

ALL HANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

JULY 2020



TOP NEWS

BLENDED RETIREMENT SYSTEM CY 2021 CONTINUATION PAY ANNOUNCED

By MC1 Mark D. Faram, Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

The Navy released the calendar year 2021 Blended Retirement System (BRS) continuation pay (CP) rates for eligible Sailors, in NAVADMIN 172/20, June 18.

Under BRS, Sailors participate in a modernized retirement program.

Throughout their career, Sailors who opt-in or were auto-enrolled in the Thrift Savings Plan receive a matching contribution of up to five percent of their base pay from the Navy. Those who stay until retirement after 20 years, still get retired pay at a two percent of base pay for every year of service (YOS) vice the two and a half percent multiplier they would receive under the legacy retirement system.

One additional benefit of BRS is continuation pay. All Sailors enrolled in BRS qualify for the incentive, which currently comes at the 12-year "mid-career point."

To collect the incentive, eligible Sailors must do two things. They must request the pay before they arrive at their 12th pay anniversary and they must agree to obligate for another four years of service via NSIPS before they can collect.

If the Sailor has a correct email on file in the Navy Standard Integrated Personnel

System (NSIPS), notification that this milestone is approaching will come at the 12, six, three and one-month dates prior to reaching their 12th year of service.

For Active Duty and Full-Time Support (FTS) Sailors, the calendar year 2021 payout is two and a half times their monthly base pay. For drilling reservists, it is half of one month's salary. This is the same amount as the calendar year 2020 payout.

For example, an Active Duty or FTS E-5 or E-6 with 12-years of service is eligible for a one-time payout of roughly \$9,000 and \$10,000, respectively. In the Selected Reserve, those payouts would be approximately \$1,800 for the E-5 and close to \$2,000 for the E-6.

The incentive is taxable income, but for Sailors who obligate for the pay while in an eligible Combat Tax Exclusion Zone, the entire amount is tax-free. Sailors get to choose the payment method and can elect either a lump-sum or in equal installments, which can't exceed four annual payments over four consecutive years.

Sailors can also collect this pay in addition to any other career-specific or retention incentives.

Sailors can update their email and elect

CP through NSIPS at <https://my.navy.mil/quick-links.html>. Those unable to choose CP through NSIPS can manually select the pay through their command career counselor.

More CP information, including instructions on electing CP in NAVADMIN 302/17 and MILPERSMAN 1810-081. For any other CP issues, Sailors can contact MyNavy Career Center (MNCC) at 833-330-MNCC or askmncc@navy.mil.

Sailors eligible for the mid-career CP can view the CY 2021 pay rates memorandum at <https://www.mnp.navy.mil/group/pay-and-benefits>.

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The backlog of PCS orders created by the March through July 1 stop movement policy is projected to be spread across the remainder of 2020.

Due to COVID-19, current stop movement policies have impacted approximately 42,000 sets of officer and enlisted orders.

- ★ Due to the backlog of PCS moves and limited logistics available, NPC will be moving Sailors based on priority instead of projected departure date.
- ★ Navy Personnel Command (NPC) is committed to ensuring Fleet readiness through operational duty manning.
- ★ Personnel who are projected to move in October 2020 or later will need to work with their detailee to ensure a relief has been identified and a face-to-face turnover is possible.
- ★ NPC may need to increase the priority of same geographic location moves and renegotiate already-released orders to maximize readiness of operational sea duty commands and accession pipelines.
- ★ Sailors transferring from high priority commands, regardless of their original estimated departure date, may be extended up to six months.
- ★ High-priority commands and billets include those designated as operational sea duty, to include strategic and special operations forces, Forward Deployed Naval Forces (FDNF) and Optimized Fleet Response Plan (OFRP) units with a published manning date (M-date), normally 12 months prior to the deployment date.

ALL HANDS MAGAZINE

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY

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All Hands Number 7, 2020 is published by Navy Production, Defense Media Activity, 6700 Taylor Avenue, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755.

FRONT COVER: Sailors enjoy fireworks during the 42nd annual Yokosuka Friendship Day celebration onboard U.S. Fleet Activities (FLEACT) Yokosuka. (U.S. Navy photo by Garrett Zupfi/photo illustration by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Livingston Lewis)

BACK COVER: Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Charles Lueth, from Chicago, renders a gun salute during a memorial service for Chief Aviation Ordnanceman Charles R. Thacker Jr. aboard the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71), June 20, 2020. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Erik Molgar/Released)

TOP NEWS

NAVY PRIORITIZES PCS MOVES

From Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves will soon be restarting using a conditions-based, phased approach and Navy Personnel Command (NPC) is poised to ensure that high priority sea duty units remain manned and ready to preserve maritime superiority.

