COASTLINE

September 10th, 2026 / Volume 36, Issue 11

U.S. Naval Activities Spain



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Leadership Corner



Fire Chief Richard Henderson NAVSTA Rota Fire & Emergency Services

Hello Team Rota,

It has been a busy and meaningful time for your Rota Fire and Emergency Services team. As we continue to achieve our goals, positively grow, and maintain a strong foundation for the benefit of the community, we wanted to take a minute to share some of the achievements that our department has accomplished as well as share the exciting events we have in store ahead.

Awards and Recognitions

Our team is truly blessed to have three of our own recognized at the highest level, earning the honors of Fire Officer of the Year, Military Officer of the Year, and Fire Inspector of the Year, a testament to their excellence and dedication. Additionally, our department was once again named Medium Fire Department of the Year, an award we strive for and proudly achieve annually.

Honoring the 25th Anniversary of 9/11

We start the fall season by coming together for our 9/11 remembrance events. On September 10, we will host our annual 9/11 Ceremonial Run, starting in front of the gym. This run is our way to honor those who answered the call in 2001—remembering the lives lost and the heroes who served that day. It is a powerful reminder of why we do what we do and the importance of staying ready to serve others.

On September 11, we will hold our 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony, honoring the sacrifices made on this significant 25-year anniversary. This will be our biggest ceremony yet, with many special guests present joining us in a moment of reflection, remembrance, and standing together as a community.

Elevating Our Scope of Service

Our department is positively growing. With our recent civilian hires of experienced EMTs and Paramedics, we have increased our scope of service and elevated our EMS response capabilities from first aid to Basic Life Support (BLS). By working closely with hospital staff, together we can provide more efficient initial care for our community.

October Brings Big Events

October will keep us moving with Fire Prevention Week, held this year from October 4 through 10. The theme for 2026 is “Charge into Fire Safety: Safe Charging is a Superpower,” focusing on how to charge devices safely to prevent fires. Throughout the week, our department and Fire Prevention team—led by Inspectors Armendariz, Fahling, and Mafnas, who many of you have seen and know—are preparing a great list of events for all, raising awareness about safe charging practices and overall fire safety.

Ready for the Future

As our base continues to grow, we renew our constant promise to our community: we will be ready and we will answer the call. It is an honor to serve this community alongside such dedicated people. On behalf of the entire Rota Fire and Emergency Services team, we look forward to seeing you at these events and wish you a safe and productive season ahead.

Stay safe,
Rota Fire and Emergency Services

On The Front Cover



Naval Aircrewman Tactical Helicopter 1st Class Huerta Dectorio, assigned to the “Griffins” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 79, looks out at the landing zone inside an MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopter near Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, Spain, Aug. 20, 2026. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ryan Brown)

Do You Like to Write or Take Photos?

The Coastline is always looking for guest writers and story ideas. Are you traveling some place fun, attending a sporting event, participating in a workshop or cooking class or leading special training in your office or community? If so, we want to hear from you! Please send story and photo submissions or story ideas to The Coastline at rotacoastline@gmail.com.

Publication is subject to approval.

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Pharmacy Essentials: What You Need to Know

1. How often does the pharmacy order medications, and how long does delivery take?

- The pharmacy orders medications weekly and monitors supply daily. Due to our overseas location, deliveries typically take 14 business days to arrive. Unforseen supply chain issues, including weather or transportation delays, may impact this timeline.

2. What happens if my medication is on backorder or unavailable?

- Sometimes medications are on backorder or are otherwise unavailable for refill. If this happens, we will work with you and your provider to try and achieve the best outcome possible. For medications that treat chronic health concerns (e.g., diabetes, high blood pressure, infections), the pharmacy will work with your provider to find a suitable alternative to ensure your treatment continues uninterrupted.

- In some cases, we may recommend filling your prescription in a host-nation pharmacy. In those instances, our pharmacy will help you navigate obtaining your prescription at a Spanish pharmacy. Please check with your insurance provider in advance to confirm reimbursement eligibility.

3. Are any medications currently in short supply?

- Yes. The manufacturer may say that there is not a national shortage of GLP-1 medications, especially Zepbound; however, the demand far outweighs the supply. We are competing with other pharmacies for the medication. The pharmacy gets allocated a number of units per week set by the vendor or manufacturer. We appreciate your patience as we work to refill our supply.

4. Is there a waitlist for GLP-1 medications?

- Yes. GLP-1 medications are waitlisted. You will receive an "Out of Stock" form with an email address to check your status. Please send an email in 14 days to request a status update.

5. Is Express Scripts (Home Delivery) still available?

- Yes, Express Scripts is a great option that can ship to APO/FPO/DPO addresses and to U.S. embassy/consulate addresses overseas.
- Note: Refrigerated medications and pressurized devices (inhalers) cannot be shipped to APO/FPO/DPO addresses.

6. How much medication can I refill or stock up on?

- While TRICARE does regulate the amount of medication prescribed at one time, we recommend speaking with your provider about the possibility of increasing your medication supply, in most circumstances we are limited to filling to a 90-day supply.

Pharmacy Essentials: What You Need to Know

7. Do controlled substances take longer to receive?

- Yes. Controlled substances (e.g., Concerta, Adderall, Ativan, Xanax, Ambien, opiates) require significantly more time because they require additional clearances from customs.
- To avoid running out of your medications, contact the Pharmacy to request a refill 14 days before your last dose.

8. Can I request an early refill?

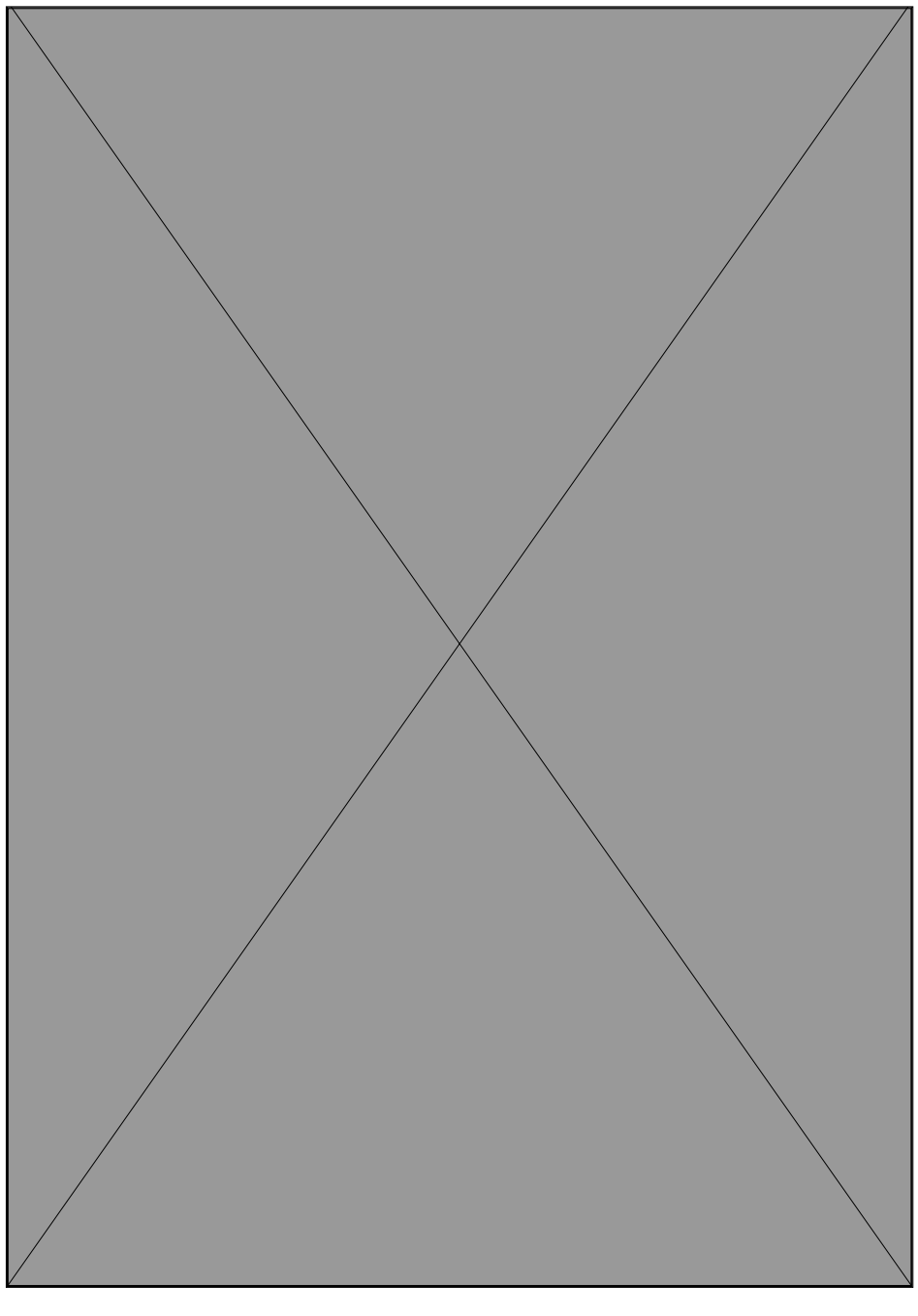
- You can check the Medication Refill tab in the MHS Genesis Patient Portal to see when your prescription is ready for refill. Typically, most medications can be refilled when you've used 75% of your supply, while controlled substances are restricted to refill after using 90% of your supply. Please contact the pharmacy if you have questions.

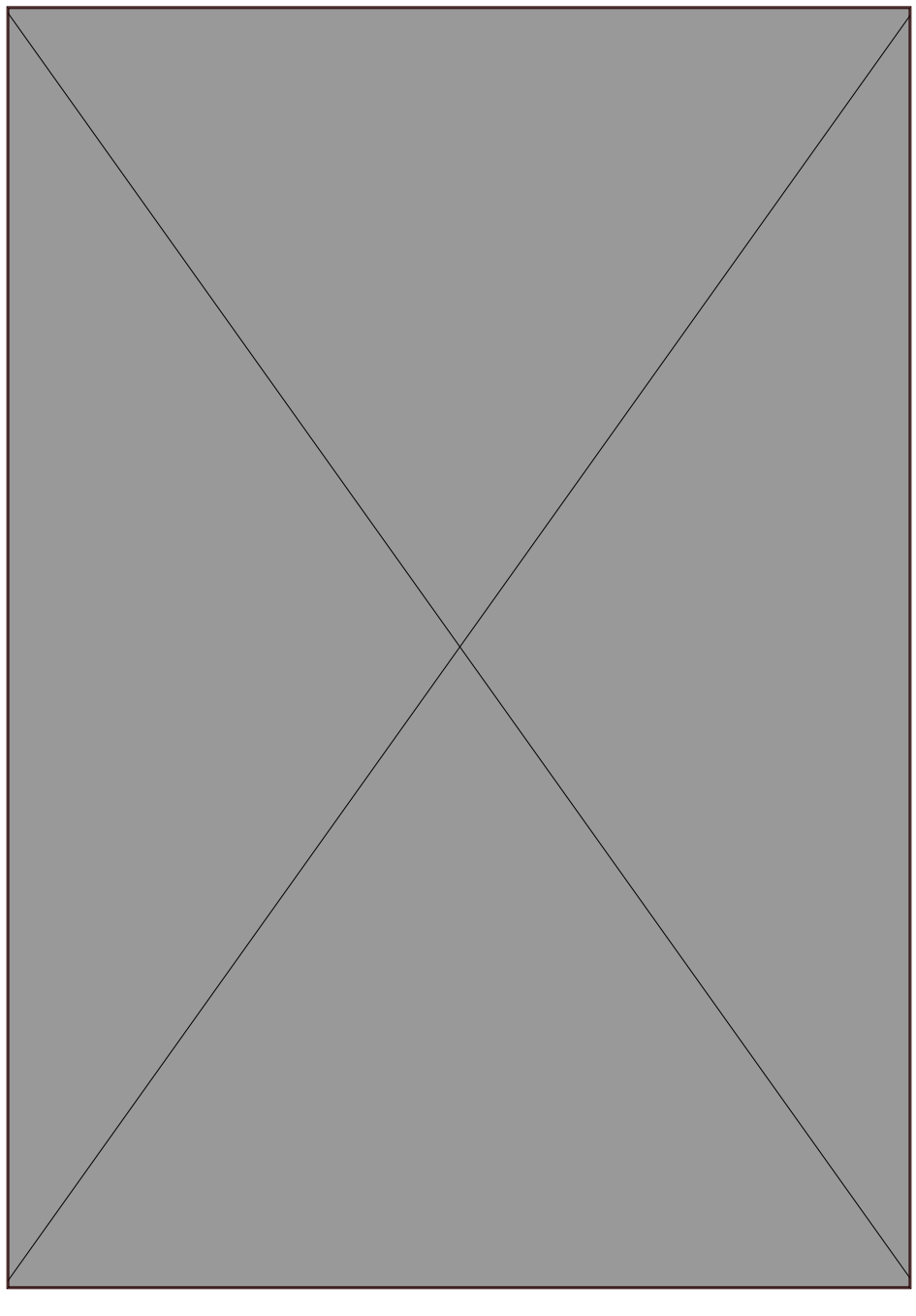
9. Can I fill my U.S. Naval Hospital Rota prescriptions at Spanish community pharmacies?

- Yes, but you'll need to take extra steps to do so.
- You will need:
  - A Spanish-licensed physician's prescription. A local Rota physician can rewrite your prescription for a fee.
  - Your military Identification/Common Access Card (CAC).
  - You'll pay the full amount for your medication when you pick it up from the pharmacy, and then you can submit a reimbursement claim to International SOS.
    - The quickest and most convenient way to submit a claim is through the Express Scripts website. Go to the Express Scripts website and log in to your account. If you don't have an account, you will need to register.
    - Please stop by the Tricare Office in the hospital to get more detailed instructions.

Please ensure your contact information is up to date in MHS GENESIS. For assistance with updating your information, please go to Patient Administration, located at E033/E034.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact the Pharmacy at +34 956-82-3565 or pull a "Questions" ticket from the kiosk.





Suicide prevention: Seeking help, building resilience, and recognizing warning signs

By Heather Morgan
NAVSTA Rota Fleet & Family Support Center

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, a time to reaffirm a powerful message important to every command and Navy household: seeking help is strength, warning signs deserve attention, and resilience grows when we stay connected.

Unique stressors like deployment separations, training demands, pressure to perform, sleep disruption, physical or emotional challenges, changes in duty station or routines test our service members and families. The strain that comes with being strong for others is a pressure that adds up quietly. People look "fine" on the surface while carrying pain too heavy to explain. Suicide prevention is about spotting signs before a crisis becomes unavoidable.

If you are struggling, this month is also for you. You deserve support now, not after things get worse.

Many people delay reaching out because they worry about what others will think, whether it will affect their career, or whether they will be judged for feeling overwhelmed. Getting support is a responsible step. It's also something we ask of each other in every other area of readiness: early action prevents greater harm.

Navy Community Assistance: Who can Help?

- Your health care team through primary care or behavioral health
- Command Leadership who can connect you to appropriate resources
- Chaplains and Spiritual support services
- Counselors, therapists, and support programs available through Military or community providers
- Trusted peers, shipmates, spouses, or family members who can stay with you while you seek professional care

If you don't know where to start, start with one conversation. You can be direct and state simply: "I'm not doing okay and I need help," or "I've been having thoughts that worry me." If you are supporting a family member, you can say: "I care about you, and I want to help you get support."

For those who feel unsafe or fear they might act on suicidal thoughts, urgent help matters. Don't wait for certainty. When risk feels immediate, treat it as an emergency and get support right away.

Know the Warning Signs

Warning signs don't always look dramatic. Sometimes they show up as changes in behavior, mood, and communication. The important thing is not to diagnose but to pay attention, especially when multiple signs appear or when something feels "off" for that person.

Possible warning signs include:

- Talking about wanting to die, self-harm, or "not wanting to be here"
- Increased hopelessness, feeling trapped, unbearable emotional pain, or feeling like a burden
- Withdrawal from friends, family, shipmates, or usual activities
- Sudden mood shifts: especially agitation, recklessness, or unusual calm after a period of distress
- Increased risky behavior, alcohol or substance use
- Preparing for the future in a way that feels like a goodbye (giving away belongings, making "final" plans, sudden closure)
- Major life stressors followed by isolation: loss, relationship conflict, financial difficulties, disciplinary issues, traumatic experiences, or difficult return-to-duty adjustments

If you notice warning signs, take them seriously. Encourage the person to get support immediately and help them connect to care.

How to Respond

When a friend, service member, or family member is showing warning signs, it can be hard to find the right words. The goal is not to be perfect, it's to be present, calm, and clear.

Ask openly and directly: "Are you thinking about suicide?" Asking directly does not put the idea in their head. It opens a door to honesty and support, and it can move someone from isolation toward care. Listen without judgment and validate their pain: "That sounds difficult. I'm glad you told me." Make sure to stay involved: "I'm here with you. Let's get help."

Reduce the chance of harm, if you can do so safely, by encouraging them to move away from means and avoid leaving them alone. Connecting them to immediate support, such as command medical/behavioral health resources, crisis resources, chaplain support, or emergency services (if it feels urgent), is crucial.

Resilience in the Hard Seasons

Resilience isn't about never struggling. It's about recognizing stress early and reaching for tools and support. In the Navy community, resilience often looks like a combination of connection, routine, and access to care.

Stay connected to at least one person who feels safe via check-ins, shared meals, team support, or family routines. Keep a basic rhythm when life feels chaotic. Focus on sleep, meals, hydration, and some form of movement. Use healthy coping skills in the moment, like grounding exercises, breathing, journaling, faith practices, creative outlets, or time outdoors. Limit time spent in isolation by inviting someone to talk or simply be around people. Getting help is part of readiness: Therapy, counseling, skill-based support, or other treatment, are all options. Learn your personal early warning signs like changes in sleep, irritability, hopeless thinking, or withdrawal, so support can happen sooner.

For families, resilience can also mean building a shared plan: who to call, what support looks like in a rough week, and how you'll handle it together rather than alone.

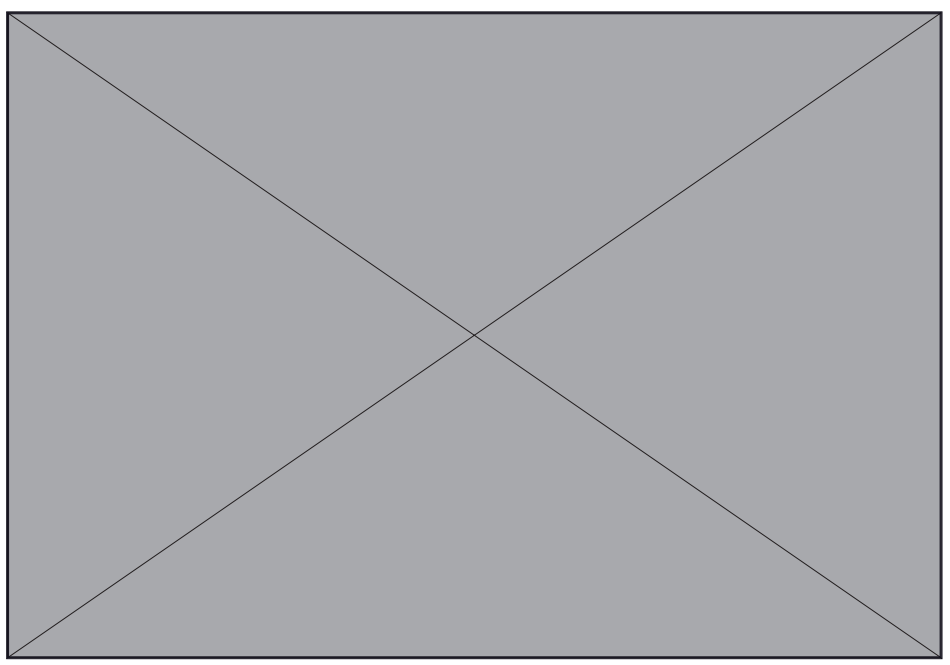
September reminds us that suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility but it also reminds us that help works. You don't have to carry this alone. Seeking help can interrupt a crisis. Recognizing warning signs can buy time for lifesaving support. Building resilience can strengthen how people cope with the intense seasons of duty, deployment, and family life.

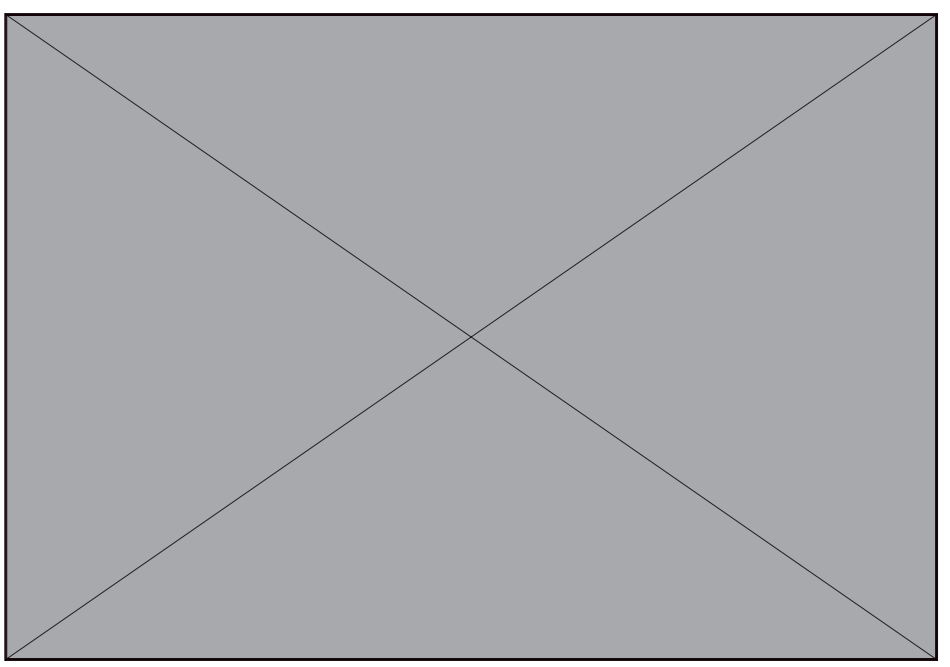
If you are struggling, reach out. If you're worried about someone else, ask, listen, and connect them to support (Ask, Care, Treat). In the Navy Community, caring for one another is part of readiness and it saves lives.

