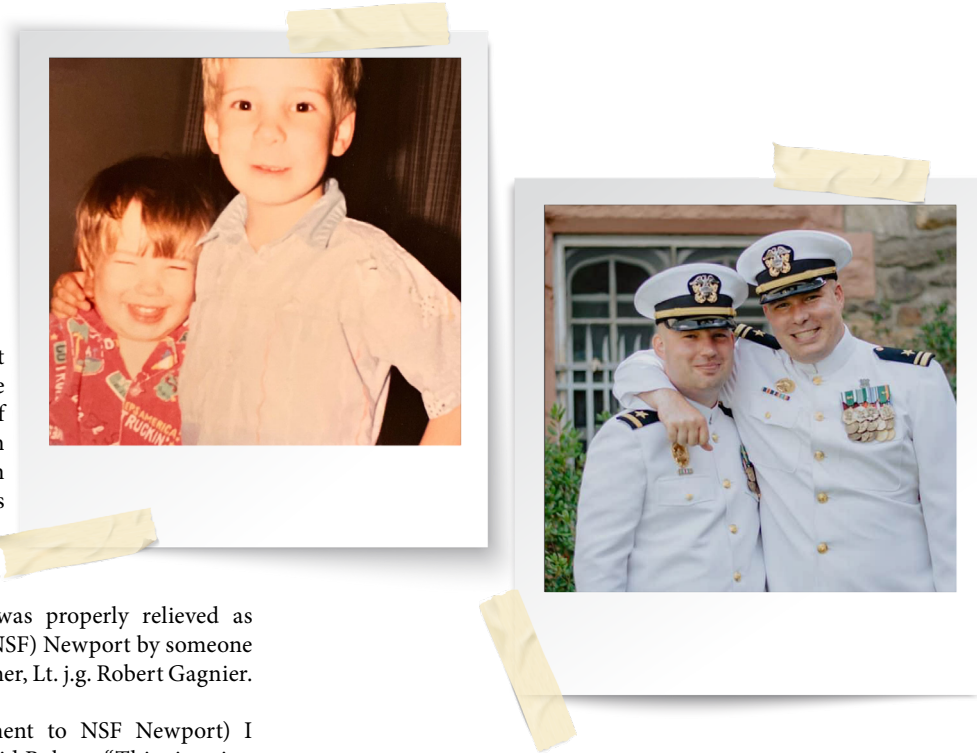
So what's next?

"Next is to develop a better partnership," he said. "However I can, any opportunity to strengthen the partnership between the U.S. and Africa. To collaborate however I can, to make Africa safer, to build the network... It's a noble mission, and I want to be part of that. With the increased security comes the non-government organizations, U.S. and global aid organizations that can really help Africa build a better health system... I have a lot to offer – languages, culture, knowledge of the continent, both African and U.S. medical training. I'm looking for any opportunity to build a bridge, whether it's the U.S. Navy, or other government organizations. I'm fired up! I'm ready for it."

Conducted by U.S. Naval Forces Africa (NAF) and sponsored by U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), OE23 is designed to improve regional cooperation, information-sharing practices, and tactical interdiction expertise to enhance the collective capabilities of participating nations to counter Illegal, Unreported, Unregulated (IUU) fishing and other sea-based illicit activity.

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

BY MC2 TYRA WATSON



Sibling bonds can create the strongest relationships. The threads their family ties are reinforced by a shared upbringing and years of youthful competitiveness. That shared strength can allow siblings to succeed together when following similar life paths. The Gagnier brothers recognize the rarity of their situation and have taken full advantage of their unique bond.

On February 4, 2023, Lt. Richard Gagnier was properly relieved as commanding officer of Naval Security Forces (NSF) Newport by someone very near and dear to his heart: his younger brother, Lt. j.g. Robert Gagnier.

“When I saw the results come out (assignment to NSF Newport) I immediately laughed to myself in my office,” said Robert. “This situation couldn’t be any more unique.”

The Gagnier brothers come from a direct lineage of naval service. Their father, Randy Gagnier, retired chief mess management specialist, served 22 years on active duty.

“My boys have given me the greatest source of pride,” said Randy Gagnier. “The Navy has been so huge for myself and our family, and watching them both join, make rank and become commanding officers of Reserve units – and then get to relieve one another -- has been indescribable.”

Richard knew from a young age he was going to follow in his father’s footsteps. “It was something that I always wanted to emulate,” said Richard. “Following my father’s footsteps into the Navy was about the only real direction I had in life.”

Robert agreed.

“Seeing our father come home every day in uniform from as early as we can recall and talking with him about his experiences massively influenced and certainly inspired our decision to join the Navy,” he said.

The Gagnier brothers’ Naval careers have been a horserace to say the least. Richard was the first of the two to attend boot camp in Great Lakes, Illinois, in the summer of 2006. Robert followed shortly behind Richard after receiving his high school diploma the next year. Both brothers attended master-at-arms class ‘A’ school in San Antonio, Texas following their bootcamp graduation.

Utilizing the National Call to Service Program, Robert served a period of two years on active duty followed by a transition to the Selected Reserve in March, 2008. Although he’d enlisted one year after Richard, Robert was promoted to MA1 in 2011, one year before his older brother.

Not to be outdone, Richard transitioned to the Navy Reserve and became the first of the brothers to earn a commission via the Limited Duty Officer (LDO) program as a Security Officer in 2016. In 2019, once again motivated by his older brother’s accomplishments, Robert joined Richard in the Wardroom after utilizing the LDO program as well.

Not only did Richard and Robert serve together for a long stretch of years as Reserve Sailors, but the duo also mirrored each other in their civilian careers as well, tapping into their naval service law enforcement experience.