"The current stop movement policies have impacted 42,000 sets of officer and enlisted orders," said Capt. Derek Trinqué, director of the Career Management Department at NPC.

"We will use every option available to maintain fleet readiness and will prioritize all PCS moves based on the impacts to readiness rather than solely on a Sailor's Projected Rotation Date (PRD) for those transferring." These options include prioritization of move timing based on the priority of billets, incentivizing sea duty and adjustment of estimated dates of detachment (EDDs).

To account for local restrictions that will persist after the initial relaxations, the flow of orders will begin in stages as areas open. Local Health Protection Condition (HPCON), international, state and local government policies will be considered when scheduling PCS transfers. Eliminating the backlog of orders could extend beyond the end of calendar year 2020.

The emphasis on operational readiness and unit prioritization reflects the Navy's identity as a sea service and focusing on filling billets at sea is critical to preserving the readiness of the fleet. High priority sea duty commands include those designated as operational sea duty.

These commands include strategic and Special Operations Forces, Forward Deployed Naval Forces (FDNF) and Optimized Fleet Response Plan (OFRP) units with a published manning date that is normally 12-months prior to the deployment date.

Priority will also be given to specific accession pipeline billets such as

to ensure new officers and enlisted continue to report to their fleet units. Additionally, consideration will be given to key milestone and special program billets. NAVADMIN 169/20, released June 12, lists the full ordered priority list for billets.

The list of priorities was guided by the Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command/Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet Notice 1000 of August 16, 2019, which explains sea manning unit target levels and stakeholder responsibilities. Officers and enlisted personnel with retirement or fleet reserve orders and enlisted personnel with End of Active Obligated Service (EAOS) dates before their PRD who do not intend to re-enlist will be exempt from this direction.

"It is critically important that leaders talk with Sailors approaching their EAOS to determine if there is an intent to separate or retire, and forward that information immediately to NPC so a backfill for sea duty billets can be prioritized," said Trinqué. "We really need commands to tell my team at PERS-4013 immediately so we can ensure a face-to-face turnover at high priority sea duty commands. I also encourage leaders in every command to talk to their Sailors about the incentives we already offer for voluntary extensions at sea."

To maintain unit readiness, detailers will prioritize face-to-face reliefs for billets at high priority commands. Service members transferring to a high priority command will move first and may have their shore duty shortened by up to six months. In contrast, Sailors transferring from high priority commands, regardless of their original estimated departure date, will move last and could be extended at their current duty location for up to six months. This will happen on a case-by-case basis in order to ensure a face-to-face relief.

Involuntary extensions beyond six months will only occur under the most

unusual circumstances. All Sailors are encouraged to consider the incentives for voluntary extensions. A list of eligible skills can be found at

<https://www.mnp.navy.mil/group/pay-and-benefits>.

In each case NPC will work with each gaining and losing command to evaluate potential impact to readiness if the billet gaps. Detailers at NPC are currently in the process of contacting all officers and enlisted Sailors with orders between March-September 2020 to evaluate potential hardships. To add flexibility, service members with dependents are authorized to delay dependent travel (DDT) up to 180 days from their transfer date. Service members with dependents in school (K-12) will be authorized DDT until the end of the school year or 30 June 2021, whichever occurs first.

For Sailors conducting a PCS to or from areas remaining under stop movement conditions, the exemption and waiver processes put in place will continue to apply. PCS orders will continue to include Restriction of Movement (ROM) periods for Sailors traveling to or from these areas, to include intermediate stops. Travel may be restricted even between areas which are open for PCS if the travel includes an intermediate stop (I-stop), layover, or airline connection in an area which remains under stop-movement.

Service members, DoD civilians, and dependents on PCS orders to OCONUS locations requiring a no-fee passport must submit passport applications to their local passport acceptance facility no earlier than 60 days and no later than 45 days from the departure date. If a visa is also required, the passport application must be submitted no earlier than 80 days and no later than 65 days before departure date. Failure to adhere to these timeframes increases the chance that command-sponsored dependents will not receive their

passport and/or visa in time to travel concurrently with their DoD sponsors.