How to help someone in 5 steps

1. **Notice** changes in words, behavior, or mood especially withdrawal or talk of death/self-harm.
2. **Ask directly**: "Are you thinking about suicide?" Keep it calm and non-judgmental.
3. **Listen and stay** with them. Validate their feelings and let them know you care.
4. **Get support now**: contact command medical/behavioral health, a chaplain, or a crisis resource. If you think danger is immediate, call emergency services.
5. **Follow through**: don't leave the person alone with the problem. Help ensure they connect to help (warm hand off) and check in after the first conversation.







Facilitating fortitude for the fleet: Naval Station Rota unveils Fleet Resiliency Center

By Lt. Daniel Ehrlich
Naval Station Rota Public Affairs



What can a Sailor on one of Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota's five homeported destroyers or visiting ships do when having a mental health or readiness issue? What about needing to report a sexual harassment or violence emergency? Many would need to wait for the base shuttle, get a costly taxi, or make the long journey by foot to the Fleet and Family Support Center or Naval Hospital Rota on the other side of the base… until now.

Recently, NAVSTA Rota has partnered with Naval Surface Group-Europe, Task Force 65/Destroyer Squadron 60, Fleet and Family Support Center, and Naval Hospital Rota to establish the Fleet Resiliency Center a short five-minute walk away from Pier 1 in the Fleet Landing building.

"We are coming to the Sailors instead of them coming to us," said Christina Cobb, NAVSTA Rota Sexual Assault Response Coordinator. "[Sailors] can stop by during their breaks, during their lunch. Sometimes they come by while doing their laundry. It gives them an easier opportunity to stop by and get resources."

And there are plenty of resources. The Fleet Resiliency Center is staffed by sexual assault victim response advocates, a chaplain, military and family life counselors, and an embedded mental health social worker. The staff can identify where a Sailor's issues or concerns fall on the mental health road map and tailors the care to their needs.

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Oscar Torres, a mental health technician with Naval Surface Group-Europe and member of the Fleet Resiliency Center's embedded mental health team, also highlighted that the center gives Sailors the opportunity to receive help when they feel like they have no one else and improve to get back into the fight.

While the center provides direct response and care to NAVSTA Rota's waterfront Sailors, it also acts as a mindfulness and training hub. The Fleet Resiliency Center holds a conference room that has been used for mental health coaching, large-group mindfulness trainings, and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) unit victim advocate program reviews and feedback with SAPR professionals. One of the future visions for the space is to also host mental wellness and focus events such as coloring activities to help Sailors ground themselves during breaks in the workday.

Tucked away next to the Gourmet Bean, the Fleet Resiliency Center enables Sailors to have open conversations about mental health over a quick coffee with staff but also provides additional safety with how easily accessible it is.



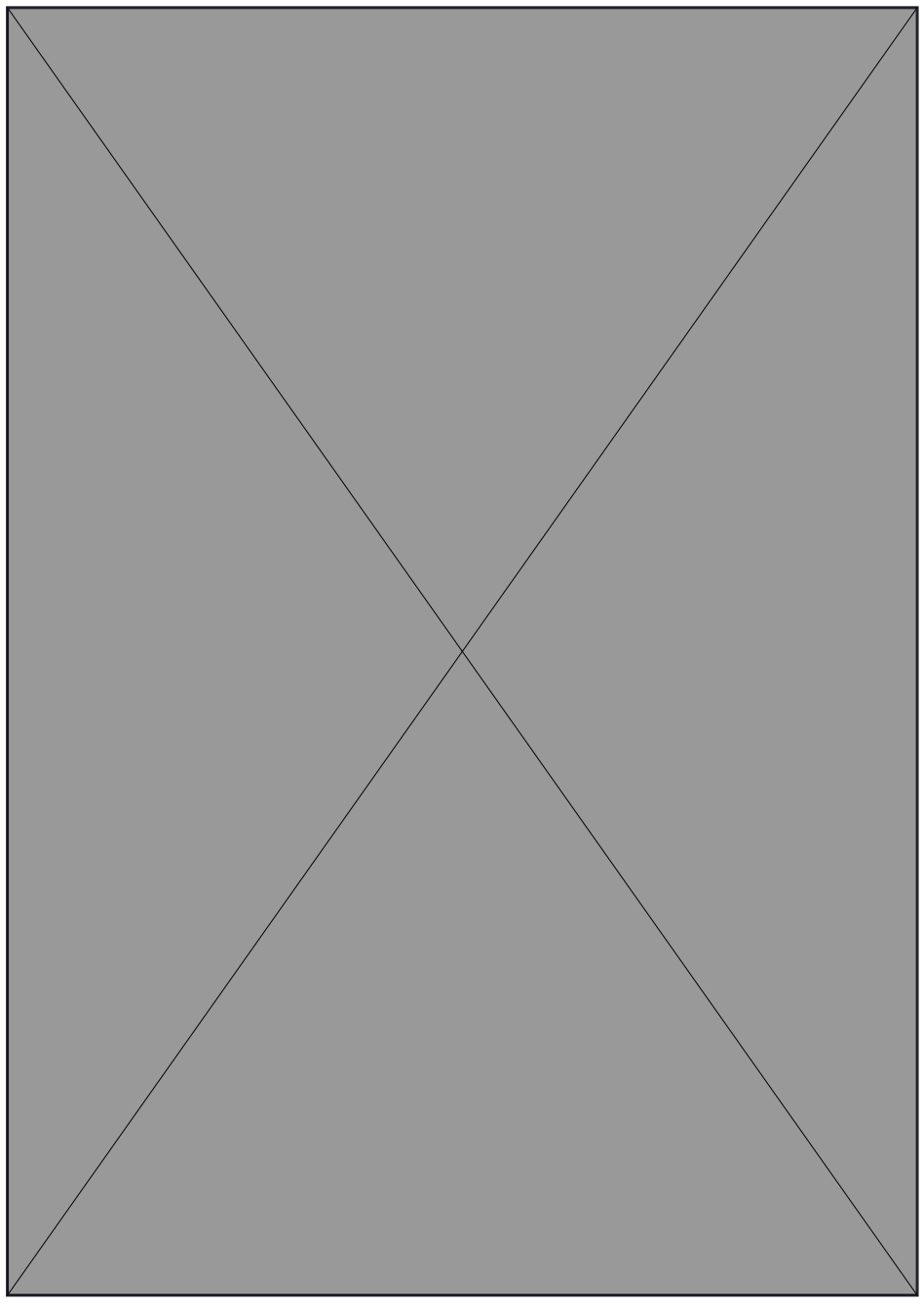
"It provides more privacy," said Nieachia Wherry, a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response victim advocate at the Fleet Resiliency Center. "Sailors don't need to go through a long building or hallway to access us, so it provides them more security."

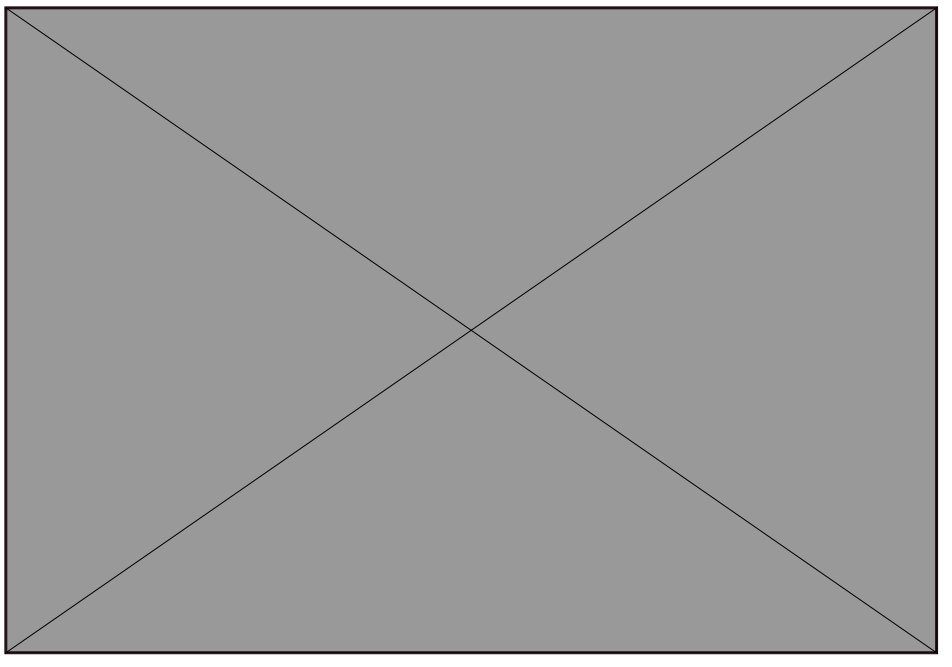
Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Daryl Caudle has honed in on Sailor readiness being a holistic issue, including mental health and mindfulness. NAVSTA Rota's Fleet Resiliency Center is one of the newest ways the forge is preparing the fleet for the fight.

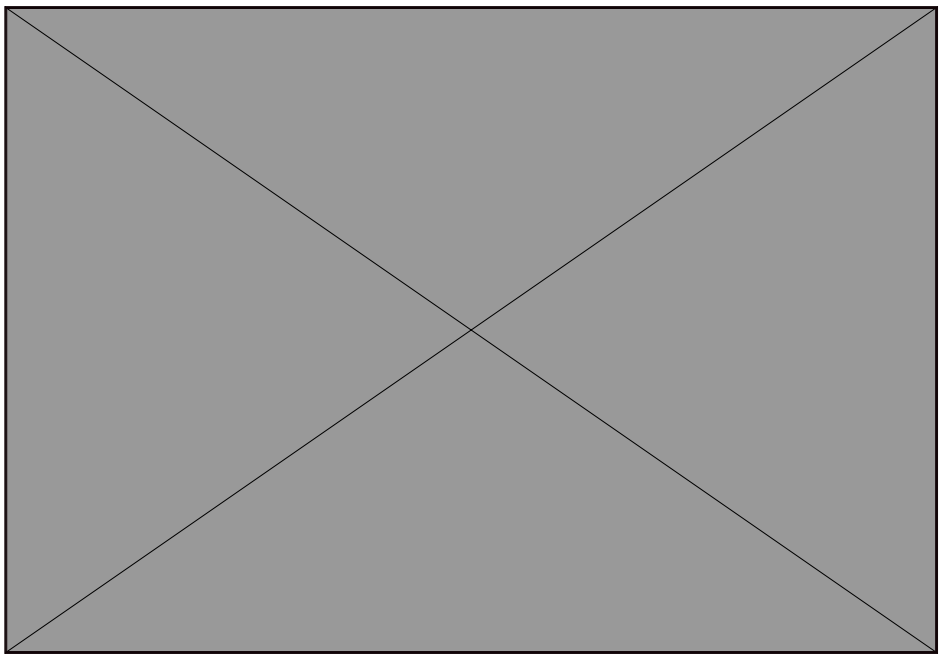
"It helps prepare Sailors for the mission," said Cobb. "If they are taking care of their mind-body mental fitness, they are ready to go out and do their jobs."

NAVSTA Rota is the enduring sum of the more than 8,000 people that call it home; the variety of backgrounds, skills, and experiences they possess; and the lines of operation they enable, ensuring U.S. and Allied forces are ready to operate when called upon.

For more information about U.S. Naval Activities Spain/NAVSTA Rota, visit the installation's website at https://cnreurafcent.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/NAVSTA-Rota/ or follow the installation on Facebook at Naval Station Rota, Spain, @navstarotaspain on Instagram, or @NAVSTA_Rota on X.







PUBLISHER´S CORNER

A TASTE OF HOME, RIGHT HERE AT NAVAL STATION ROTA

Obrador San Antonio brings traditional recipes and freshly prepared meals to the Naval Station Rota community.

After a long day at work, many people are looking for something simple: a quality meal, freshly prepared and with the comforting taste of home.

With that idea in mind, Obrador San Antonio, a family-owned business founded in 1950, has recently expanded its food service within Naval Station Rota, bringing its traditional, home-style cooking to three convenient locations: the **Navy Exchange Mini Mart**, the **Gas Station**, and the **Navy Lodge Hotel**.

The goal is not simply to offer prepared meals, but to provide service members, civilian personnel, families and visitors with a convenient option without sacrificing quality or the authentic flavors of traditional Spanish cuisine.

Every day, San Antonio's chefs prepare a selection of dishes inspired by both Spanish cuisine and international recipes, using fresh, quality ingredients and preparing each dish daily to preserve the essence of home cooking.

Among the available options are appetizers and lighter dishes such as Arranque Roteño, a traditional recipe from Rota made with tomatoes and bread; boiled eggs with cheese and nuts; coleslaw; Spanish potato omelet; and soy-marinated salmon poke.

For those looking for more substantial meals, the menu includes a variety of chicken specialties such as Chicken Poke Bowl, Chicken Sub, Chicken Wrap, and Wok-Fried Chicken with Vegetables.

Rice lovers can choose from Chicken Paella, Chicken Curry with Rice, or Fried Rice with Chicken, Shrimp, Pork and Soy Sauce.

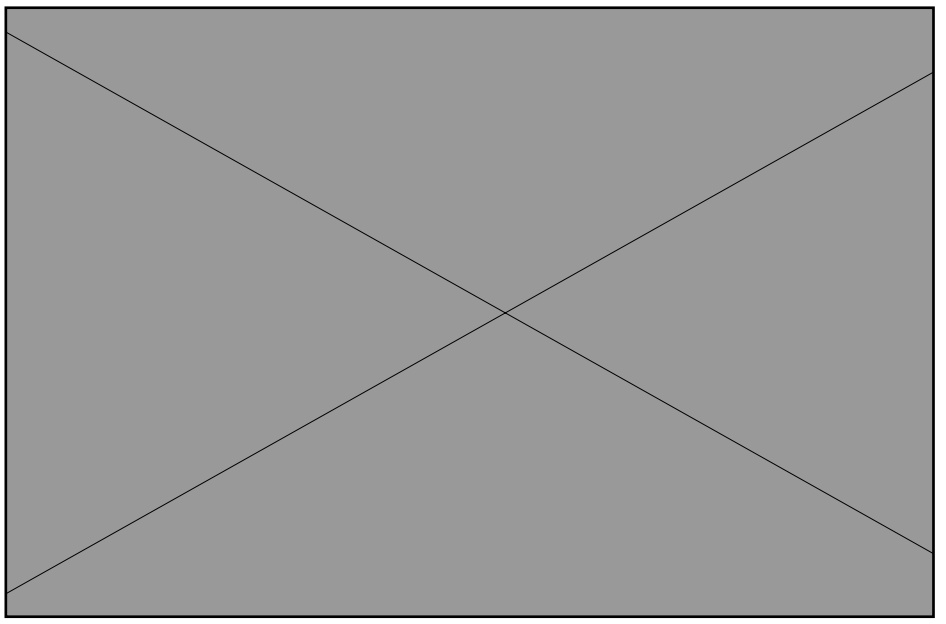
The meat selection features some of the most popular dishes in traditional Spanish cuisine, including Meatballs in Tomato Sauce, Meatballs with Pedro Ximénez Sauce, BBQ Ribs, Iberian Pork Cheek, and Iberian Pork Tenderloin with Peppercorn Sauce.

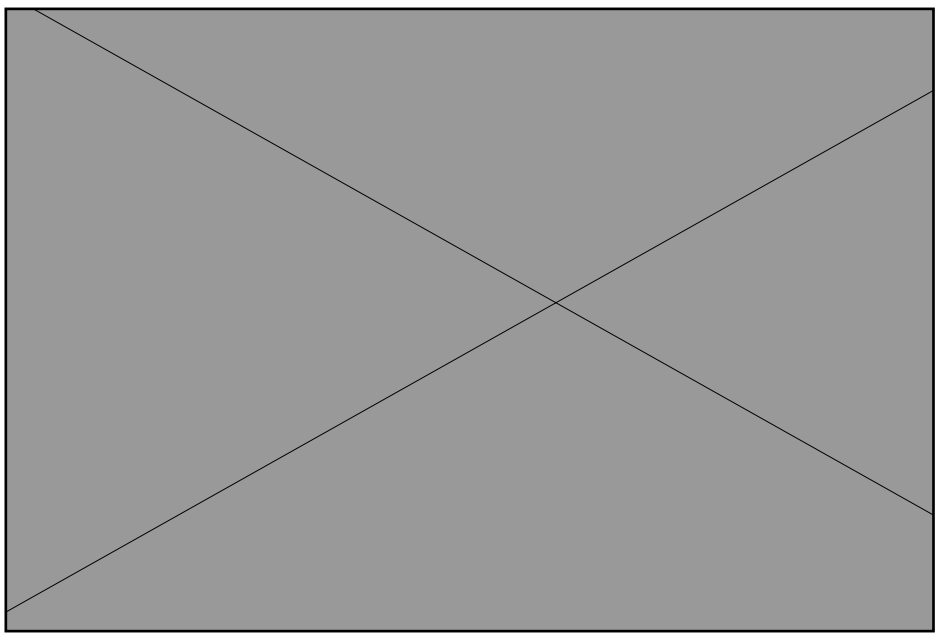
With such a wide variety of choices, customers can find something to enjoy at any time of day, whether they need a quick lunch during the workday or a ready-to-enjoy dinner without having to cook.

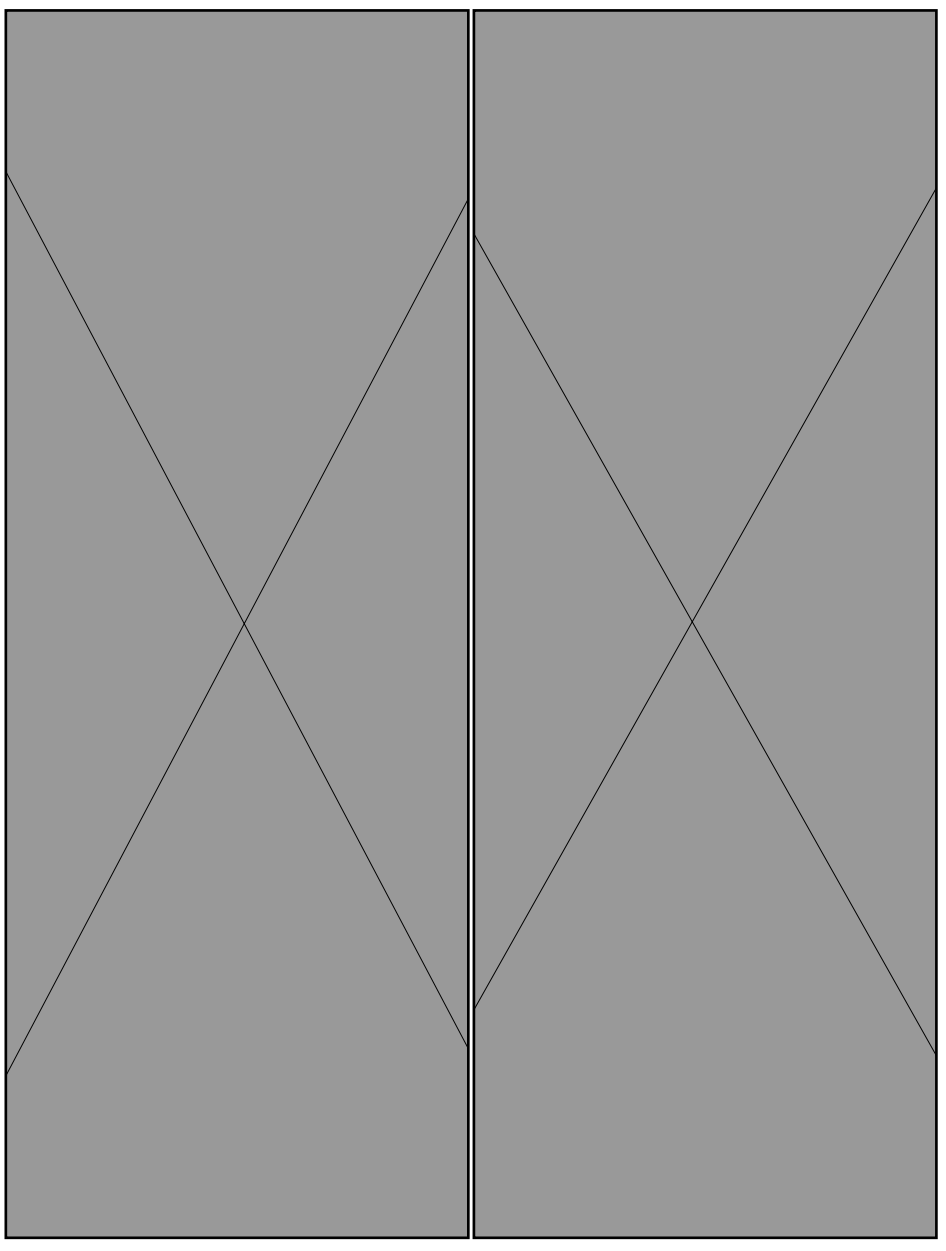
Tradition Across Cultures:
While many of the recipes are rooted in Spanish culinary traditions, the selection also includes internationally inspired dishes, reflecting the cultural diversity that characterizes the Naval Station Rota community.

The result is a diverse food selection where Mediterranean specialties, American-style favorites and Asian-inspired dishes come together under the same philosophy: quality, locally sourced ingredients whenever possible, fresh daily preparation, and carefully crafted recipes that embody the spirit of this initiative: “Fresh from our fields, full of real flavor.” Because even when you're far from home, a good meal can always make you feel a little closer to it.

See their add for more info!







NAVFAC EURAFCENT delivers $25 million Morón Air Base airfield readiness facility

Story by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Keyly Santizo
Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Europe Africa Central

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) Europe, Africa, Central (EURAFCENT), in partnership with the U.S. Air Force, celebrated the completion of a $25.3 million Rapid Airfield Damage Repair (RADR) storage facility with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on July 28, 2026.