Following his separation from active duty service, Robert served as a Department of Defense police officer in his civilian career and currently serves as the Alternate Fuels Security Officer at Naval Shipyard Portsmouth. Richard served as a police officer in the state of New Hampshire and is currently a Federal Agent for the Department of Homeland Security.

Richard assumed command of Naval Reserve NSF Newport in 2021 and looks forward to his next assignment as commanding officer of NSF New London in Groton, Connecticut. Robert anticipated the turnover with Richard and even feels as though he has a built-in advantage in assuming command, due to his close relationship with his brother.

“My brother and I are number one on each other’s speed dial whether one of us finds success in something or has an obstacle or challenge,” said Robert. “I’ve had the privilege of being in the wings during his entire tour in Newport. Luckily, that has given me a much better understanding of what I am taking command of and responsibility for.”

Richard believes his brother’s intelligence, judgement and empathy will make Robert an exceptional commanding officer at NSF Newport in his succession. Following humbly in his brother’s footsteps, Robert is eager to do everything he can to continue moving NSF Newport in a positive direction.

“It feels good to come into a team that is already finding success in doing things well and being effective already,” said Robert. “They’ve found a working formula and I am excited to continue to move that forward and continue to evolve.”

Although Richard is headed to Connecticut to execute his follow on set of orders, Robert has no concern that the distance between them will create divide in their tight-knit bond.

“The two of us are so close,” said Robert of his brother. “He’s my built-in best friend.”

addressing your civilian employer about your upcoming navy reserve orders:



discuss: WHEN you’re leaving HOW long you’ll be gone WHERE you’ll be WHY it’s important

Understand, you need to dedicate your drill time to warfighting training, qualifications and proficiency-- which means drilling at your gaining command or mobilization unit. Your billet may require additional travel time. Be prepared to discuss and explain that as well. For more info contact Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve at esgr.mil or 800-336-4590, Option 1.

HEY, WHATS THAT WARFARE PIN?



90% OF GLOBAL COMMERCE IS CONDUCTED BY SEA.

That fact is probably a familiar one; but did you know that over 2,300 of your fellow Reserve Sailors directly support global maritime commerce?

As Reserve Sailors, we all have our day jobs. For the Strategic Sealift Officer (SSO) community, that day job is as a licensed merchant mariner who sails on commercial cargo ships and is at sea delivering goods around the world. Global commerce is the SSO's day job!

Merchant mariners are the workforce behind our maritime commerce. Maritime commerce and Naval Supremacy empower our country's economy and project power and influence around the world. The SSO community is built to support those ideals. It is comprised of highly trained merchant mariners who are qualified to operate commercial cargo vessels and receive specialized training as Navy Reserve officers to mobilize in support of the country's surge sealift fleet during sustained combat operations under Military Sealift Command (MSC).

Even though the community is part of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), these officers are required to maintain a higher level of readiness than the members of the general IRR population. When not in a mobilized status, the SSO's primary role is to maintain warfighting readiness. To maintain these skills, SSOs (designator 1665) hold valid U.S. Coast Guard-issued Merchant

CUTLASS

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Mariner Credentials (MMC) which allows them to operate and sail large cargo vessels around the world. They must complete a minimum of twelve (12) days of Active Duty for Training (ADT) per year, maintain a common access card (CAC), medical readiness, and recall information, security clearance, and have an active NMCI account. They regularly activate under short, medium and long term ADT to sharpen these skills and provide operational support.

To enable the quick recall of the SSO IRR community to missions, MSC and CNRFC have been executing mass mobilization exercises (MOBEX) since 2021; which included an SSO mobilization exercise (SSOEX) in December 2022. This was the second of two events to implement the same mobilization pathway for SSO IRR personnel as the Selected Reserve. The exercises serve as a litmus test for implementing policies, processes, and practices that affect the mobilization of the IRR, writ large.

Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (CNRFC/N14) is the SSO Virtual Navy Reserve Center (NRC) that provides administrative support and maintains SSO readiness requirements to mobilize to the MSC mission. SSOs also attain support from local NRCs to administer functions that require a personal presence. Support includes medical and dental support, immunizations, mobilization activation/deactivation support, official photos, and in-person training. CNRFC N14, MSC and the local NRC coordinate on a wide range of issues regarding SSO support. Teamwork between all parties is crucial for the community's warfighting readiness and to ensure seamless mobilizations.

www.NavyReserve.Navy.mil has an SSO Tool Kit:

<https://www.navyreserve.navy.mil/Resources/SSO-Tool-Kit/>

Here, SSOs can find instructions, guidance, and contact information that support them during their Navy Reserve career. NRCs can find a list of their responsibilities to assigned SSOs.

The Strategic Sealift Officer Community is different than most Reserve communities and presents unique challenges. The partnerships, trust, and coordination between SSO and NRC, MSC and CNRFC, enable this warfighting readiness every day. Our SSOs will be ready on day one to deliver the goods that sustain our forces and ensure success wherever operations take place.



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Our Mission

The mission of the Navy Reserve is to provide strategic depth and deliver operational capabilities to the Navy and Marine Corps team and Joint forces, in times of peace or war.

Warfighting Readiness is Priority One

We are focused unambiguously on warfighting readiness. We will generate the combat power and critical strategic depth the Navy requires to prevail in conflict in an era of strategic competition. That's our job, and why we exist.

The Navy Reserve provides essential naval warfighting capabilities and expertise, strategically aligned with mission requirements - valued for our readiness, innovation, and agility.

U.S. Navy Reserve



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