To ensure it is easier for Sailors to execute a PCS move through this trying time, multiple new programs created as part of the Navy's ongoing pay and personnel transformation efforts are available. Initiatives like the MyNavy Career Center with 24/7 contact agents on standby for support, MyPCS Mobile app and the newly added ability for service members to use their Government Travel Charge Card during a PCS dramatically decreases the stress of a PCS. To find out more visit npc.navy.mil or call MNCC at (833) 330-MNCC (6622).

For more information, read NAVADMIN 169/20 at www.npc.navy.mil.

The latest DoD policies can be found at: <https://www.defense.gov/explore/spotlight/coronavirus>.

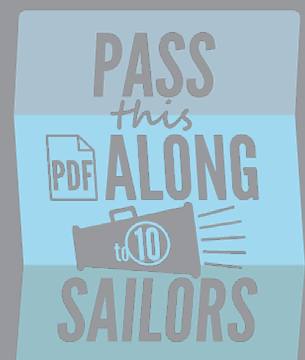
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OUR MISSION IS SHARING THE NAVY STORY



ALWAYS READY



In the Navy, it is ubiquitous that the command to “come to the ready” will always be followed by a hearty and resounding “always ready!” Sailors learn the mantra in bootcamp as they are pushed to their physical limits. This phrase represents a Sailor’s vigilance and dedication to preparedness, and they use every day in the fleet – maybe even at home (if extremely motivated).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of the Navy slowed down to duty section only. Sailors have been quarantined to their homes, unable to travel willingly per a DoD order aimed at protecting lives. The readiness that was championed was muffled by the wave of a deadly respiratory virus. The policies of social distancing have become common place in 2020, and Sailors, along with the rest of humanity, are pushing through and adapting with the quarantine.

After four months of a nation in lockdown, many parts of the U.S. are slowly opening. Looking forward, the Navy has begun to put measures in place to ensure Sailors’ safety at sea and shore.

“Our forces continue to operate forward every day- the impact of COVID-19 on the global community only heightens the critical roll our Navy plays in maintaining security and stability at sea,” said Vice Adm. Phillip Sawyer, the Navy’s operations chief in charge of coordinating the service’s response to COVID. “As we learn more about this virus, the Navy will continue to take steps necessary to preserve our operational readiness while protecting the health of our forces.”

Sailors are being screened pre-deployment, so if the virus is present in a Sailor(s), the crew can take the necessary measures and precautions to mitigate the spread and treat the patient(s) before those symptomatic Sailors deploy, keeping the healthy crew healthy.

“Personal responsibility and disciplined organizational public health protection measures are the bedrock of risk reduction and risk mitigation,” said Rear Adm. Bruce Gillingham, U.S. Navy Surgeon General.

*“YOUR RESILIENCY
GIVES US ALL HOPE AND
ASSURANCE DURING
THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES”*



In order for a unit to deploy, certain actions must be taken: the crew must undergo a medical screening, the ship must maintain a 14-day pre-deployment restriction of movement sequestered status, and all crew embarked aboard must obey a strict adherence to preventative measures such as handwashing and wearing masks underway. These measures establish what is called a “clean bubble,” which allows the ships and their crews to maintain operational readiness around the world.

So far, testing is the only way to find if a Sailor is asymptomatic, but testing does not always guarantee that a unit preparing for deployment is free of COVID-19. Social distancing, basic hygiene measures, wearing masks, and keeping the spaces clean will reduce the likelihood of an outbreak once a ship is at sea.

“I know our Sailors’ ability to adapt and respond has been nothing short of amazing and I am grateful. Your resiliency gives us all hope and assurance during these uncertain times,” said Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday.

As the world begins to open and recover from the unforeseen pandemic, every Sailor must continue to “represent the fighting spirit of the Navy,” as it says in the Sailor’s Creed. Sailors learn resiliency during bootcamp, practice it in the fleet, and carry it throughout their career. The world is preparing to “come to the ready” for post pandemic life, and Naval forces remain and will continue to remain “always ready.”





A Hero Changes Uniforms

Story by Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class Brent Pyfrom, All Hands Magazine

A lot of times service members hear “you’re a hero” and “thank you for your service” and many times the thoughts of battle-hardened heroes sweep through the mind of that particular service member. This story is about a few things surrounding one Sailor who kept the title “hero” high.

“I always believed that things would work out one way or the other for the better,” said former Navy pilot, Elizabeth Bailey.

As a graduate of the Naval Academy Bailey received her wings in Sept. ‘93 and flew SH-60B Sea Hawks in the Navy for nine years. Afterwards, she spent another five years in the reserves. Bailey explained her time in the Navy started a little rough due to the lack of women in the piloting community or even on ships.