The military construction project, awarded to Eiffage Group in June 2023 and officially turned over on Aug. 12, 2026, delivers two new warehouses and a laydown yard. The facility will house the heavy machinery and raw materials—including front-end loaders, excavators, skid steers, concrete saws, and bagged concrete—essential for quickly repairing a damaged runway.

Capt. Andrew Olsen, commanding officer of NAVFAC EURAFCENT, highlighted the collaborative effort behind the project.

"Delivering a facility of this scale is no small feat," said Olsen. "Thanks to the hard work of our NAVFAC team, Morón Air Base leadership, and our contractor Eiffage Group, we have successfully delivered a critical capability to the theater. This RADR facility is a direct investment in our warfighters."

Constructing the facility required technical problem-solving to ensure the infrastructure could support the heavy machinery.

"We collaborated closely with the contractor to resolve an exterior concrete curing issue that was causing surface cracking," said Lt. j.g. James Gourley, construction manager at Resident Officer in Charge of Construction (ROICC) Rota. "By updating the mix design with a new admixture, we improved the concrete's workability and successfully eliminated the defect."

The completed facility will be utilized by the U.S. Air Force's 496th Air Base Squadron (ABS) to protect highly valuable tractors and vehicles susceptible to elemental damage. It provides a dedicated workspace for contractors to perform preventive maintenance and organizes the storage of more than 1,100 items.

Lt. Col. Stephen Parsons, commander of the 496th ABS, emphasized the strategic impact this protection provides to the broader military mission.

"Morón Air Base is in a vital strategic location geographically for War Reserve Material and Rapid Airfield Damage Repair equipment, but it also exposes outdoor assets to extreme heat and sun exposure," Parsons explained. "This facility provides vital protection and maintenance housing for over a thousand pieces of equipment valued at $48 million. This protection allows the equipment to maintain a mission-ready status for deployment across five Combatant Commands once called upon."

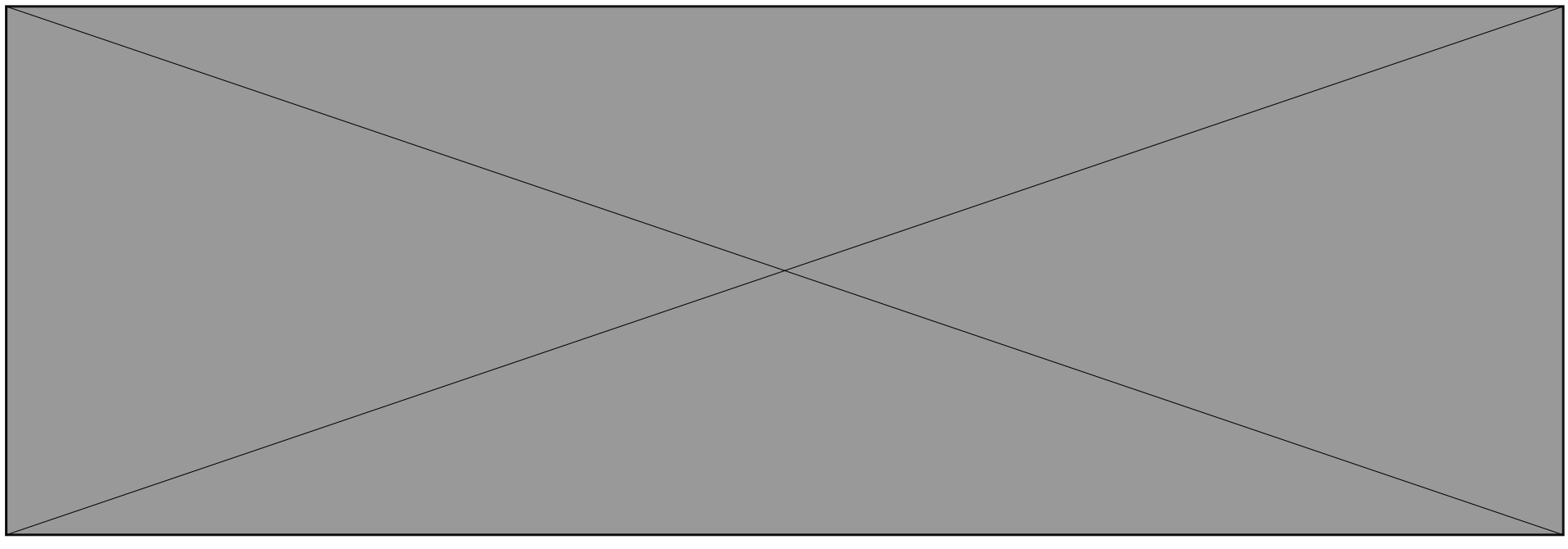
During the ceremony, Parsons also spoke about the joint effort between the Air Force, Navy, and industry, noting that the infrastructure at Morón continues to expand, following a recent groundbreaking for a new U.S. Space Force facility.

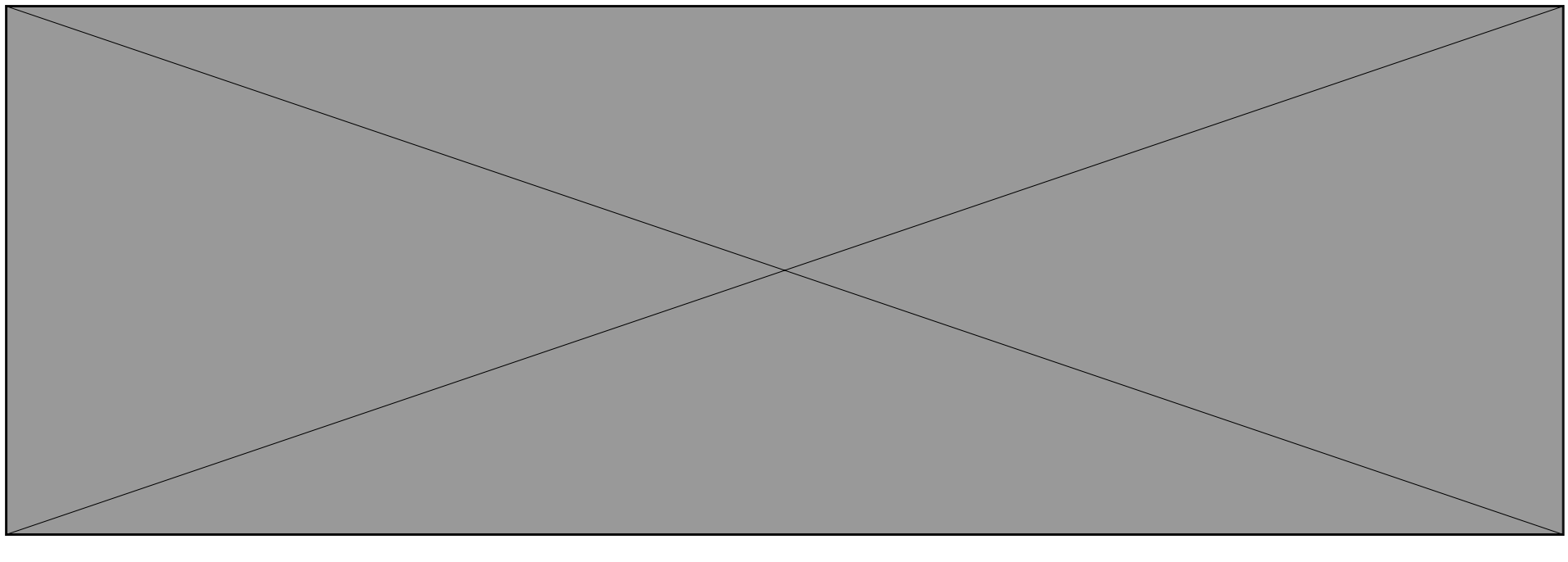
"The success of this base relies on Airmen who are stationed here for a year or two at a time putting on the patch of the 496th Air Base Squadron and deciding they are going to make an improvement to this location," said Parsons. "This facility is a testament to the tireless efforts of the personnel stationed here to create the infrastructure that ultimately allows us to prosecute the missions we need to for our country."

The ceremony concluded with the official ribbon cutting by Olsen, Parsons, and representatives from Eiffage Group, officially marking the facility's operational turnover.

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command is the naval shore facilities, base operating support, and expeditionary engineering systems command delivering life-cycle technical and acquisition solutions aligned to fleet and Marine Corps priorities. NAVFAC EURAFCENT supports fleet commanders by providing engineering assessments and agile acquisition strategy, constructing and maintaining shore infrastructure, and maximizing force readiness to enhance warfighter capability. NAVFAC EURAFCENT serves as the engineering link between the shore and the Fleet in the European, African, and Central Command areas of responsibility. The U.S. military partnership with Spain increases joint and Allied agility and readiness by providing the capability to safely and securely refuel, repair, rearm, and resupply vessels and aircraft.

For more information, contact NAVFAC EURAFCENT public affairs at NAVFAC-EAC-PAO@us.navy.mil.





From curriculum to culture: 725th AMS puts resilience plan into action

Story by 1st Lt. George Schroeder
521st Air Mobility Operations Wing



Along Spain's southern coast the 725th Air Mobility Squadron is turning the unique pressures at Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota into a testing ground for a more deliberate approach to developing resiliency.

"This squadron has some of the best Airmen in the Air Force, and I want to make sure they have every resource available to them," said Lieutenant Colonel Brad Seehawer, 725th AMS commander.

Centered on connection, belonging and the needs of Airmen and their families, the squadron's plan is striking at the heart of specific stressors facing its personnel.

As an Air Force tenant unit at a Spanish-controlled naval station, the 725th AMS operates without a broader Air Force community. World events greatly impact the flow of mobility aircraft through NAVSTA Rota which can shift operational tempo dramatically. Family members often struggle to find employment in Spain and homes off base can feel isolated.

"We asked ourselves what we could do to help Airmen through tough times and improve their connectedness," Seehawer said. "So, we looked at the Air Force resilience curriculum."

The Air Force adopted its curriculum in 2010 from an Army program. Initially designed to help Soldiers manage post-traumatic stress disorder, it evolved to equip service members with practical skills for navigating a broader range of stressful situations. Today, it is known as the Integrated Resilience model.

"We started thinking about how we could use this curriculum as the jumping off point for expanding resilience into something more applicable to the squadron," Seehawer said.

The result was the 725th AMS Resilience Plan, a 14-page strategy outlining how the squadron is aiming to improve the connectedness and belonging of Airmen and their families.

Organized around key focus areas like physical fitness, emotional intelligence and grit, the plan treats resilience not as a stand-alone requirement, but something woven into everyday squadron life. The plan outlines goals tied to tangible actions like small group discussions, spouse and family events, sleep, nutrition and even social media.

"I love what you've done here, and I love this plan," said Colonel Angela Polsinelli, 521st Air Mobility Operations Wing commander, on a recent visit to the squadron. "It gives you measurable goals for an immeasurable concept. No single action solves all challenges, but added together, these focused efforts build more resilient Airmen."

Master Resilience Trainers (MRTs) lead Air Force resilience curriculum and are assisted by Resilience Training Assistants (RTAs). Lt Col Seehawer became an RTA in 2022 and an MRT in 2024. He is leveraging his training to develop a program tailored to the exact needs of his personnel.

"Taking care of Airmen the right way is the most important thing we do," said Chief Master Sgt. Simon Fancher, 521st AMOW command chief. "The structure, emphasis, empowerment and characteristics of this plan make it so unique from anywhere else. This is the most comprehensive program I've seen at the squadron, group or wing level."

It's one thing to have the squadron's plan on paper, but putting it into action requires the work of experienced personnel like Master Sgt. Justin Aguilar, the lead MRT for the squadron.

"My passion for resilience stems from a simple truth," Aguilar said. "What makes or breaks a unit is how we connect with one another."

The 725th AMS Resilience Plan extends beyond the core DAF curriculum. Squadron MRTs have been certified to teach parts of the Navy Warrior Toughness program, recently embedded with Air Force Deployed Transition Centers at Ramstein Air Base, and implemented BOUNCE, a teen-focused version of resilience training.

The team also leverages internal social media and the commander's Key Support Liaison (KSL) program to highlight personnel and ensure it isn't only Airmen who feel connected.

"I'm most proud of the Key Support Liaison program," Seehawer said. "We have more dependents than military members here. Not every spouse wants to be involved in squadron activities, but we want them to at least know who to contact if they need help. We try to think of our KSLs like Ombudsmen, the Navy equivalent of the program."

Aguilar's wife, Arianna Pillado-Aguilar, has been instrumental in the success of the program, offering continuity as the squadron restructured the KSL program to align with the resiliency plan.

"People do not always recognize the impact their actions can have on those around them," Pillado-Aguilar said. "I like to believe that I have made a difference for the 725th. Maybe not in grand gestures, but ensuring that Airmen and families know they are seen, heard and never alone."

Her goal to support Airmen and families has not gone unnoticed. In 2025, she was recognized as the 521st AMOW's KSL of the year for her efforts in revitalizing the program while her husband was recognized as Air Mobility Command's Phoenix Warrior Sponsor of the Year.

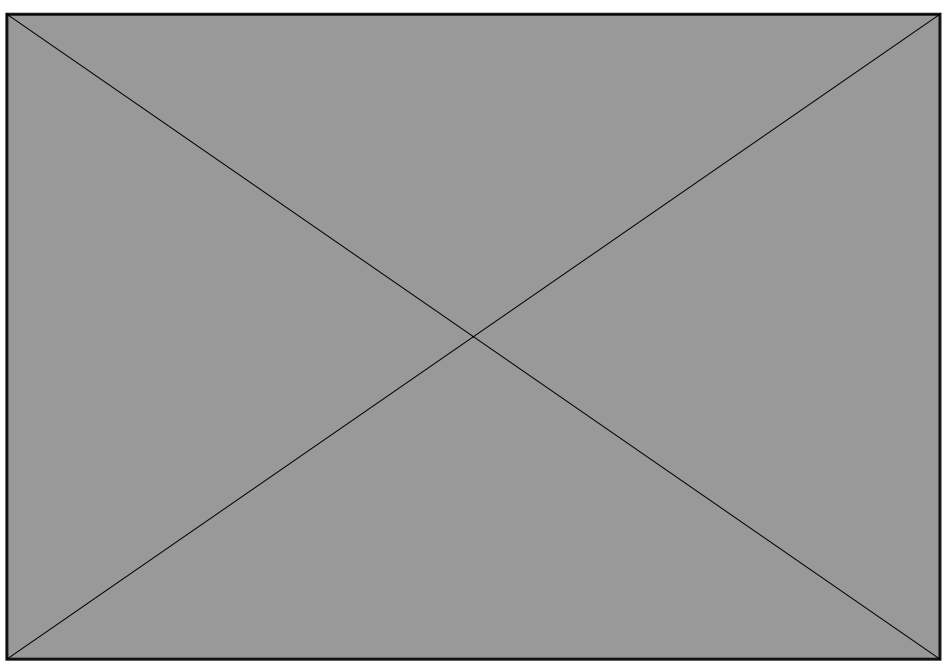
Their work directly impacted the squadron's 2025 climate survey which saw an 11% increase in morale and a 13% increase in unit cohesion—stats the unit hopes to continue to improve in 2026 and beyond.

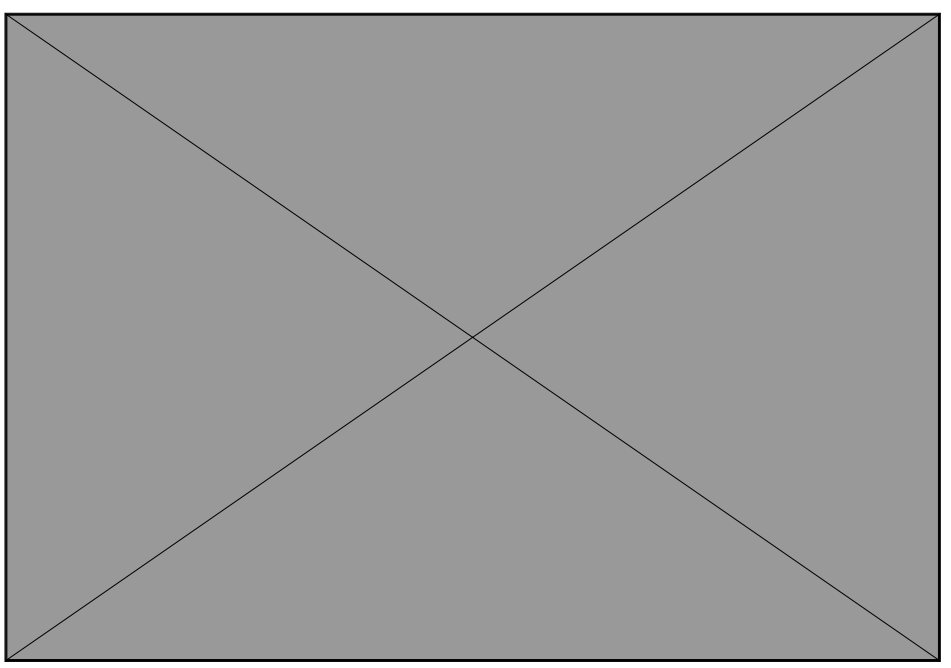
"We're partnering with the Navy Chaplain's office to build safeTALK into our Foundations courses," Seehawer said. "We're using commercial apps to promote Mindfulness. We're sending our Airmen to get civilian certifications in nutrition and sleep science to replicate the services provided in Guardian Resilience Teams."

Units have no shortage of resources available to forge stronger, more resilient teams. Often, it just requires one person taking initiative to put them into action.

"Building a strong organizational foundation requires us to foster trust, create safe spaces for open dialogue and equip our team with the emotional intelligence needed to navigate high-tempo environments," Aguilar said. "When we invest in our people this way, the warrior mindset follows naturally."







Damas del Rosario tour Rota Middle-High School

Photos by Everett Lopez
Contributing Community Photographer

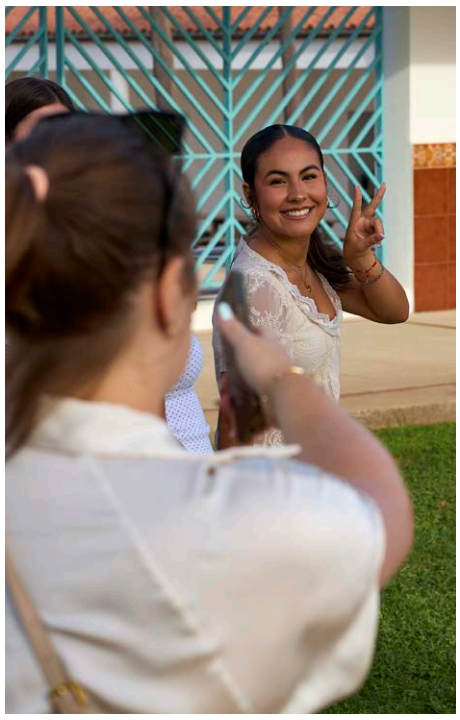
This year's Damas del Rosario, alongside members and the Ayuntamiento de Rota, toured Naval Station Rota on Sept. 3, 2026.

They visited Rota Middle-High School, the Spanish ship Castilla (L-52) and the Spanish navy's Flotilla de Aeronaves. They also had the chance to meet with the base leadership.

















Team Rota

Jose Luis Civera Pineda

Jose Luis Civera Pineda, from Puçol, Spain, is the support services assistant serving onboard National Support Element (NSE) Valencia. His typical workday involves coordinating mail movement, managing and organizing MWR trips and events, and managing travel funds for U.S. personnel among other roles. Before becoming the support services assistant, Pineda held the housing management assistant role when he first joined the Valencia team in 2018.

"Since I grew up in this area, I really enjoy helping our customers with everyday needs, from legal/bureaucratic procedures, to recommending local services, places to visit or serving as a translator when needed," stated Pineda. "I appreciate sharing my local knowledge and making things a little easier for them."

Pineda explained that he works with a small team at NSE Valencia and everyone must be knowledgeable in several areas to ensure the mission is completed.

"As the longest-serving employee in the office, one of my additional responsibilities is helping onboard and training new team members. I help them learn our office procedures, daily operations, and the different services we provide," specified Pineda. "As mentioned previously, serving as a community liaison would also be one of those extra duties, acting as a bridge between our personnel and the local Spanish community. I assist with a wide range of legal and administrative matters, helping personnel understand and navigate local procedures and bureaucratic requirements."

Outside the workplace, Pineda enjoys playing competitive sports; he is playing with a soccer team and is participating in several padel tournaments. He also enjoys reading, playing video games, and learning about Spanish legislation.

"(NSE Valencia), although its small and not many people know about our existence, has a tremendous impact on our service members, families, civilian employees and retirees of our community," stated Pineda. "Since we are the only U.S. facility near them, we provide administrative agent support and adequate standards of safety, security, welfare, and quality of life."

Unaccompanied housing wins award

By Rodney Kayes
Naval Station Rota Housing Department

Congratulations to the Unaccompanied Housing team for receiving the 2026 Crystal Award real estate award for customer service excellence! The award is based on survey responses for overall satisfaction of property and service. Managing 19 aging unaccompanied housing buildings throughout the year is a tall order and the Rota Unaccompanied Housing Team of 25 Spanish, military and civilian personnel do it with style and are second to none!

One major project at Unaccompanied Housing began in December of 2025. Housing identified deficiencies at Camp Mitchell which initiated an aggressive phased project to restore property condition and in turn, restoring resident moral. The renovation project focused on repairing and painting visible surfaces, interior and exterior doors, window screens, interior fixtures and remodeling of the bathroom and exterior vanity. The phased renovation includes a deliberate, coordinated effort with Public Works Department, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, and tenant commands in moving occupants and furnishings from one property to another as the buildings are completed in roughly 6-month intervals with a project completion date of February 2028.

NAVSTA Rota continues to be a strategic base in Europe and unaccompanied housing plays a vital role in its' success by providing quality housing for single sailors and geographic bachelors. I am honored to work with you, and I look forward to the great things we will accomplish together in the months to come.

Unaccompanied housing (UH) at Rota Spain consists of 19 buildings and has been lodging warfighters for 69 years. The first 8 buildings numbered 28 to 35 and were constructed between 1957 and 1958. The next 4 built were the 500 series constructed between 1966 and 1967. Building 226, previously owned by Navy Inn, was constructed in 1962. It was brought into the UH inventory in 2025 to support the arrival of the USS Oscar Austin. The last 6 buildings are in Camp Mitchell and were constructed between 1986 to 1988 to support the Seabee battalion.



From left to right: Jesús Lubian Fernández: Safety Manager, SEMI; Angela Romero Gil: Quality Control Manager, SEMI; Javier Olivares Marin, UH complex manager; Maria Angeles Garcia, UH supervisor.

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The September 11th Attacks, 25 years later

In remembrance of the September 11th attacks that took place 25 years ago, we asked Sailors, retirees, and firefighters of various backgrounds and generations for their thoughts surrounding the tragedy.



"On September 11, 2001, nineteen terrorists hijacked four commercial aircraft. Two struck the World Trade Center towers. One hit the Pentagon. Aboard Flight 93, intended for Washington D.C., passengers fought back, forcing their aircraft into a Pennsylvania field rather than let it reach its target. Nearly 3,000 people died. Thousands more were injured.

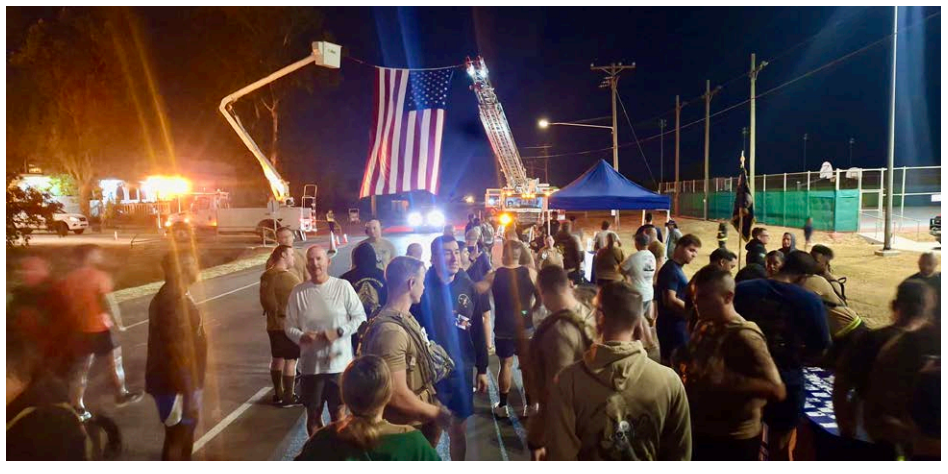
I was in high school when the second plane struck the South Tower. What I remember most, after the shock, is what came next: a nation coming together. Flags rose over homes, storefronts, and street corners. Strangers stood side by side at vigils and prayed together in crowded churches. Neighbors looked after neighbors. For a time, our differences receded, and what remained was something larger: a shared identity as Americans. That spirit of unity and sacrifice took root in me and eventually led me into the Navy.

Today, I serve aboard USS PAUL IGNATIUS, where 165 of our 362 Sailors were born after September 11, 2001. For them, 9/11 is history—read about, studied, discussed in a classroom. For those of us who lived it, it remains immediate and personal. That difference is why our responsibility matters: to close the gap between memory and history by telling the stories, honoring the fallen, and passing the lessons forward with the weight they deserve.

The Navy carries that memory in steel. Three ships stand as living tributes: USS NEW YORK, her bow cast from steel recovered at Ground Zero; USS ARLINGTON, honoring the victims at the Pentagon; and USS SOMERSET, named for the Pennsylvania county where Flight 93's passengers gave their lives to save others.

On this 25th anniversary, we remember what was lost—and what followed: courage, unity, service. That is the legacy we owe the dead, and the standard we owe those carrying this nation forward."

- Cmdr. William Burke
Commanding Officer, USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117)



"On September 11, 2001, one of the darkest tragedies in American history took place. I was not yet alive when it happened, nor was I born in the United States. I was born on April 14, 2003, in Ecuador, nearly two years after 9/11. Even so, it was a tragedy I learned about at a very young age.

Until I was eight years old, I attended an English academy in Ecuador, where 9/11 was one of the primary historical events taught in our curriculum. Though I was too young at the time to fully grasp the true scope of the tragedy, the event stuck with me. Later, when I moved to the United States, I came to realize just how significant remembering 9/11 is to the American people. As I grew older, I researched the topic more extensively to understand what really happened on that day.

Once I joined the Navy, I began to investigate the chain of events that 9/11 set off. Because I wasn't alive when it occurred, I didn't experience firsthand how it altered people's daily lives in real time, but I have seen how it reshaped many of their futures. Many of the people I have met in the military began their service post-9/11 out of a profound sense of duty to their country.

Unfortunately, as the years have passed, 9/11 seems to have shifted from a deeply respected day of remembrance to just another post on someone's social media story. I often feel that many people in my generation fail to understand its true significance, treating it as an obligation. It can be easy for those who were not directly impacted to lose sight of what 9/11 truly meant when we were not around to see it."

- Ensign Micaela Cabrera



"On Sept. 11th, 2001, I was living in Rota. I was at home watching TV when they announced the terrible news of the first impact on the World Trade Center. I just couldn't believe it was real. I was shocked watching the whole chain of events through the Spanish news. It was just unbelievable that the U.S. could be attacked.

At that moment, I was overcome with a feeling of absolute helplessness because I had just left the Navy the year before. The only thing that I thought I could do was re-enlist and come back to serve and defend our country. And that's what I did. We all might think that our daily efforts and work don't matter, but they do. Every person counts!

Through annual commemorations of 9/11 we show our love and respect for the victims of that dreadful day. The tragedy of 9/11 also reminds us that we have to stay alert, so that hopefully we can prevent similar horrors from happening."

- Amanda Gipson
NC1 (Retired), USN

"Like most Americans who are old enough, I remember 11 September 2001 quite clearly. I was at Commander, Submarine Force, Atlantic Fleet, in Norfolk, VA. I was just down the hall from the PAO, who always had a TV tuned to the news. After the first plane hit the World Trade Center, word spread, and many gathered around the PAO's TV. When I arrived, a second plane had hit the towers. A New Yorker, I had worked across the street at Merrill Lynch one summer, and my brother worked on the NY Stock Exchange, just blocks away. I was stunned! Then the news reported an explosion at the Pentagon. I assumed (foolishly, in hindsight) it was a car bomb. Once it became clear the United States was under attack, we quickly began to evaluate what more could be done to ensure the Submarine Force was not the next object of attack. Everyone throughout the government did the same, in their own areas. By the time I left for home that evening, force protection/security measures were high, and things would never be the same. A few days later, I drove to NY. As I drove up the NJ Thruway, I could see the Manhattan skyline, smoke still rising from where the Towers had stood. Years later, I would have the honor to work prosecuting the alleged perpetrators and their fellow al Qaeda terrorists in military commissions. Unfortunately, that effort largely remains a work-in-progress 25 years later — but it continues. We still see the consequences of that day in reduced access to public sites & heighten security that have become normal parts of our modern reality. But more than anything, I remember the bravery of those who responded to the attacks, and the unity and resolve they provoked among Americans. "

- Edward S. White
Captain (Retired), USN



"On September 11, 2001, I was in Astoria Park, a quiet neighborhood in Queens, New York. I remember it like it was yesterday. I was doing chores at home, with the television tuned to breaking news from Manhattan. At first, I couldn't comprehend what was happening. It felt surreal, almost like a scene from a movie. But as soon as I stepped outside, the gravity of the situation hit me like a punch to the gut. The stunning views of the Manhattan skyline were obscured by a massive cloud of dust and debris. In those initial moments, I was flooded with a mix of fear, sadness, anger, and confusion. How could this happen in the Big Apple—the city that never sleeps? It felt unimaginable. I remember standing there, paralyzed, as the chaos unfolded around me. The world had changed in an instant.

Just a month later, my life took another turn. I was activated by my reserve unit for Operation Enduring Freedom and reported to Dover Air Force Base to serve as a firefighter in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Transitioning from a civilian life filled with uncertainty to the harsh realities of a war zone was a surreal experience. I worked as a Crash Fire and Rescue firefighter in a bare base environment, with no lodging or running water. Our meals consisted of various MREs, and we faced attacks almost daily. Each day brought new challenges, and we lost even more American lives while deployed. Despite the chaos, I felt a profound sense of honor. I was standing up against those who had inflicted such harm on our nation. A month before 9/11, I had lost my older brother after a long battle with a medical illness. As I reflected on that tragic day each year, I found solace in the belief that he was watching over me. I often thought about how proud he would be to see me answering the call when our country needed us most."

- Moises Colon
Assistant Fire Chief Operations



Twenty-five years ago, September 11, 2001, changed our world forever.

That morning, I stood in a barber shop at Naval Station Annapolis, gathered with strangers around a television as the attacks unfolded. We watched in disbelief as the World Trade Center and Pentagon were struck, and later learned of the extraordinary courage of the passengers aboard Flight 93 in Pennsylvania.

Nearly 3,000 lives were lost that day—sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, friends and colleagues. We also witnessed remarkable courage: first responders running toward danger, ordinary citizens helping strangers, and communities coming together in the face of unimaginable tragedy.

America did not grieve alone. Our allies stood with us, and Spain was among them.

Just five days after the attacks, His Royal Highness the Prince of Asturias joined Spanish authorities, local leaders, neighbors, and the American community at Naval Station Rota for a memorial ceremony. For Americans serving far from home, that solidarity carried profound meaning.

In the aftermath of 9/11, NATO invoked Article 5—its collective-defense provision—for the first and only time in the Alliance's history. Naval Station Rota supported the response and continues to play an important role in our shared security today.

A quarter-century later, an entire generation knows September 11 only as history. Those of us who remember it have a responsibility to preserve its lessons: courage in the face of danger, service before self, compassion for others, and the enduring strength of allies united by shared values.

- Capt. Charles Chmielak
Commanding Officer, Naval Station Rota, Spain



Celebrating Ombudsman Appreciation Mon

Amy Le

NAVSTA Rota



“I became an ombudsman through the recommendation of the very person who helped my family with our PCS here. I was raised in a traditional home where asking for help was often seen as a weakness. Although I still struggle with it, I would like to be a trusted source of support and help those sailors and families who may be facing similar challenges.”

Tracy Powers

CNSG-E / CTF-65 DESRON 60



“Having lived through overwhelming moments of isolation, loneliness, and deep uncertainty when my husband first joined the Navy, I became an Ombudsman to ensure that no other family ever has to face that vulnerability alone. My mission is to make our Navy families feel truly seen, supported, and deeply appreciated for the immense sacrifices they make for the mission. I want to serve as their lighthouse and compass—providing a steady, compassionate, and always-approachable guide through the unique challenges of military life.”

Stephanie Martin

CTF 68

“I became an Ombudsman because I want to be a trusted resource for families, especially during transitions when clear communication and support are so important. I want to help bridge the gap between the base, command, and families by providing timely information, connecting people with resources, and making sure families feel heard, supported, and included.”

Carrie Nanning

HSM-79



“Is it wrong to say myself? At least the version of myself who arrived in Rota as a new spouse, overwhelmed by learning how to survive and trhive in this world we call the U.S. Navy. My goal is to give what I needed to each spouse or family member who reaches out: A safety net and reource when things get off-kilter, a bridge to making this their home, and knowledge of the amazing resources available to help them thrive here.”

Faheemah Jester

NAVSUP FLC Site Rota



"I became an Ombudsman because I wanted to be a source of support and encouragement for the Navy families in my husband’s command. I believe in building a strong sense of community, keeping families informed , and making sure they know they have someone they can turn to when they need guidance or support.“

Jasmine Klimaski

NMRTC Rota

“Serving as a Command Ombudsman offers a meaningful opportunity to enhance the well-being of Navy families and strengthen the Command's sense of community-cultivating an environment in which both single Sailors and families feel valued, supported, connected, and assured that they are not alone.”

Jessica Sanchez

USS Bulkeley (DDG 84)



"When I arrived in Spain, it was hard to find a purpose and becoming ombudsman for our command lead to many great opportunities to serve our community. This is my last month as ombudsman alongside Cassie and I’m forever grateful for the opportunity to have been able to help comfort so many families during some of the most stressful times in their lives."

Cassandra Gaffney

USS Bulkeley (DDG 84)



"Being able to help the families of the Bulkeley with Jessica was my main driving force to become an ombudsman. I am so thankful for the opportunity to share my knowledge and to form positive connections within both the Bulkeley and Rota communities. I have had the opportunity to support both new and seasoned families through their Spanish adventures and it has been a heartwarming a truly unique experience."

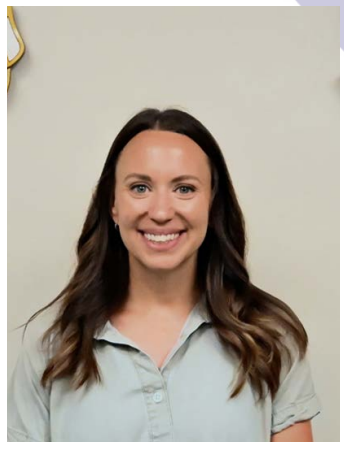
Taylor Larrowe

USS Oscar Austin (DDG 79)

“I have always had a passion for serving and helping others. I feel privileged to be able to provide information, guidance and support to fellow military spouses as we all navigate this life, especially with the challenges that come with being overseas.”

Sarah Seehawer

725th AMS / 521st AMOG



“I’ve been through 5 PCSs in the last 10 years so I know how stressful it can be arriving at a new base, especially overseas, and trying to find your new normal. I love being able to help others in that process, with finding the resources they need, or just being a friendly face when it’s all a little overwhelming.”

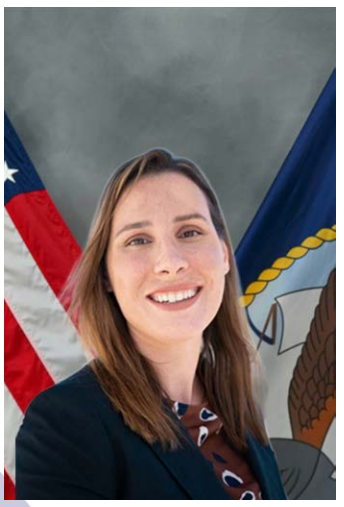
th: "Why did you become an Ombudsman?"



Flora Barron

EODMU 8

“I volunteered for the Ombudsman role so I could leverage my experiences and expertise to help families navigate the unique challenges we face as a community. I am driven by helping families surmount struggle and thrive by offering meaningful guidance and supports. Military families serve alongside servicemembers, and they deserve a community that pours back into them.”



Katie White

FLTPACEN Rota



"I wanted to become an Ombudsman because I remember what it was like being new to a command and having a million questions, and I really appreciated having someone I could turn to. As I found myself becoming that person for other spouses, I realized how much I enjoy supporting people and being that extra layer of support when things feel new or overwhelming, which made me want to step up and become an Ombudsman myself."



Piloya Otermat

USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51)

“I became an ombudsman to support families by providing reliable information, guidance and trusted point of contact during both everyday situations and times of challenge. I am passionate about building strong communication between leadership and families, ensuring everyone feels heard, supported , and connected.”



Kristin Morris

USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51)



“I became an Ombudsmen because I truly wanted to make a difference for my fellow military spouses -to help guide them, advocate for them, and be a pillar of support through all the different seasons of military life. After more than 12 years as a military spouse myself, I wanted to use the experiences, lessons, and knowledge I have gained along the way to help others feel supported, informed, and never alone in navigating this life.”



Kate Berg

USS Roosevelt (DDG 80)

“My 'why' behind becoming an Ombudsman is my desire to serve others and make a meaningful difference in the lives of our military families. I want to provide support, guidance, and connection to resources while helping families feel informed, valued, and supported throughout their time in the military community.”



Sammie Pack

USS Roosevelt (DDG 80)

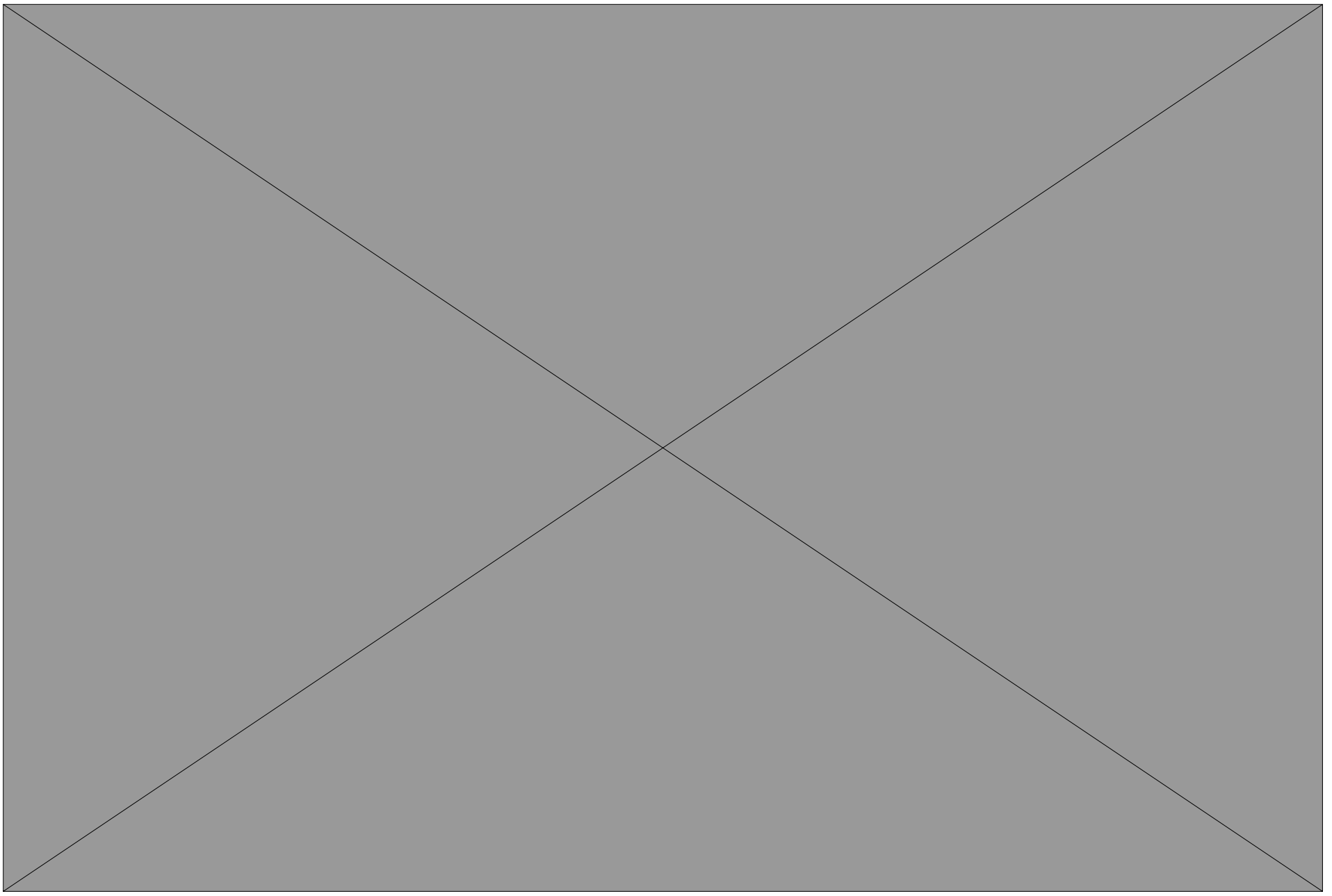
“My why for becoming an ombudsman is simple: I want to help people. I believe everyone deserves to feel heard, respected, and valued, especially during times when they may feel overwhelmed, uncertain, or unsure of where to turn.”

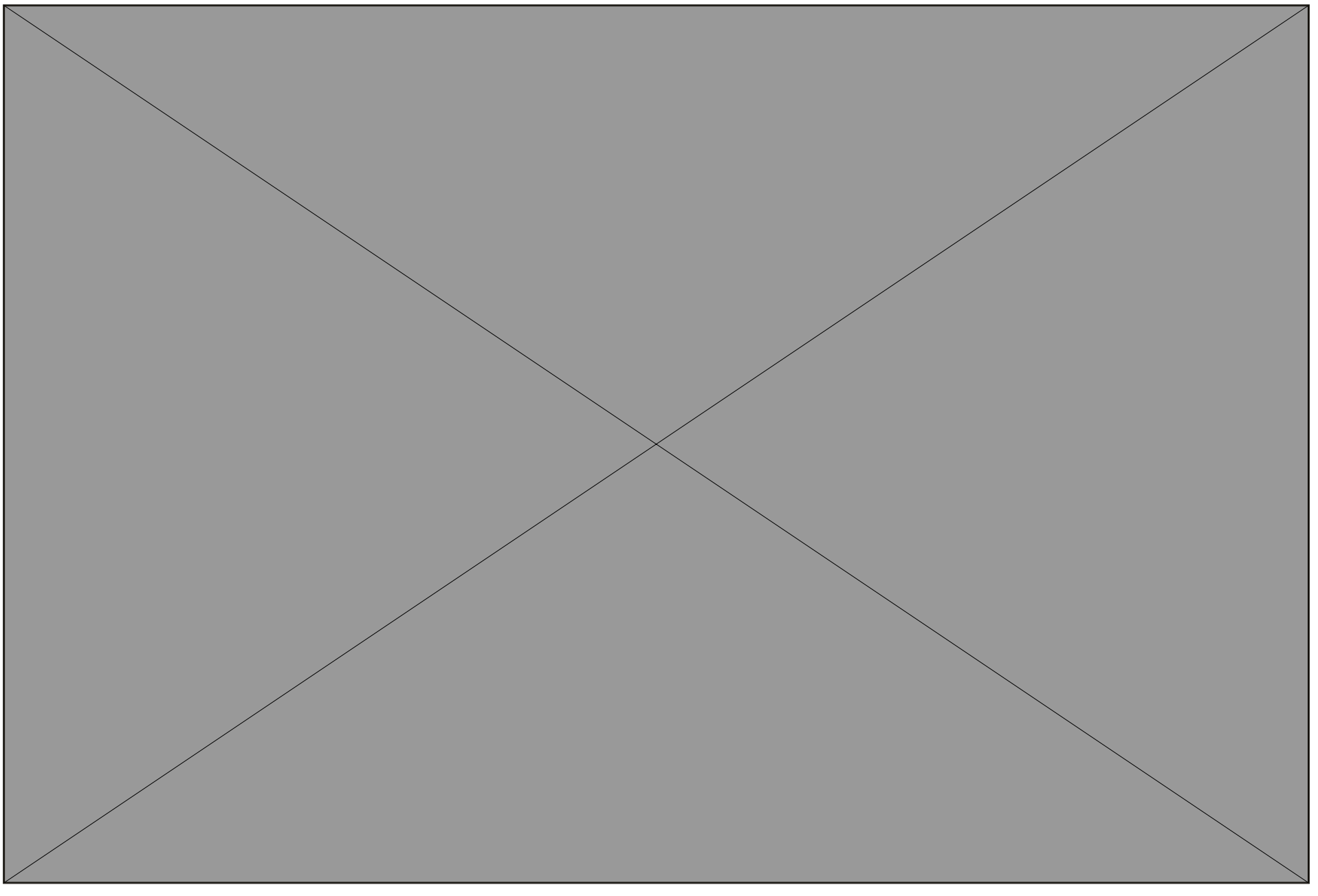


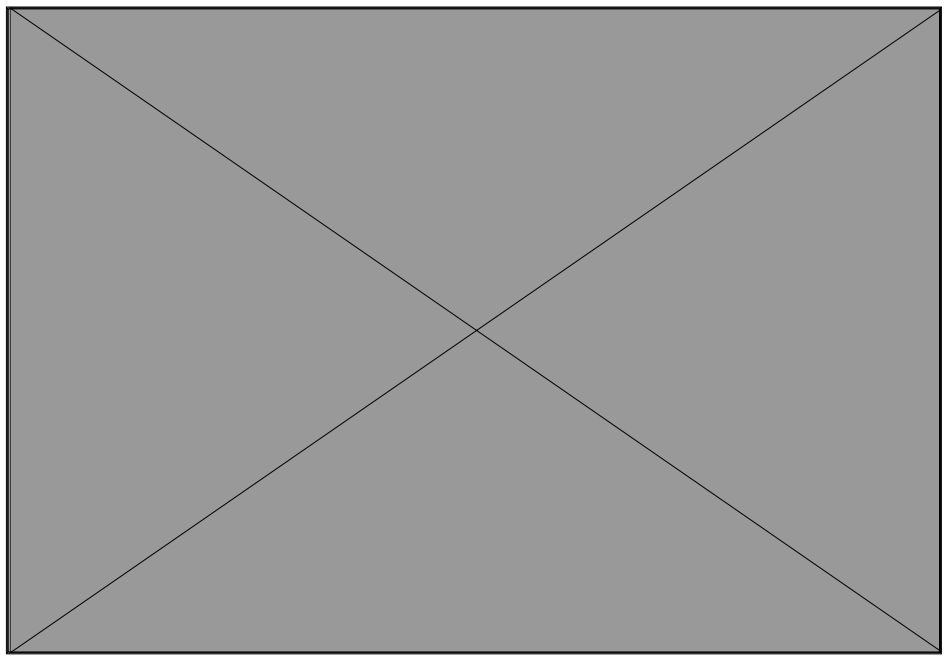
Candace Rodriguez

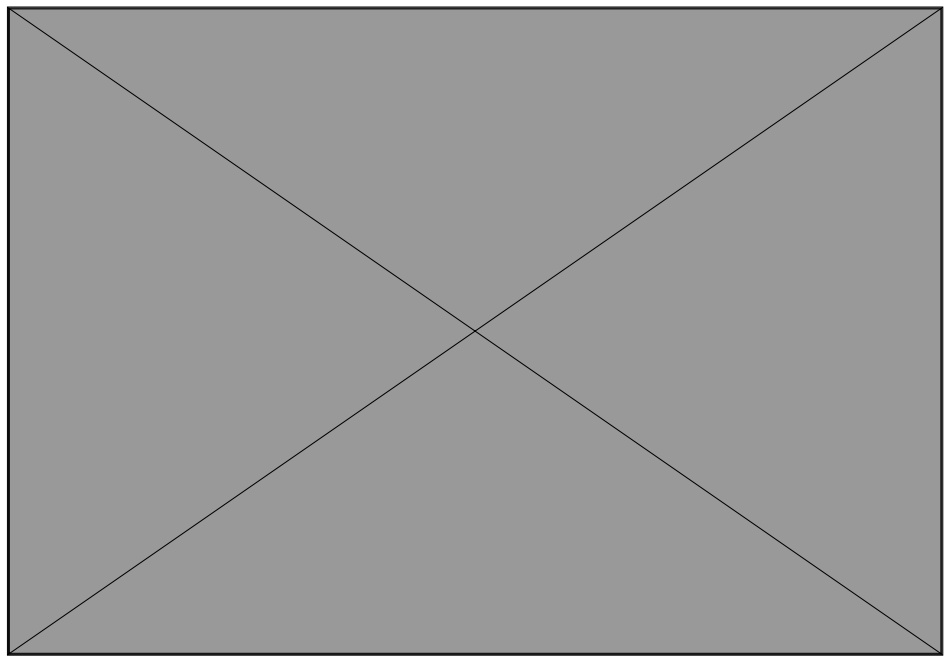
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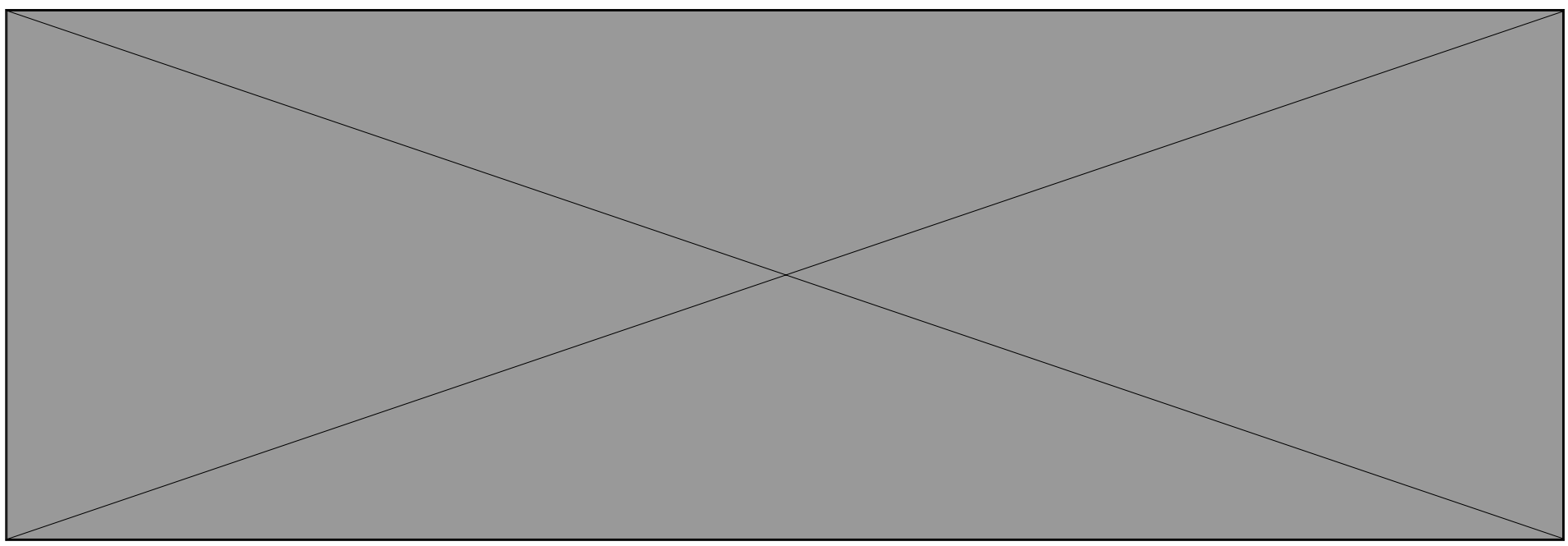
“I chose to become an ombudsman to serve as a compassionate bridge between families and the command, ensuring loved ones have clear, reliable information to navigate military life. By offering a confidential and impartial space to address concerns, I am driven to empower families with knowledge while supporting the command’s mission to build a strong, connected community. Ultimately, my "why" is fostering trust and ensuring every family feels supported, informed, and connected."

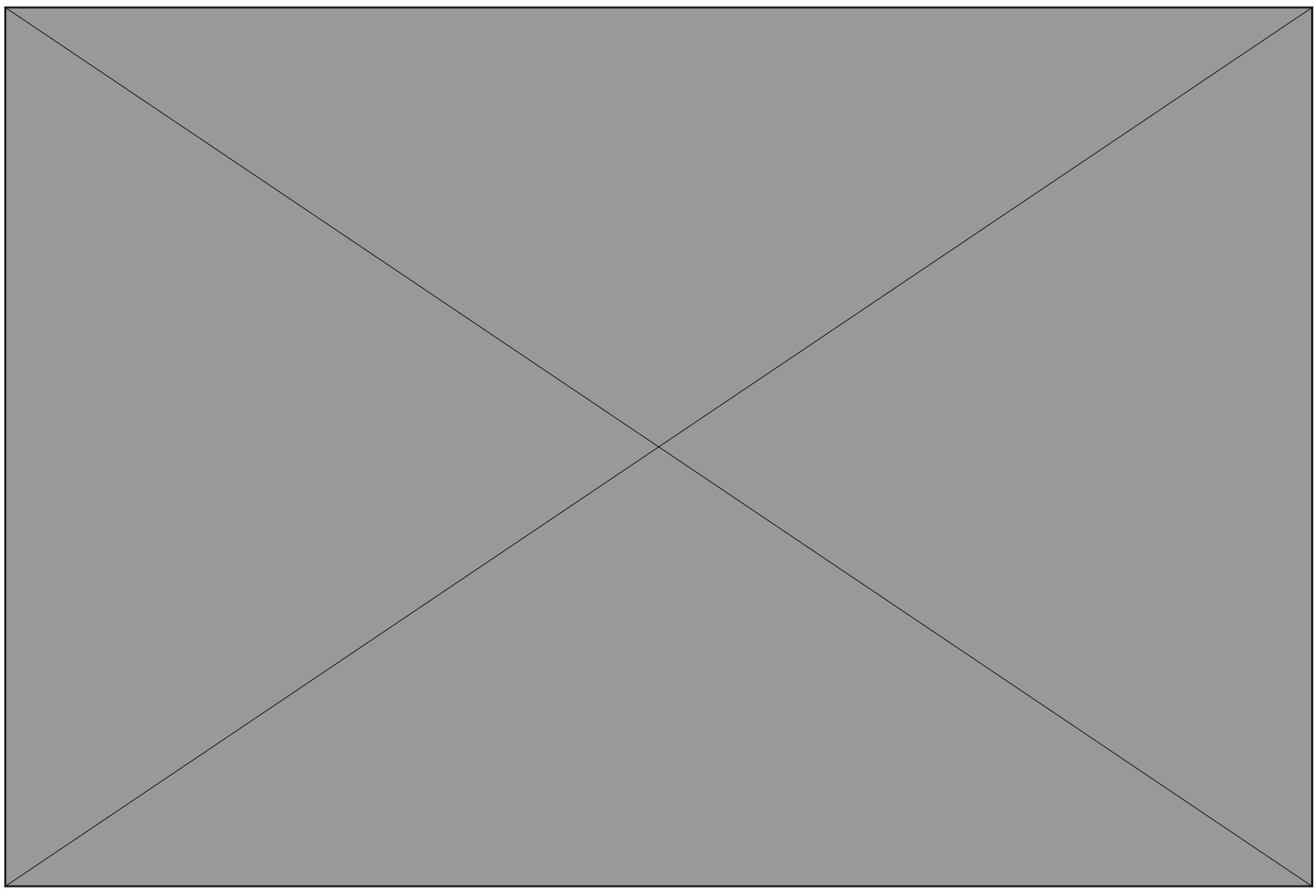












Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 79 flight operations

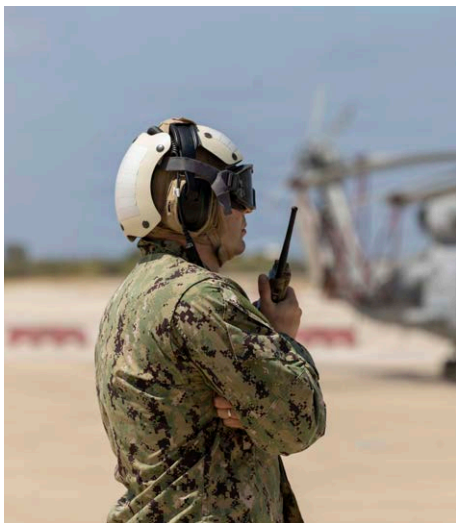
Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Johnny Garcia and Ryan Brown

Sailors assigned to the “Griffins” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 79 conducted aerial operations and landings in the vicinity of Naval Station Rota, Spain, Aug. 20, 2026.











NAVSUP Sailors volunteer with "abuelos"

Sailors from Naval Supply Systems Command Fleet Ligistics Center Sigonella - Site Rota participated in two volunteering events at Asociación de Familiares de Enfermos de Alzheimer y otras Demencias "El Arenal de Rota" during the month of August. Volunteers had the opportunity to paint, play games and sing karaoke with the association's users, also known as "abuelos."







Team Rota members volunteer at triathlon

U.S. Sailors, civilians, and family members volunteered during the city of Rota's 29th triathlon on September 6, 2026.



NAVAL STATION ROTA COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings

AA on base: "Rota 213" meets Tuesday and Thursday, 1800-1900 (6-7pm) in person in the NAVSTA Rota Chapel (in the back). For meeting information, please contact Cynthia at +34 661 47 95 20 or Dean at +34 674 38 77 55.

AA off base on Zoom: "Rota Drydockers." Every Saturday, 1600 (4 pm) on Zoom only. For information on how to join the Zoom session, contact Cynthia at +34 661 47 95 20 or Joe G. via WhatsApp at: +34 603 84 15 59.

AA in Rota in English: "Rota to Recovery." Every Saturday, 1900-2000 (7-8pm) in person, Calle Bachiller, 11, Rota; parking is available near the marina. For information, please contact Cynthia at +34 661 47 95 20 or Dean at +34 674 38 77 55.

Al-Anon Meetings

Have you been affected by another person's drinking? If so, please join us every Wednesday at 1600 (4 p.m.) at the base chapel nursery for an Al-Anon meeting. The only requirement for Al-Anon membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend. For info on meetings, please contact Naydene at +34 669 09 7149.

American Red Cross

Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Volunteers are welcome and encouraged to stop by the office and CPR courses are now being offered. Days and times of the courses will be posted on our FB page. For more information, call us during business hours at DSN 727-2333 or commercial, +34 956-82-2333, or visit our Facebook page, @RedCrossRota.

American Red Cross Emergency Communications Service

Red Cross Emergency Messages services operate 24/7. If you have a family emergency during business hours, call us immediately at DSN (314) 727-2333 or +34 956-82-2333. After hours or on weekends, our national call center can be reached at +1 (877) 272-7337. Messages can also be initiated online, at https://www.redcross.org/military-emergency-communication.html

Rota Education Center

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and University of Maryland Global Campus offices are open and able to assist you in reaching your education goals. The Rota Education Center is located on the first floor of the Community Services Building (Bldg. 3293).

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS)

When you are having trouble meeting urgent financial needs, NMCRS may be able to provide an interest-free loan or grant. Through financial counseling, we will also help you plan for better financial stability. Our services are completely confidential. If you are approved for a loan or grant, you will receive funds immediately. There is no application fee and the appointment is completely free. If you need $1,000 or less, you may be eligible for our Quick Assist Loan.

NMCRS Business Office

Monday-Friday; 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.
Office: DSN 727-1614 or +34 956-821-614
After Hours Duty Cell: +34 660 984 511
After Hours Emergency Assistance: +1 (877) 272-7337
Email: rota@nmcrs.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/nmcrsrota

NMCRS Thrift Shop

Hours of Operation

Monday: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Thursday: 3-6 p.m. (third Thursday / active duty + dependents only)
Third Saturday of month: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

NMCRS Casework and Classes

Casework Appointment: For active duty Navy, Marines, retirees, and dependents, the NMCRS can help you with financial relief. This can be used for emergency travel, basic living expenses (BLE), pet OCONUS, auto, household set up, and more.

Budget for Baby Class: Are you a new or prospective parent? Join us in-person to learn important budgeting skills for your new addition! Parents will learn about military pay fluctuations, baby expenses, consumer pressures targeting new parents, and entitlements available through government and private sources. This class is now open to both active duty and government civilian families. All participants will receive a layette and a handmade baby blanket. Families will also receive a $50 Amazon gift card. To register, visit http://linktr.ee/nmcrsrota and select the desired class and date.

Command Classes: We offer financial classes for groups and commands. Our caseworkers can come to you, or we can hold the classes in our classroom. Call or email our office to schedule one of these classes.

Upcoming NMCRS and Hospital maternal programs and classes:

The Visiting Nurse program includes home and virtual visits, classes, and community support groups for active duty, retirees, and their families. The Visiting Nurse provides health education, resource referral, and support for prenatal and postpartum, newborn care, breastfeeding, pediatric, adult, and geriatric health concerns.

NMCRS: VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Are you interested in volunteering in the NMCRS office or Thrift Shop? We have several opportunities to grow your resume while contributing to our community! We also reimburse for childcare and mileage. Apply to volunteer online at http://linktr.ee/nmcrsrota and join us for a monthly volunteer orientation. NMCRS Rota is looking for blanket makers and Thrift Shop volunteers.

Preschool Services for Children with Disabilities

Child Find for children three to five years of age is an ongoing outreach program that locates and identifies children who may have developmental delays or educational disabilities and need special services. If you have concerns regarding your child's development, please contact DSN 727-4185/4435 or commercial, +34 956-82-4185/4435.

Retired Activities Office (RAO)

Fleet and Family Support Center, Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., by appointment only, +34 956 82 3232.

RAO serves as a link between the military retired community and other government agencies, such as Federal benefits Unit for Social Security and Defense Finance and Accounting Service, Veterans Administration (VA), and Office of Personnel Management (OPM). RAO provides assistance to survivors regarding pensions and benefits and is a source for information about retiring and living in Spain.

USO Rota

The mission of the USO is to strengthen the well-being of America's military service members and their families. At USO Rota, we are dedicated to this mission by offering a variety of events and services—all free for active duty service members and their families.

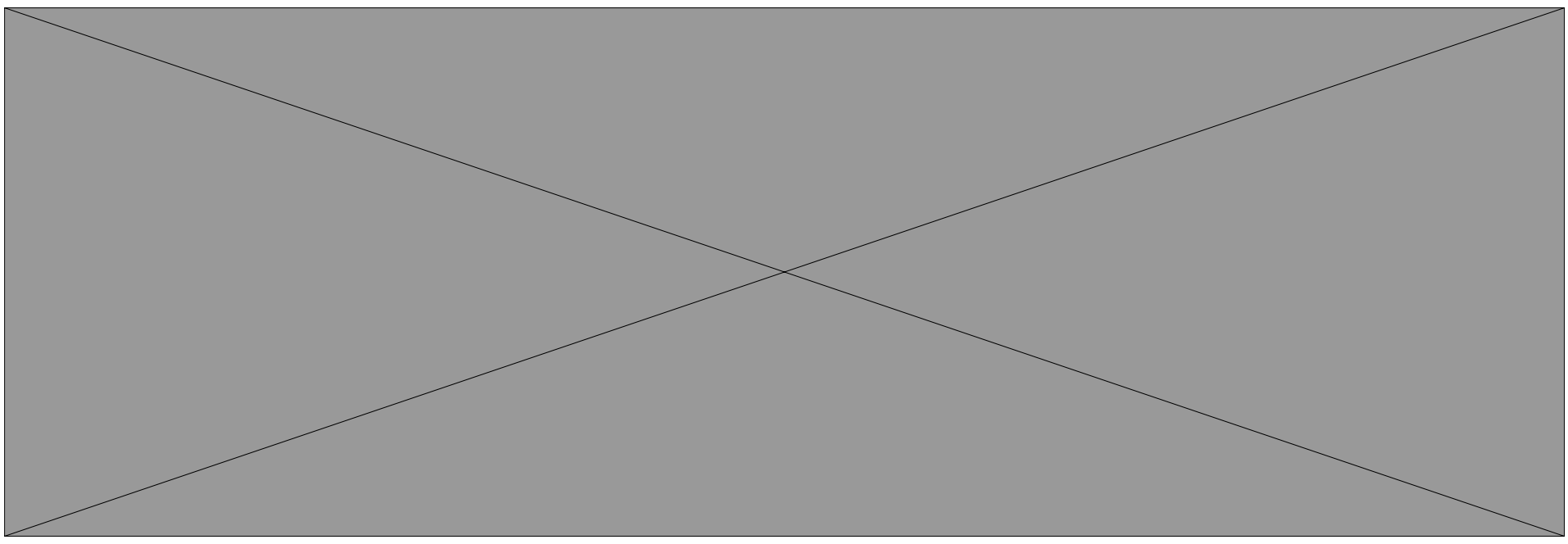
Our center is conveniently located inside the Air Terminal and is open Monday through Friday, from 0830 to 1630. We invite you to join us for any of our events or stop by for a visit!

Interested in giving back? The USO is a fantastic organization for volunteering. To get started, fill out your volunteer profile at VOLUNTEERS.USO.ORG.

For all USO Rota events and more, follow "USO Rota" on Facebook at www.facebook.com/USORota.

WIC Overseas

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Overseas is a nutrition education and supplemental food program that aims to improve the overall health and wellness of families for active duty service members and their dependents, DoD civilian employees and their dependents, DoD contractors and their dependents. Basic nutrition and health screenings, drafts to be redeemed for nutritious foods, access to resources & tips that help you and your family lead healthier lives, healthier birth weights for babies, reduced anemia rates for children, breastfeeding support, breast pump loan program, breastfeeding/pumping room open to everyone. Call DSN 727-2921 or commercial, +34 956-82-2921, for more information.



ICYMI: August's LN Legends focused on the Navy Lodge and Navy Inn local nationals.

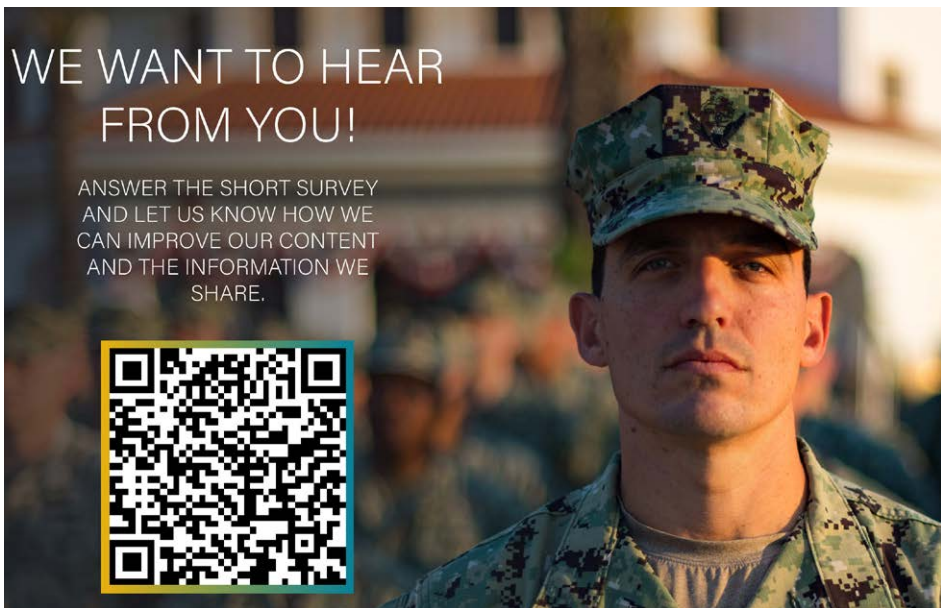
They work around the clock to provide award-winning service from check-in to check-out, ensuring our warfighters and families are rested and recharged for the mission!

And this month's LN Legends focuses on Naval Station Rota's Safety department local nationals.

From holding training on how to prevent injuries at work to zone inspections and mask fittings, they work hard to ensure everybody gets home safe after work!



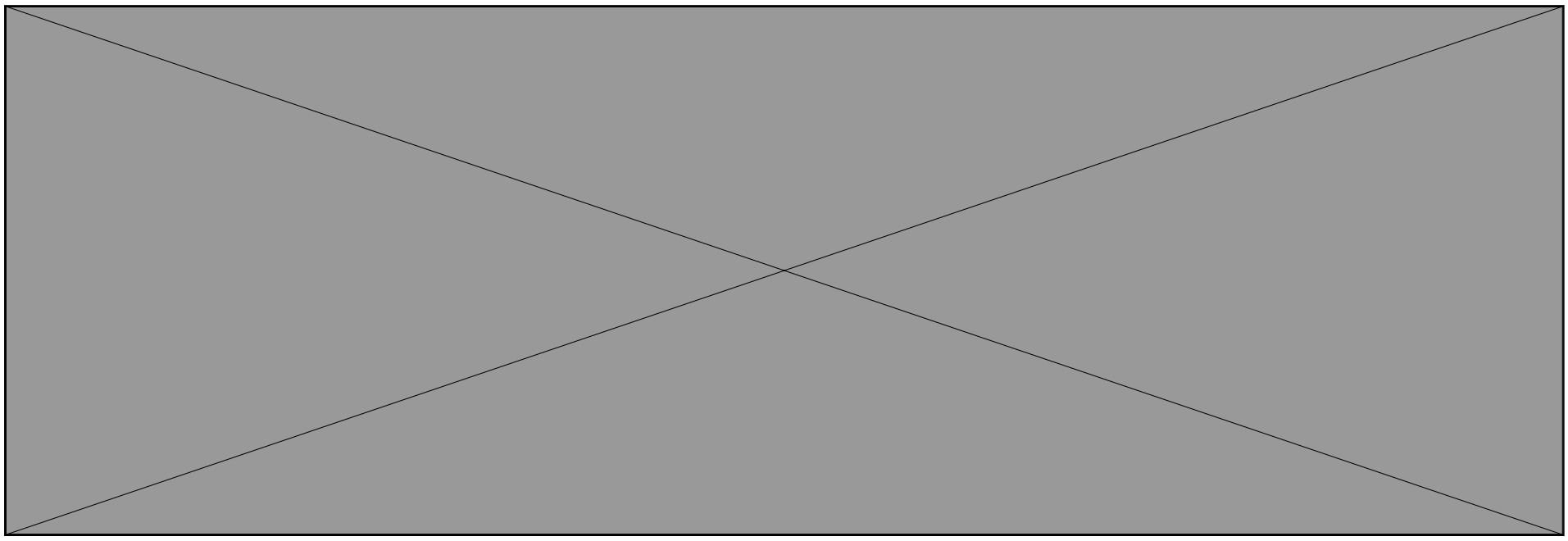


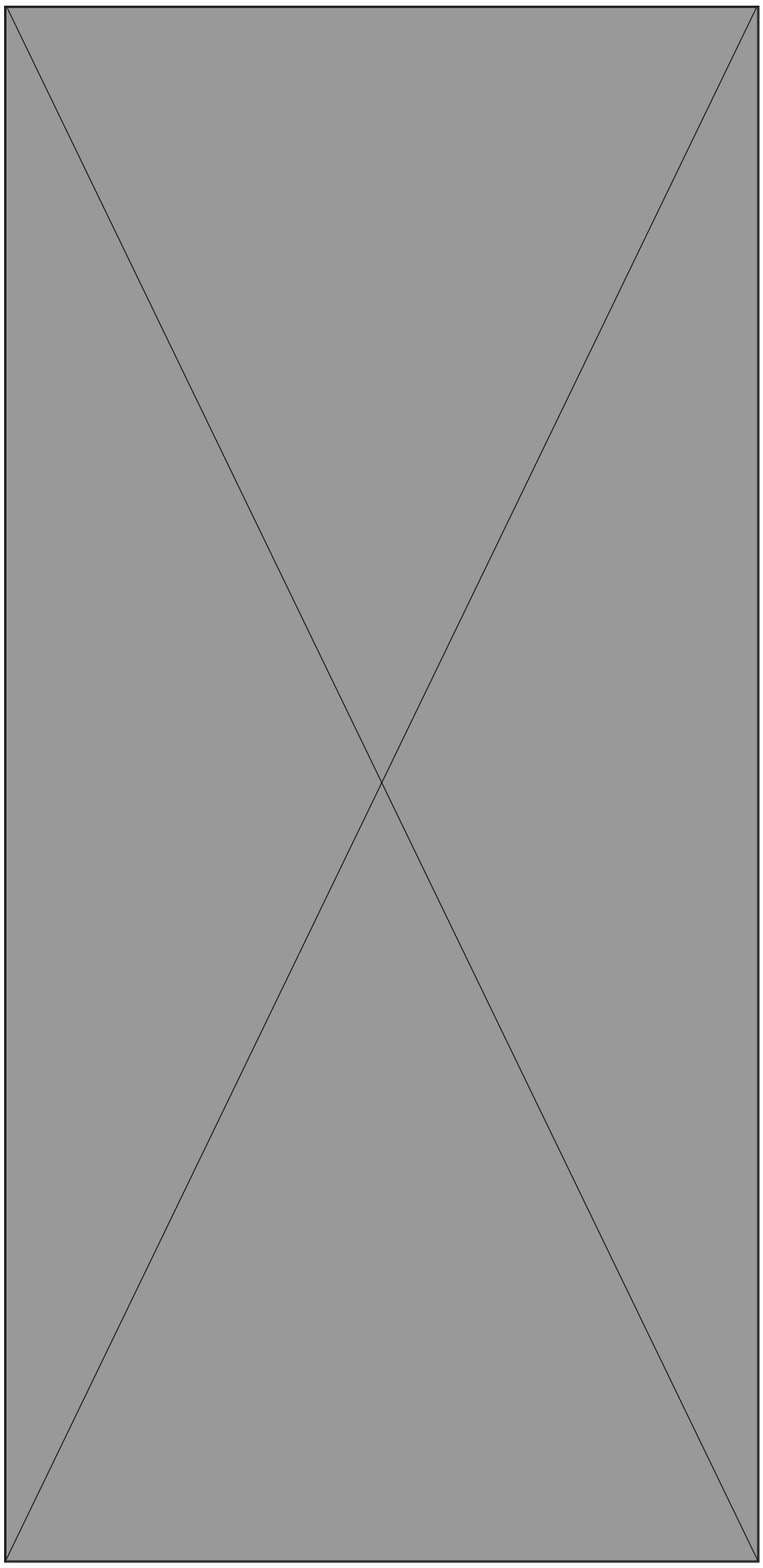


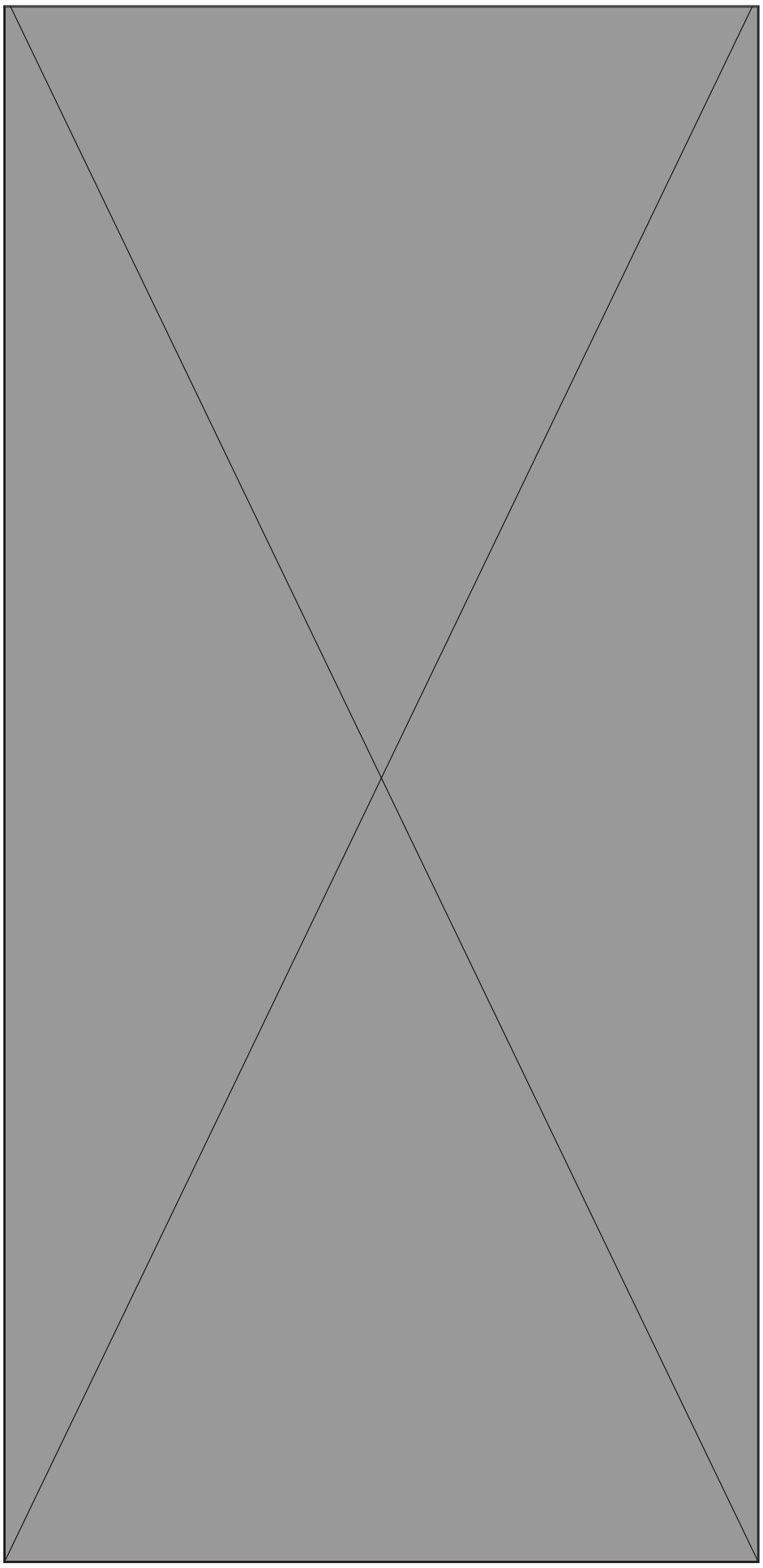
CRIME VICTIM CHECKLIST

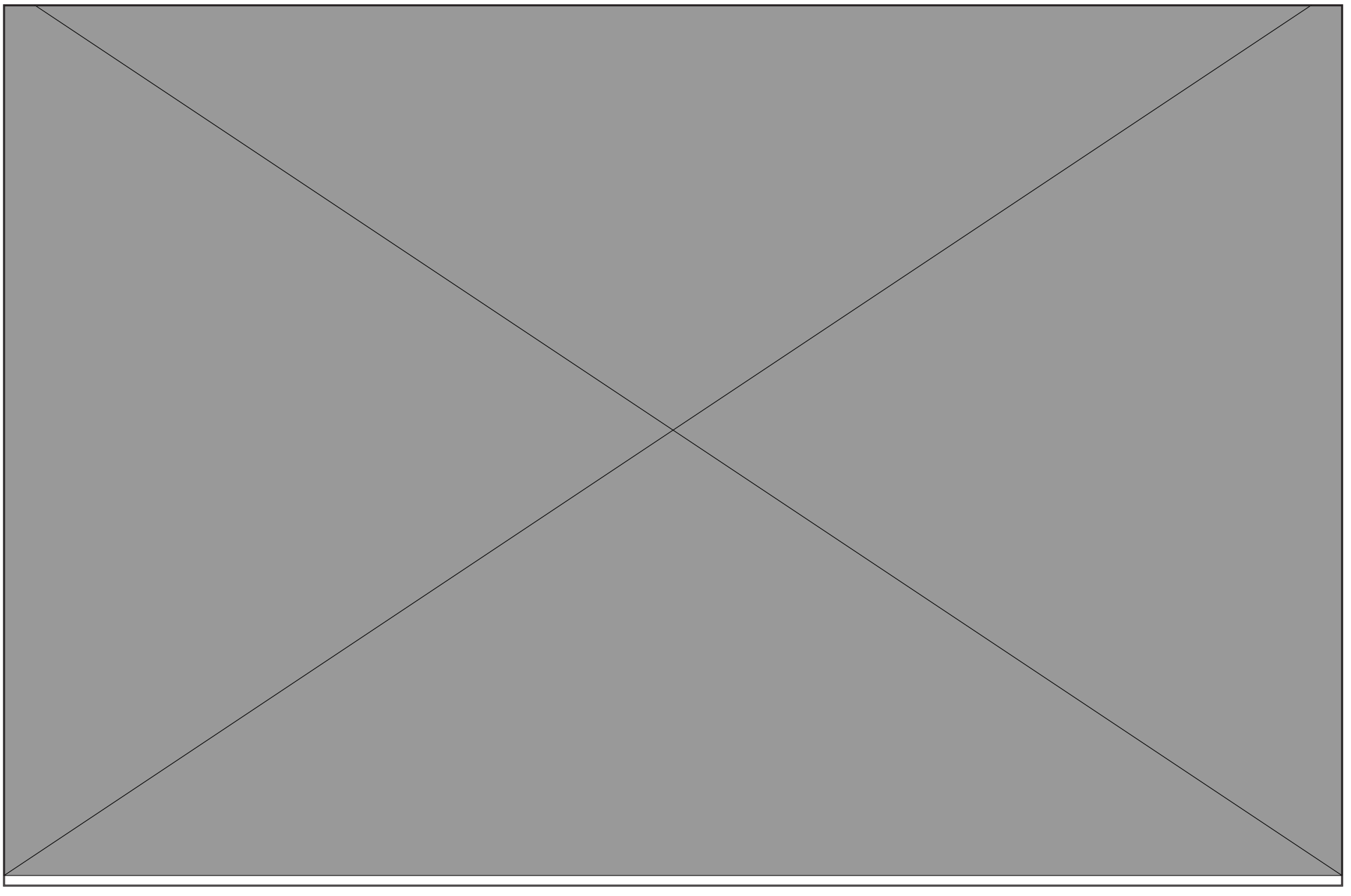
1. **NOTIFY LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT**
   ** Use the free app **AlertCops** for the quickest reponse. You can also dial **091** for local police, **112** for emergency traslation services, **956-82-2911** for on-base emergency dispatch or **911** from a base landline phone.*
2. **OBTAIN A COPY OF YOUR POLICE REPORT**
3. **TAKE POLICE REPORT TO NCIS**
   ** NCIS is located in bldg. 3263 across from the NEX behind the main Security building.*

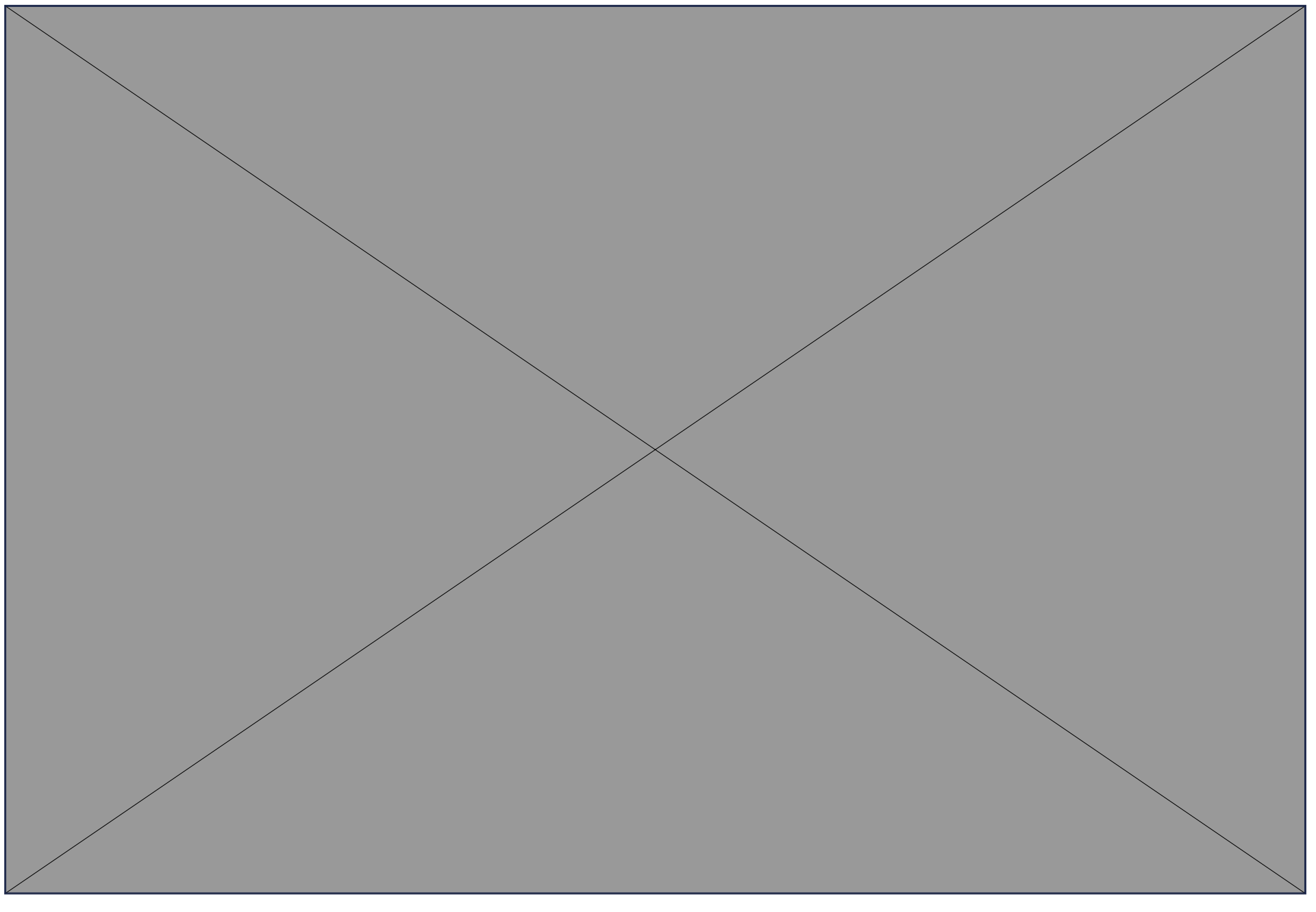
HIDE YOUR THINGS | **LOCK** YOUR HOUSE/CAR | **TAKE** YOUR KEYS

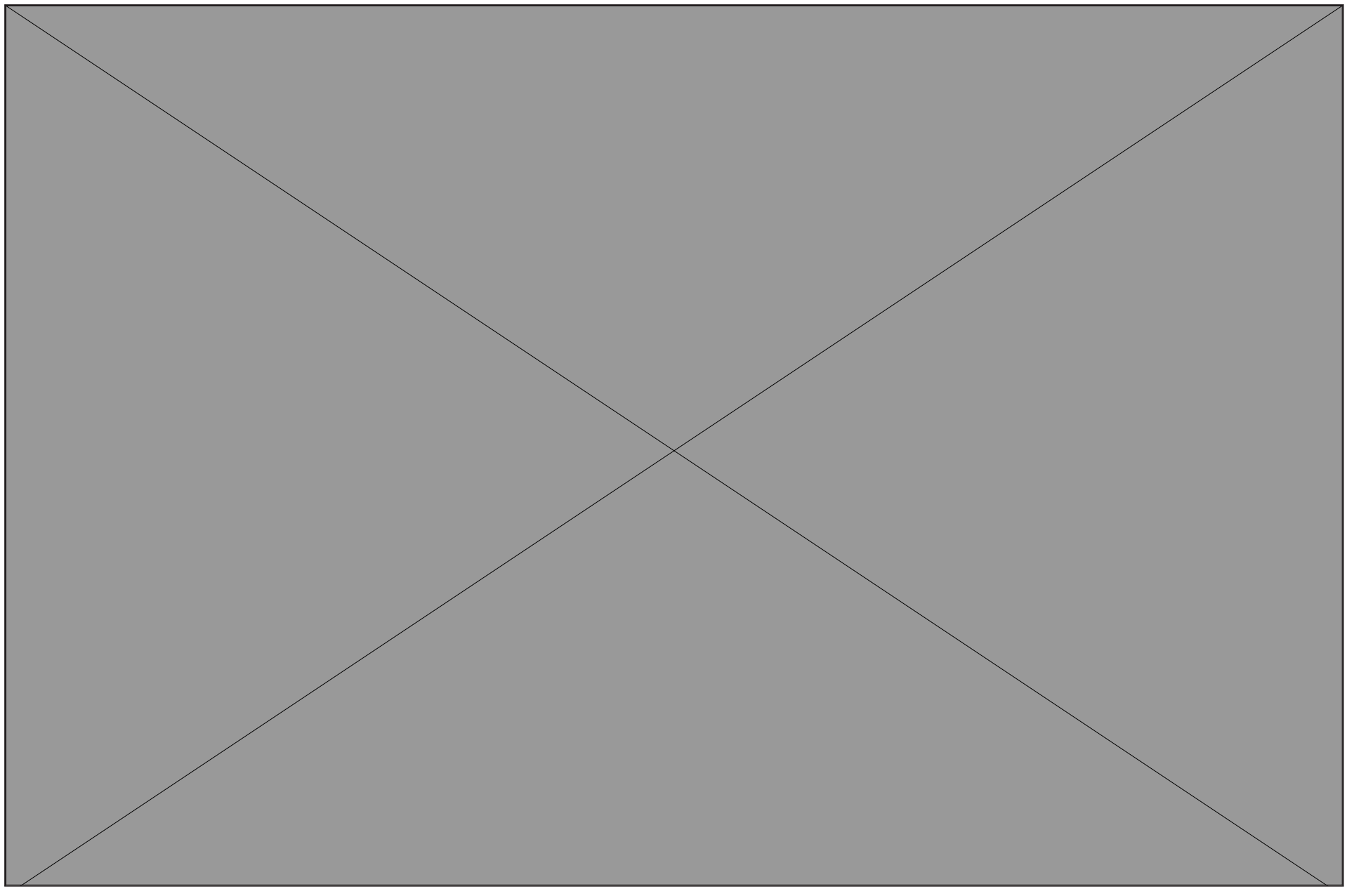


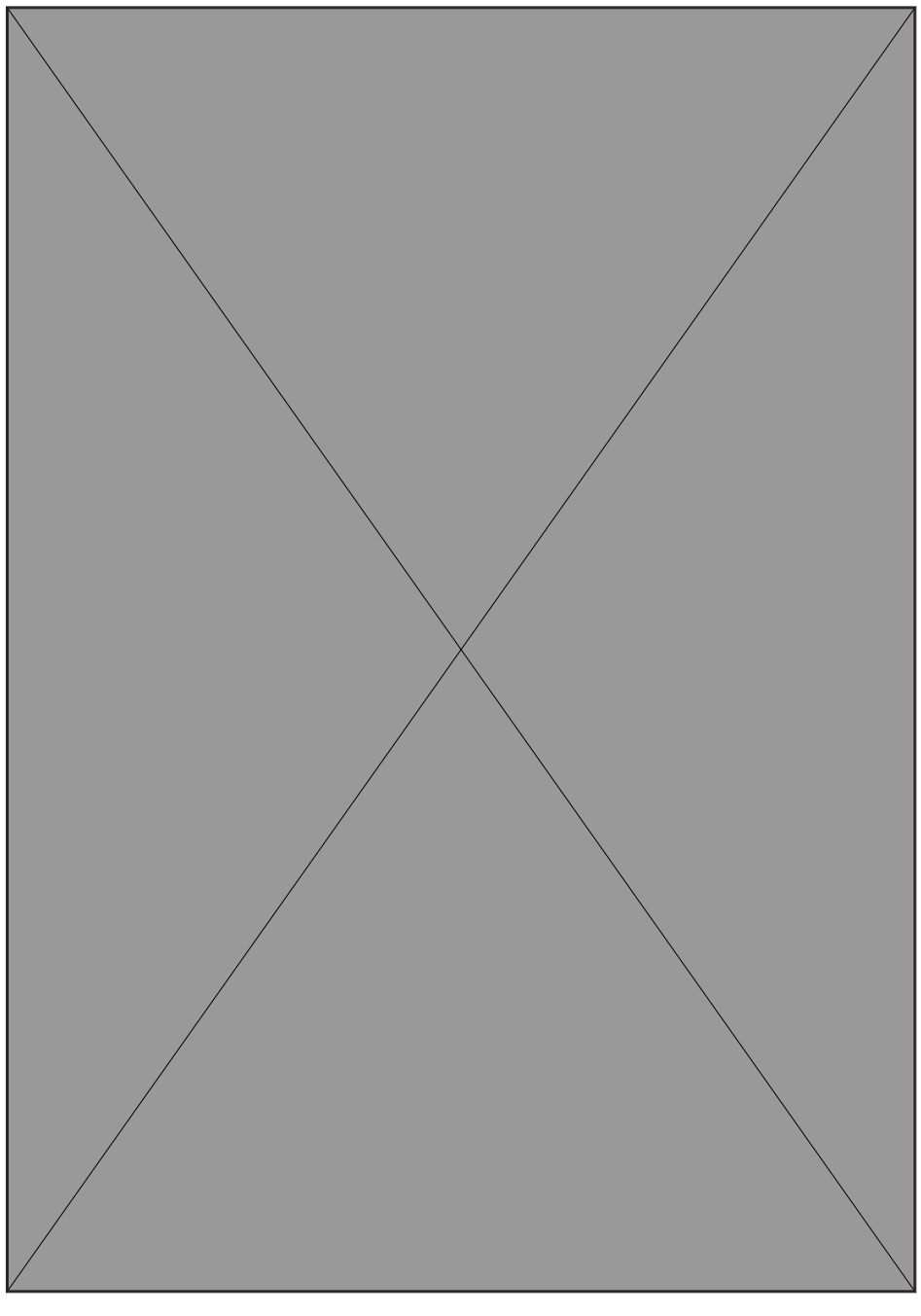


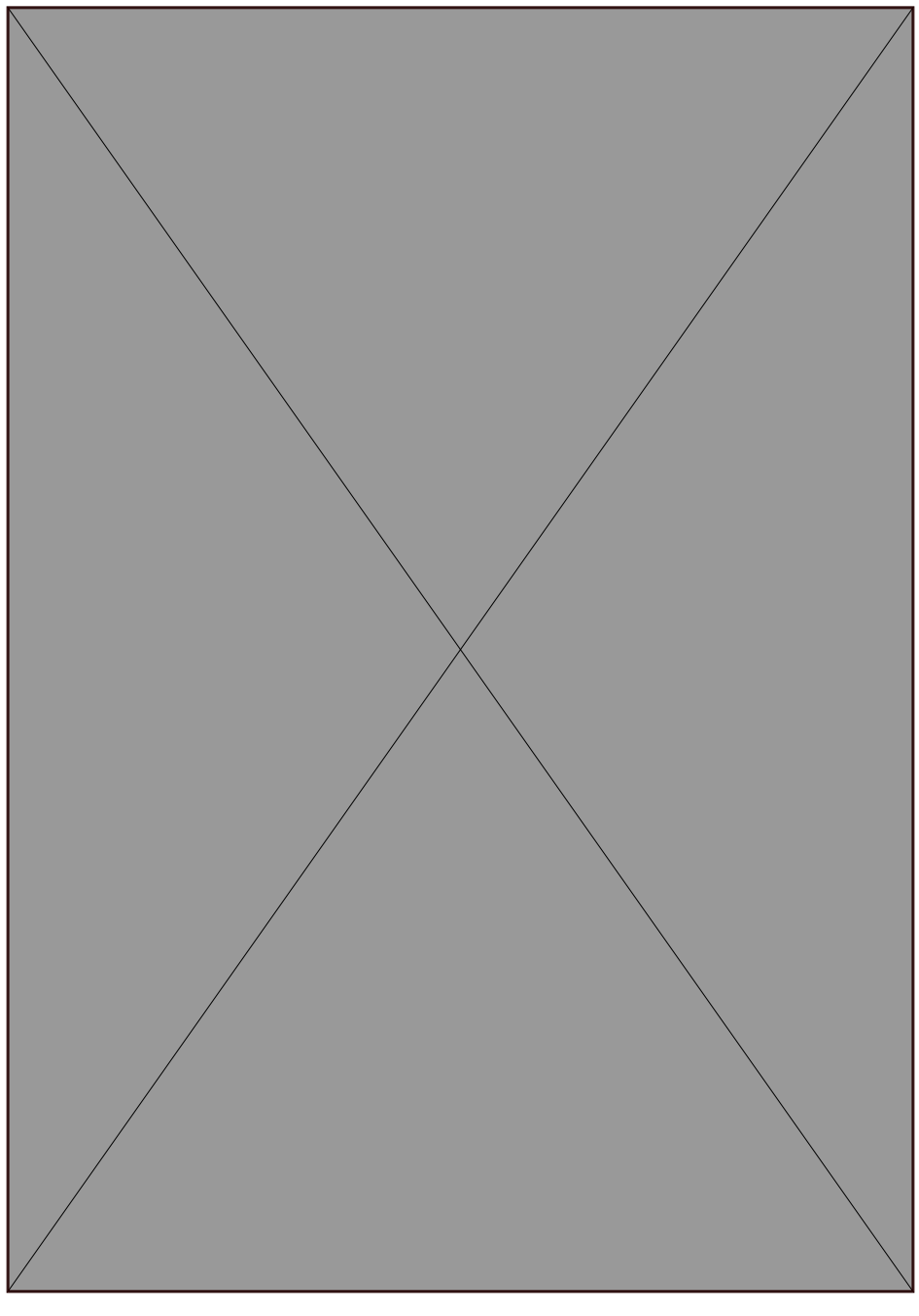












Hello Baby!

NAVSTA Rota Baby Births

Charles A. George

9 lbs 3 oz
Born on June 25th, 2026
Congrats to Scott & Tiffany George

Lorenzo I. Vecasco

6 lbs 3 oz
Born on June 9th, 2026
Congrats to Jordan Trump & Joseph Vecasco

Louis G. Suess

8 lbs 12 oz
Born on August 19th, 2026
Congrats to PJ & Abby Suess

Clementine N. Campbell

6 lbs 8 oz
Born on August 27th, 2026
Congrats to Tyler Campbell & Payton Hefner

NSE Lisbon Back-2-Cool Luau

U.S. National Support Element Lisbon celebrated the end of the summer with tropical fun, smiling faces, and great memories before beginning their new school year.











The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society: In with the new, but the mission never left

By Daniel Sutton II
Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society

The Origins

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society has aided the two branches for over 120 years, founded by fellow military personnel. This organization is non-profited and acquires funds from donations and annual fund drives; as a result, this provides the financial aid for those who need it within the Navy and Marine Corps community. From surface level, the society assists those who serve and their families from deployments to emergency leave among other services. Their belief is "helping one another is both a duty and an honor"(4). From understanding the organization and its mission, why does this forerunning partnership need change? The reason is the unawareness of the society's much broader scope of opportunities it has to offer.

The Executive Decision

From the plethora of research, analyzing data, conducting audits, and was given genuine inputs: the team discovered there is a strong lack of communication on the purpose of the NMCRS. In 2025, the Relief Society decided to make this complete change of their appearance and form of expression. Furthermore, they create the intention to have more awareness and making light of the organization's overall qualities.

What Changed?

Based off the decision, the society developed a complete renovation: new positioning statement, tagline, color palette, typography, and the highlight of the change, their logo. Additionally, with the tagline stating, "powered by compassion"(8) to the color themes, the logo is what stands out amongst the innovative changes. The logo possesses two elements: the anchor and the logos design, the anchor symbolizes stability and reliability connecting with the waves being the sole point of connecting all clients. As far as the precise color choices, midnight blue and bright scarlet red being the primary colors is to honor the USN and USMC. Also, the ocean teal and the royal blue is applied to better differentiate from the other military branches.

For the secondary colors, these three were used to categorize the main services the organization provides. Emerald green representing financial assistance for loans and assist with PCS and the transportation process, prairie taupe being financial education by offering workshops and classes to expand on financial knowledge.



Thirdly the amber gold, for community support, provided by the workforce of 90% volunteer representatives working in multiple facilities (i.e.: Thrift stores, Uniform lockers, Support groups/Classes, and much more). The change is there; however, it is paramount to better inform the military brothers and sisters that the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is there from them and their families, all they have to do is stop by.



NAVY-MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY™

Health Promotions - Stress, burnout, and mental health

Story by Mr. Devin Evans
Naval Hospital Rota



It is highly likely that some time in your life you have said " I feel burnt out". The term burn out is commonly used to describe feelings of stress or being tired after stressful or sustained increase in work responsibilities. The true meaning of burnout reflects a long-term response to work related events resulting in a loss of job satisfaction or decrease in work effort. Some people express feeling that they can no longer give their best performance at work or at home in these situations and also report a feeling of unhappiness with job satisfaction or with work or personal accomplishment.

It is important to identify that there is positive stress and harmful stress incorporated into professional work. Work stress is not uncommon but, in some instances, too much may contribute to eventual burnout. Typically, positive work stress are short-term demands or stressors that have an impact on your personal wellbeing which may include temporary feelings of anxiety, sadness, or even frustration. But these feelings reduce or resolve completely once challenging work demands decrease or are completed.

Burnout on the other hand occurs after pressure and work demands accumulate overtime without a reduction or cessation. You may notice an increase in mental fatigue or emotional exhaustion, loss of joy with work satisfaction and may even lead to a disconnect from your coworkers and the mission. As a Warfighter, work stress is inevitable but true burnout negatively impacts readiness.

Due to the demanding nature of military life, Warfighters often experience work stress but over time with increased resiliency experience they are equipped to combat these feelings. Some unfortunately may not have these capabilities or have not learned resiliency techniques to reduce work stress. This group of people are at a greater risk for burnout. Extended work and duty hours, rotational shifts, poor sleep quality, environmental exposures, and work-family conflicts all can lead to burnout. Ultimately, burnout negatively impacts unit cohesion, combat effectiveness and can lead to negative personal life outcomes. But there are strategies and interventions that can assist you with managing your work stress before it results in burnout.

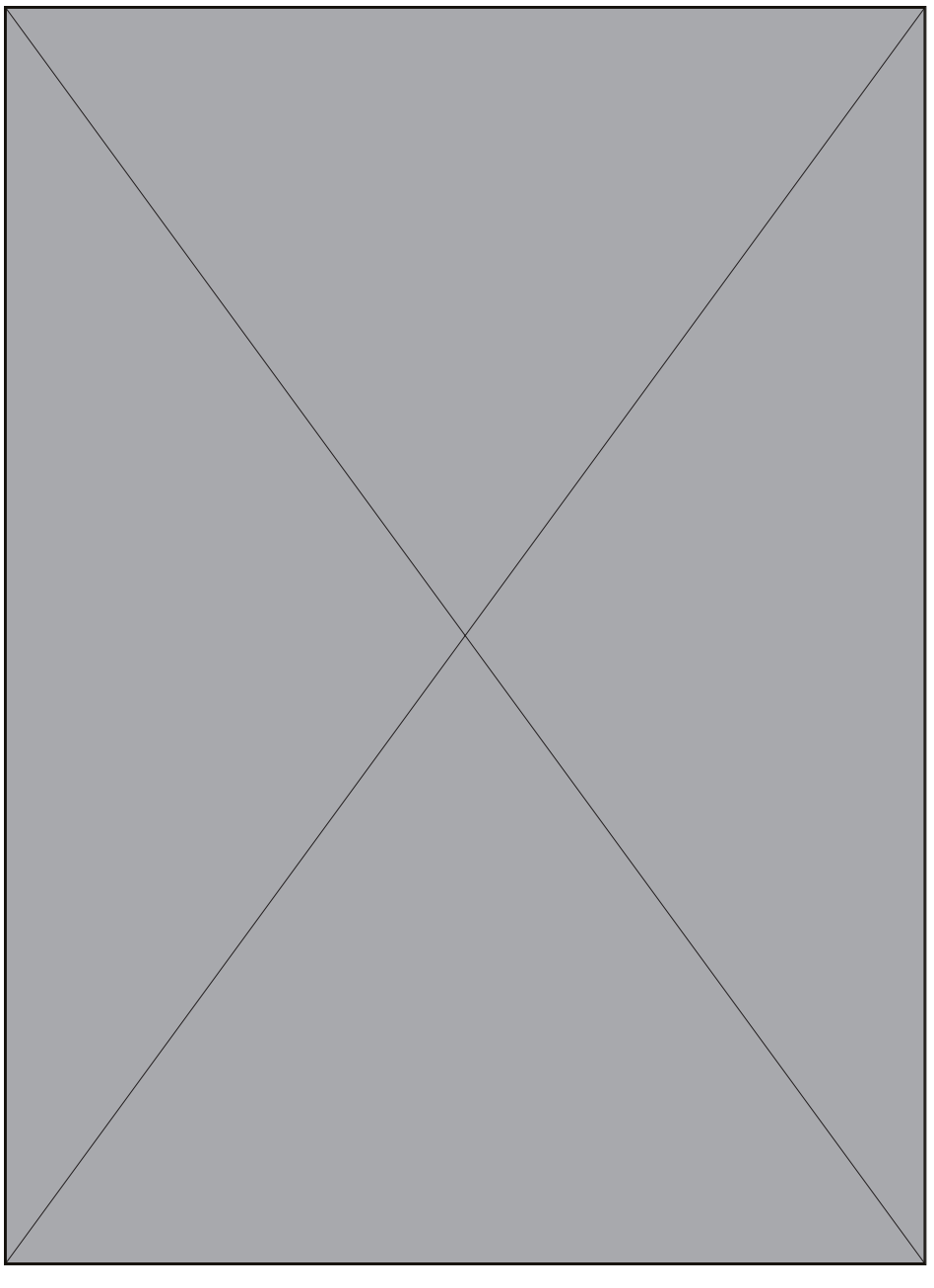
A good place to start is to be proactive and engage in healthy lifestyle activities that support adequate sleep. 7-9 hours of quality sleep in a 24 hour day is essential to physical and mental recovery. Remember to be active even if you have long work hours. Do your best to engage in moderate to intense physical activity for at least 150-300 minutes per week. And lastly, for optimal health and to increase resiliency be sure to limit alcohol intake and avoid tobacco and nicotine products.

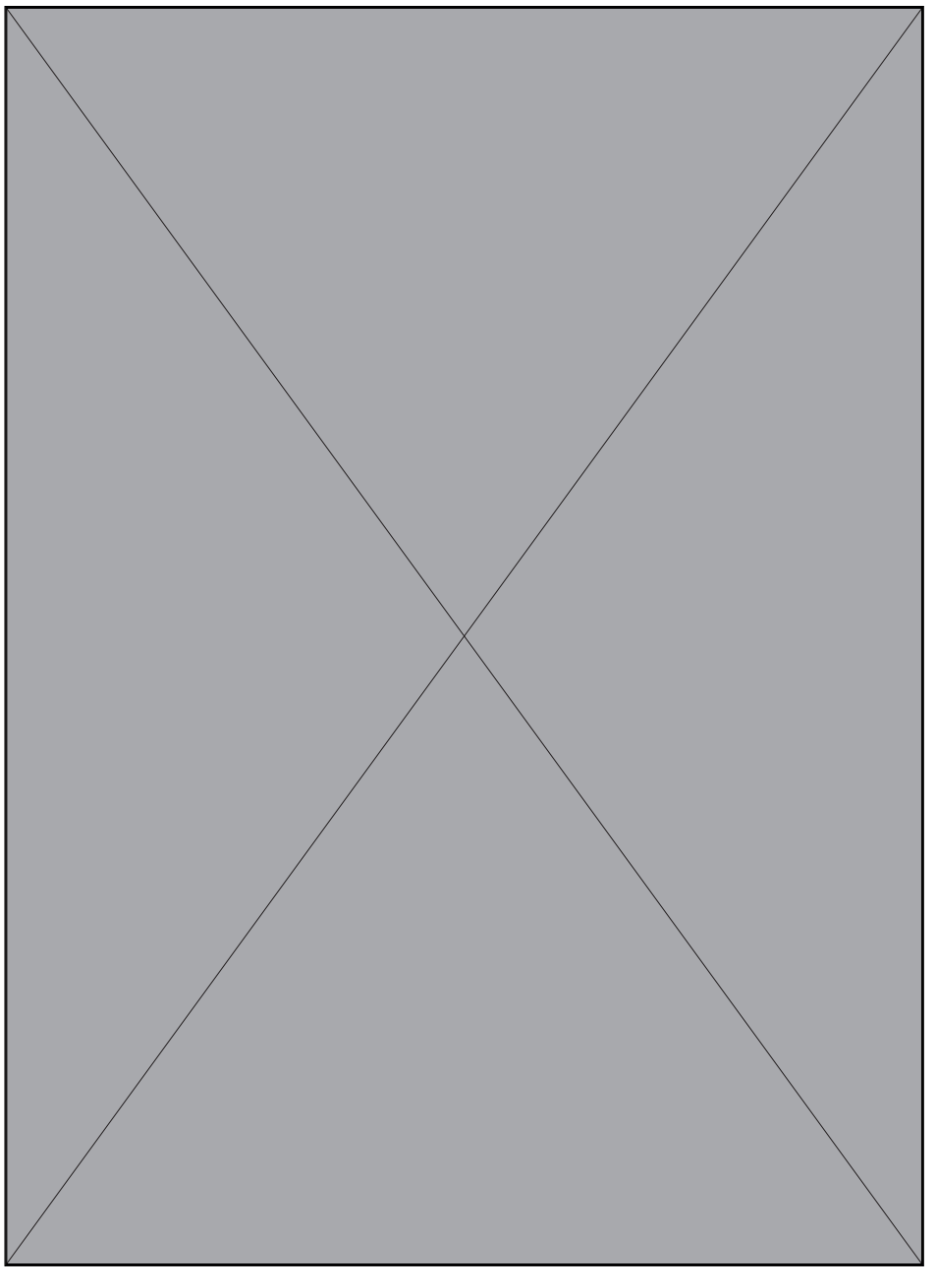
- Be sure to prioritize your mental health too. To avoid burnout, use these tactics to support your mental health:
- Make time for activities you enjoy. (Sports, games, hobbies)
- Connect with friends and loved ones.
- Find things to be grateful for.
- Use stress reduction techniques. (Yoga, meditation, music, etc.)
- Talk to your health care team about emotional wellbeing.

As a Warfighter your mental health is just as important as your physical health. It takes self-awareness to recognize the signs of work stress versus burnout. Pay attention to your emotions and learn to identify negative thoughts and attempt to incorporate positive ones. If you are unable to manage your mental health concerns seek help by reaching out to your health care provider, chaplain, or military and family life counselor. Also, be sure to speak with your leadership to increase command-level visibility about working conditions and the status of their Warfighters.

You are the most important asset to success and are crucial to the mission. Be sure to take care of yourself and be the best and healthiest, both mentally and physically, that you can be.







L.E.A.P. into books at the library!

Story by Minerva Jimenez
Rota MWR Library

Where stories became experiments, robots, games and discoveries

What happens when a book doesn't end on the last page? What if its ideas can be built, programmed, tested, redesigned—and even used to challenge what we think we see?

That was the spirit behind L.E.A.P. into Books! – Literacy, Exploration, Art & Play, a series of hands-on STEAM workshops developed by Optimus Educación in collaboration with MWR Library. The program was created to connect reading with science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics, turning the themes and words suggested by books into opportunities to explore, create and discover. Rather than simply learning about STEAM concepts, children became active participants: experimenting, building, programming and finding their own solutions—exactly the curiosity, creativity, problem-solving and digital literacy the program was designed to encourage.

From making an LED glow with a lemon to bringing a robot to life, designing a video game or questioning whether their own eyes could be fooled, every workshop followed the same philosophy: children learn most powerfully when they are given the opportunity to explore for themselves. This was never intended to be an off-the-shelf activity; the original L.E.A.P. concept called for each workshop to be created around the selected themes and to connect storytelling with hands-on exploration.







"Plant a seed, read" summer reading

Story by Minerva Jimenez
Rota MWR Library

Rooted in the farm-to-table concept, this year's "Plant a Seed, Read!" Summer Reading Program explored how food and stories shape our connections to family, the local economy, and our ecology. Running from June 9th to August 11th, the program used agriculture and sustainability as a framework to dive into culture, history, science, health, and human connection.

Weekly activities ran every Tuesday and Thursday, tailored across age groups:

Kids (Ages 6–12): Suncatcher paintings and nature-based crafts.

Teens: Canvas art projects using dried flowers.

Adults: Plant-themed bingo, nature lanterns, cord wrapped plants, … and much more

Literacy remained the central focus. Participants tracked their reading to unlock five distinct reward tiers designed for each age group, driving toward an overall community goal of 300,000 reading minutes.

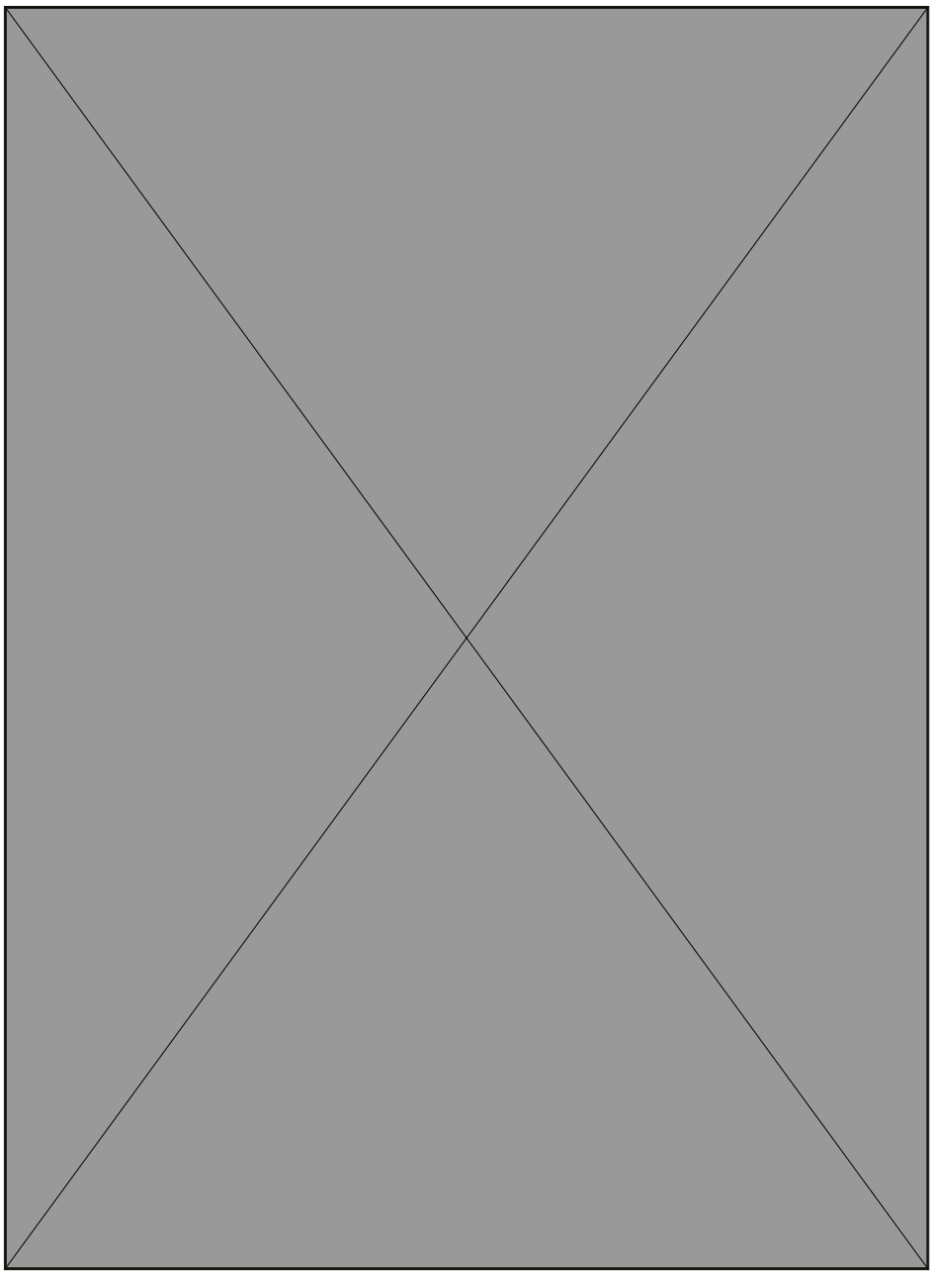
The program concluded on August 11th with an end-of-season party featuring a kids' gymkhana, an active course comprising 10 game and activity stations across Rota MWR Library grounds.

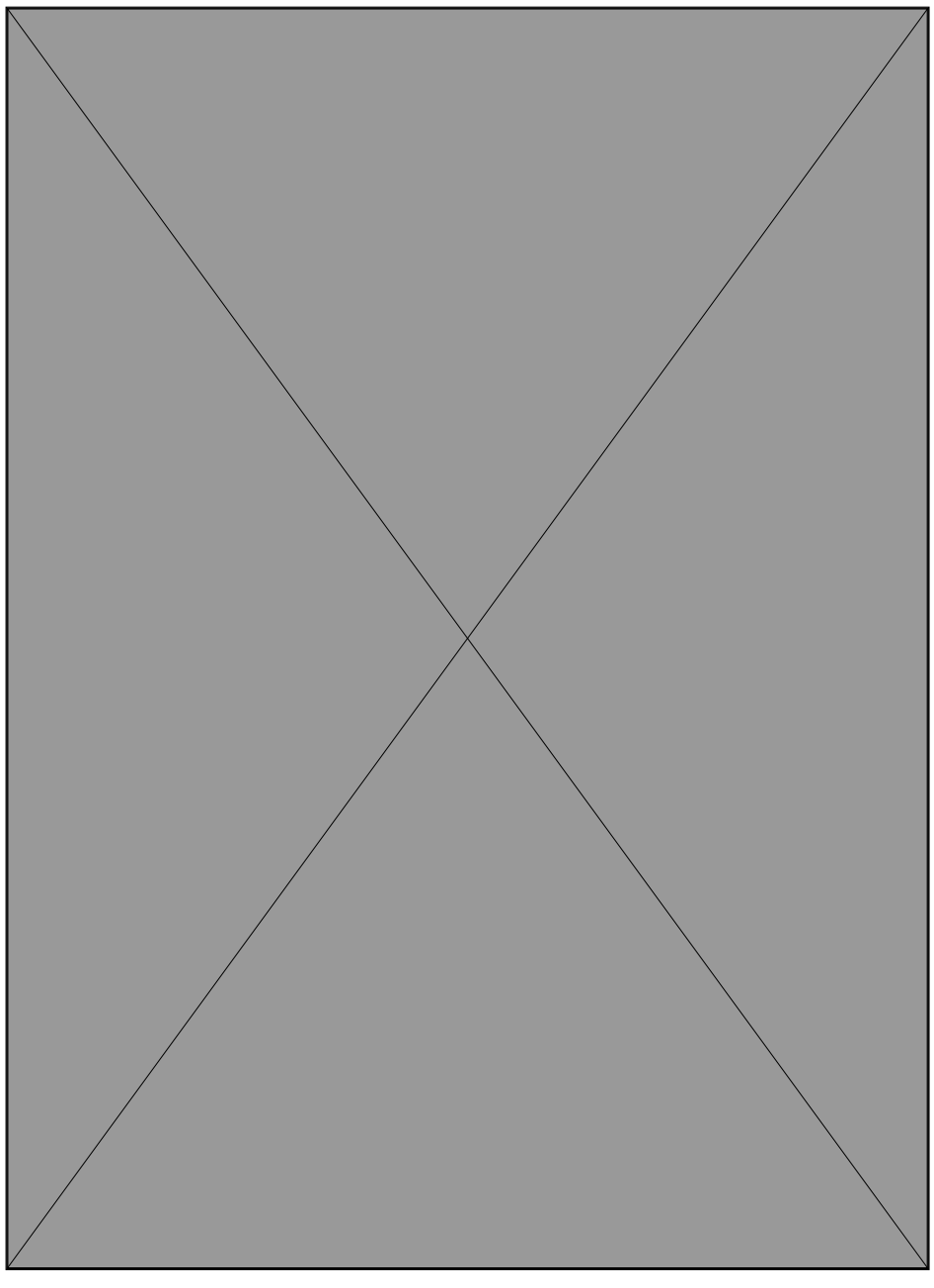
Thank you to everyone who participated, read, and helped make the season a success.











Let's Eat!

By Pilar Ruiz

Cherry Tomato & Cherry Gaz pacho

A refreshing Andalusian classic with a sweet summer



Summer in southern Spain is the perfect time to enjoy light, refreshing dishes, and this Cherry tomato & Cherry Gazpacho is one of our seasonal favorites.

This version gives a fresh twist to traditional gazpacho by adding one of summer's most delicious fruits: sweet cherries. Their natural sweetness balances beautifully with the acidity of ripe tomatoes, creating a vibrant soup that's both refreshing and full of flavor.

Finished with crumbled feta cheese, fresh cherry slices, and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil, it's an elegant starter that's surprisingly easy to prepare and perfect for sharing with family and friends.

In Andalusia, gazpacho is more than a cold soup, it's a summer tradition enjoyed in homes across the region, with each family adding its own special touch. This cherry version is ours.

Ingredients (Serves 4):

- 1⅓ lb (600 g) cherry tomatoes (If cherry tomatoes aren't available, ripe Roma tomatoes make an excellent substitute)
- 7 oz (200 g) fresh cherries, pitted
- ¼ small onion
- ¼ cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 tablespoon Jerez (Sherry) vinegar
- 6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt, to taste

For garnish

- Crumbled feta cheese
- Fresh cherry slices
- A drizzle of extra virgin olive oil

Method:

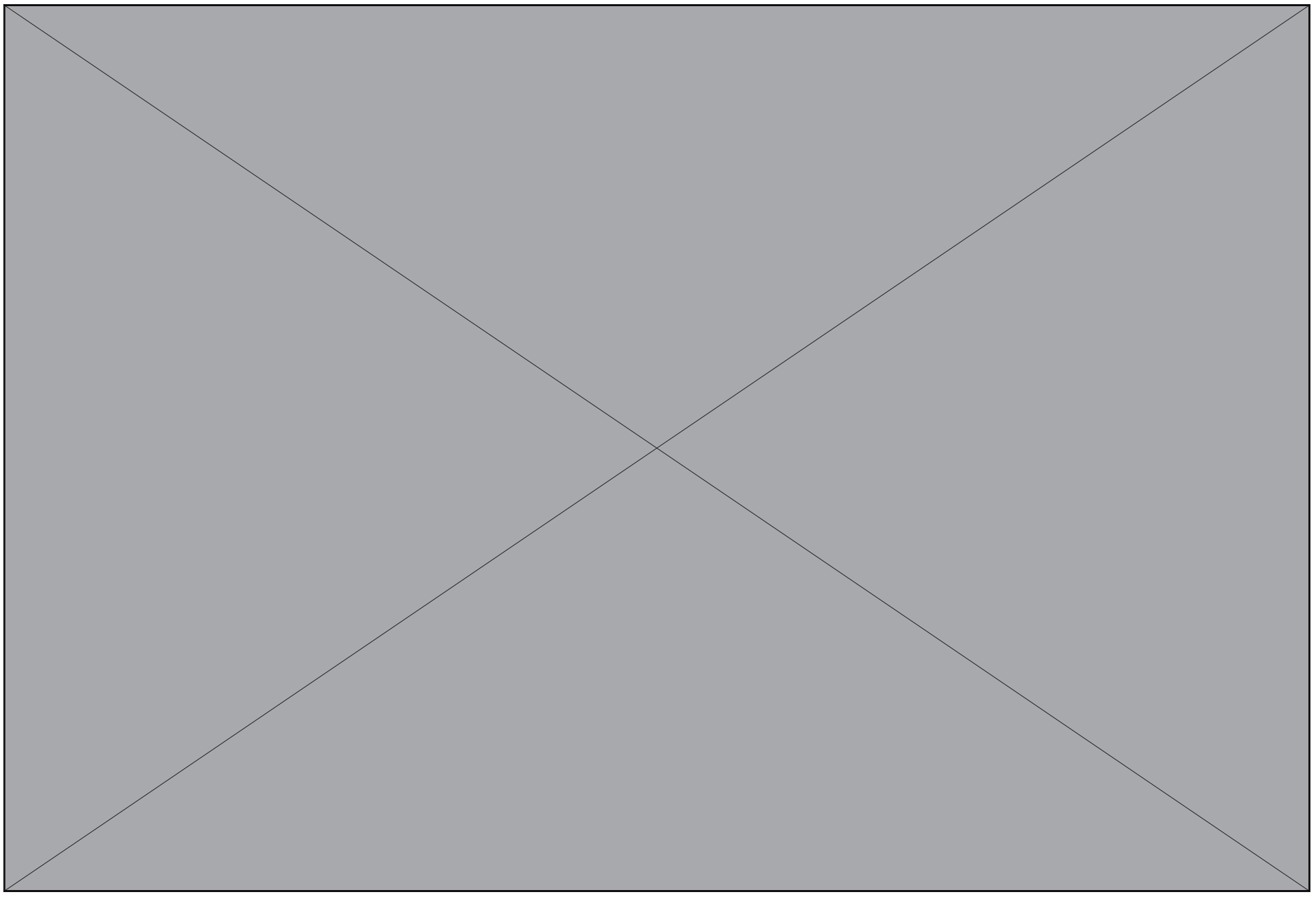
- Wash the cherry tomatoes thoroughly and pit the cherries.
- Place the tomatoes, cherries, onion, red bell pepper, garlic, salt, and Sherry vinegar into a blender. Blend until completely smooth.
- With the blender running on low speed, slowly drizzle in the extra virgin olive oil until the gazpacho becomes silky and creamy.
- Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary.
- For an even smoother texture, strain the gazpacho through a fine-mesh sieve.
- Chill in the refrigerator for at least one hour before serving.

Serve in bowls or shallow soup plates and garnish with crumbled feta cheese, a few fresh cherry slices, and a final drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.

Fresh, colorful, and full of Mediterranean flavor, this Cherry Gazpacho is a wonderful way to enjoy one of Andalusia's most iconic dishes while making the most of summer's sweetest produce.

A Tip to Take Home:

For the best flavor, use perfectly ripe sweet cherries and chill the gazpacho well before serving. Pair it with a glass of Manzanilla from Sanlúcar de Barrameda for a refreshing Andalusian summer experience.



Expeditionary warfare and allied integration during Northern Viking 2026

Courtesy Story
Commander Task Force 68

U.S. Navy Expeditionary Forces assigned to Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces Europe/Africa are demonstrating the ability to establish, sustain, and project combat power across the North Atlantic and High North during exercise Northern Viking 2026 (NV26).

NV26 is a Joint and Allied live exercise (LIVEX) from Aug. 22 to Sept. 3, 2026. The exercise strengthens interoperability and forges readiness between Iceland and participating NATO Allies. Participating nations include Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Norway, Poland, and the United States, alongside specialized assets and personnel from Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM) and NATO Joint Force Command Norfolk.

Participating expeditionary forces include Commander, Task Group (CTG) 68.1, consisting of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit EIGHT (EODMU 8) and Commander, Task Group (CTG) 68.2, consisting of the 22nd Naval Construction Regiment (22 NCR).

CTF 68 forces operating across Iceland and Norway are contributing expeditionary capabilities to include construction, advanced naval basing, airfield damage repair, bathymetric surveys, salvage operations, explosive ordnance disposal and integration with special operations forces (SOF). CTF 68 also established a forward-deployed command and control center that enables mission command and synchronization of distributed operations across the High North.

"Northern Viking demonstrates our commitment to Iceland along with our Joint and NATO Allies," said Capt. Leslie Slootmaker, commander of CTF 68. "We have an opportunity to demonstrate how our expeditionary forces enable access, how we establish operating locations, and how we can integrate with our NATO partners and Allies. Our forces that are operating across Iceland and Norway bring specialized capabilities that help to enhance interoperability."

Project Combat Power

22NCR is operating across Iceland and Norway to establish and sustain infrastructure for military operations. In Iceland, they are conducting construction, advanced naval basing and airfield damage repair to demonstrate the ability to rapidly establish and restore operating locations in austere environments.

"Combat power depends on access and sustainment," said Lt. Arthur Hines, current operations officer of 22 NCR. "Our Seabees provide commanders options to establish, restore and sustain critical infrastructure to enable follow-on forces."

In Norway, Underwater Construction Team (UCT) One, Construction Dive Detachment Charlie (CDD/C), is conducting bathymetric surveys and salvage operations from Ramsund. The team is helping to assist in the removal of Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning units in Breivika Bay. These operations are essential to maintain maritime infrastructure and support joint military readiness.

Integrating With Special Operations Forces and Allies

U.S. forces, Allies and partners train together to demonstrate their ability to seamlessly operate together while responding to real world challenges.

EODMU 8 is integrating with special operations forces and Allies through counter-improvised explosive devices (IED) and unexploded ordnance training. Events include assault full mission profiles, Helicopter Rope Suspension Techniques, Visit, Board, Search and Seizure operations and a time-sensitive target direct-action raid.

"Interoperability has to extend to the tactical level," said Lt. Caleb Williams, officer in charge of EODMU 8. "When Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technicians operate with special operations forces and Allies in complex missions, we build trust and proficiency for higher-risk operations."

Strategic Geography and Allied Integration

NV26 marks a milestone with the biennial exercising marking the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Bilateral Defense Agreement between Iceland and the United States. NV26 enhances the ability to command and control Joint and Allied forces in the defense of Iceland and the strategic lines of communication in the Greenland, Iceland, and United Kingdom (GIUK) gap.

U.S. and Allied forces train in these complex environments to remain ready, lethal and postured. NV26 improves our collective defense and maintains operational readiness to be prepared for any mission, anytime.

"Operating alongside our Allies builds trust and familiarity that cannot be replaced or replicated elsewhere," said CDR.s.g. Marvin Ingolfsson, Keflavik Deputy Base Commander/Deputy director of defense division, Northern Viking 2026 Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for Iceland. CTF 68's diverse combat capabilities show how expeditionary forces enable access and establish presence across the region. Construction, maritime, EOD and SOF-integrated capabilities are synchronized through forward-deployed command and control elements.

"Every single capability makes an impact on the mission," said Slootmaker.



"Northern Viking allows us to operate in a dynamic and challenging environment to build tactical proficiency while working alongside our Allies. Every Sailor that is executing the mission makes these capabilities stronger. With our Allies, we will strengthen deterrence, maintain readiness and defend our shared interests."

CTF 68, headquartered in Rota, Spain, is a part of the U.S. 6th Fleet and commands all Naval Expeditionary Combat Forces in U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command areas of responsibility. Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces bridge the gap from sea to shore and provide expeditionary capabilities in remote, complex and austere environments.

U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with Allied and interagency partners, to advance U.S. national interests, security and stability in Europe and Africa.