“Women were not able to do everything in the Navy at that time, there was the Combat Exclusion law,” said Bailey. “I knew I was about to be transport or something but luckily about the same time I got my wings they lifted the Combat Exclusion law and that’s the only reason I was able to fly the SH-60s. I was one of two women at that time to fly that particular frame on the east coast.”

Bailey said she was supported by a group of pilots who believed she belonged there, flying with them and on ships, but she knew her time in the Navy was coming to an end and began to think about her family. Her husband, Mark, remained in the Navy but Elizabeth wanted to be home to raise their children. Upon her transition into the Navy reserves, she went back to college and studied the courses that would lead her into what she truly wanted to do.

“Straight out of high school I wanted to be a nurse. My mother was an emergency nurse and I grew up with that,” said Bailey. “I had a teacher tell me that I should be an engineer so I started researching and looking through books because I thought since I liked planes that I’d be an aerospace engineer. I saw the Naval Academy listed and that was interesting so that’s the initial transition of wanting to be a nurse and ending up in the Military.”

Throughout her career, Elizabeth remained interested in the medical field. She says even when she was younger the kids in the neighborhood would come to her if they were injured. She always did her best to patch them up so she became the neighborhood nurse for the kids. Later in life, Bailey’s grandmother grew sick and Bailey learned that she was comfortable and enjoyed being a makeshift caretaker. This was when she made her choice to leave one career field and enter a new one.

“When my wife asked me ‘do you think I’ll be a good nurse’ I said no, I think you’d be a great nurse,” said Capt. Mark Bailey, Elizabeth’s husband. “It wasn’t a surprise to me that she felt very comfortable in the space of emergency medicine and acute care. It fit her personality and her background.”

Bailey recalls lessons from the Navy as she moved into her position where she currently works at Anne

Arundel Medical Center in Annapolis, Md. She said the Navy was a place that taught her a lot about herself and showed her that she could overcome way more than she thought possible. These would be lessons she’d put to use later down the line.

“I found out that I could tolerate way more than I ever gave myself credit for,” said Bailey. “I had the benefit of doing Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) school where I learned so much about myself. Then there was flight school, the Academy and I realized in order to have self-confidence you have to go through things that you don’t think you’re going to make it through. Then you look back knowing that you did make it through that. That’s when you get your confidence and knowledge of knowing you can get through anything.”

Currently Elizabeth works as a weekend clinical supervisor which is likened to an introductory leadership role. She manages taskings from higher-ups, ensures her staff has everything they need, and leads the shift. This is especially essential on the weekends when much of the administrative staff isn’t there. She admits her love for the job continues to grow and she enjoys helping people through bad situations.

“That’s what nursing is to some extent,” said Bailey. “You’re seeing everyone on their worst day, you’re helping people who are suffering, dealing with family members who are suffering on some level, and in today’s pandemic everything is magnified.”

During this pandemic the entire medical community is fighting on the front lines and are being worn thin, Bailey says the best part of it all to her is that she gets to take care of her staff and they take care of the patients so everyone wins. Mankind may be winning because of heroes like this.

“I don’t think the word ‘pride’ can describe how I feel about her, her performance, or what she’s doing,” said Mark. “The fact she goes to work and leads a team in a very high-level stress environment and performs well, it doesn’t surprise me. It doesn’t surprise me because of her personality and her unique background in aviation, that’s a recipe for success. That’s how my wife rolls.”

Bailey says everything that she’s done up to this point has led her to this point and her Navy training is a big part of that.

“Everything I learned in the Navy applies to what I’m doing now,” said Bailey. “When you’re flying at night or on a mission where things aren’t clearly laid out there’s a lot of unknown and fear but you have to learn to deal with a changing environment, things being thrown at you, the mission changing. I’ve dealt with many difficult situations and the Navy taught me to work on the things I wasn’t so good at and expand on the things I was good at. That’s directly applicable to what I’m doing right now. If I’m successful where I am now, it’s because I had some of the best training to prepare me for it.”



THE NAVY IS COMMITTED TO MAINTAINING ITS MARITIME SUPERIORITY BY FOCUSING ON FLEET READINESS. THE SECDEF-DIRECTED STOP MOVEMENT OF ALL SERVICE MEMBERS, HAS FORCED SAILORS WITH TRANSFER DATES IN MARCH THROUGH JUNE TO DELAY THEIR PCS. COMBINED WITH THE ORDERS IN JULY, THE NAVY'S TRANSFER BACKLOG IS APPROXIMATELY 42,000 SAILORS. ELIMINATING THE PCS BACKLOG COULD EXTEND BEYOND THE END OF CALENDAR YEAR 2020.

EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN READINESS

EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE NOT TO EXTEND SAILORS BEYOND SIX MONTHS. COMMANDS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ADVERTISE THE ADDITIONAL MEASURES SAILORS CAN USE TO BE ABLE TO EXTEND AT SEA.



**PRIORITIZING ALL PCS
MOVES BASED ON THE
PRIORITY OF THE
UNIT/BILLET**

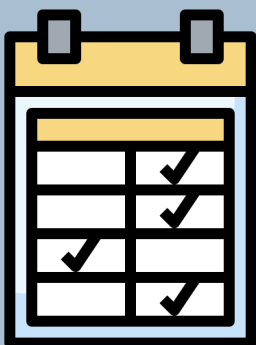


**INCENTIVIZING SEA
DUTY**

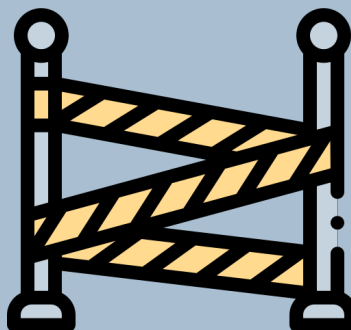


**ADJUSTING THE OFFICER
OR ENLISTED SAILOR'S
PROJECTED DETACHMENT
DATE (PRD)**

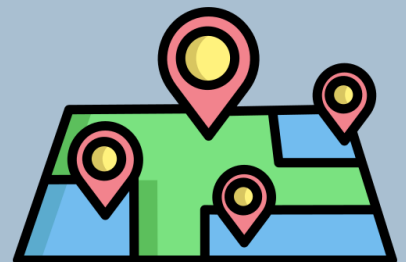
FACTORS IN PCS PRIORITIZATION



**IMPACTS TO GAINING AND
LOSING COMMANDS**



SAILOR HARDSHIPS



**REGIONAL COVID-19
RECOVERY TIMELINES**

THE BACKLOG OF ORDERS WILL BE SPREAD ACROSS CALENDAR YEAR 2020

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES, VISIT [HTTPS://ALLHANDS.NAVY.MIL/THE-WAY-FORWARD](https://allhands.navy.mil/the-way-forward)

N7: Warfighting Development

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kashif Basharat, Defense Media Activity

Throughout the Navy, N7 commands primarily focus on training. Their duties generally include forming plans on how to train Sailors, how to improve training and the development of what type of training to focus on. However, OPNAV N7, Warfighting Development, is focused on something a little different.

"Training prepares you for what is expected and education helps prepare you for what is unexpected" said Vice. Adm. Stuart Munsch, deputy chief of naval operations for warfighting development. "As we go forward here, the world is changing rapidly and we need to have trainings for things like how to operate your equipment, how to fly your aircraft and how to work together as a strike group, but we also need education...to be more adaptive in our behaviors to maintain advantage over our adversaries."

According to Munsch, N7 was designed to assess the Navy's warfighting advantage against all potential adversaries. One of the biggest advantages N7 is looking to capitalize on is the academic education of Sailors. A catalyst for the inception of N7 was the "Education for Seapower" study – which concluded that the educational activities of the Navy must be more directly and deliberately related to warfighting advantage if we are to prevail across the spectrum of conflict in this era of renewed great-power competition.

"Education is like a rising tide that raises all ships," said Munsch. "It makes everyone better in their capabilities. A couple of specific things can come out of that...such as specific ideas for warfighting advantage. The more knowledgeable people become, the more adaptive they become. So as things continue to change at a more rapid pace, our force will become adaptive and stay at the cutting edge of warfighting advantage."

Last year, the Department of the Navy created the Naval University System, which will combine the United States Naval Academy, Naval War College, Marine Corps University, Naval Postgraduate School, the academic curricula of the Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps. This academic combination will service Officer Candidate Schools, federal executive fellowships, and all flag and general officer education into one united university system. A key component of the system will be the establishment of a Naval Community College, which will provide accredited associates' degrees for enlisted Marines and Sailors in academic disciplines that advance lethality, partnership and reform.

"For the enlisted force we are establishing a naval community college that will be made available all throughout the Navy to make education, in terms of a process, easier," said Munsch. As you move around with [permanent change of station] order or are at sea, you can continue to accumulate credits towards a degree under this naval community college. It will focus mainly on skill sets that are desired in the navy, somewhat occupationally related."

To better assist Sailors and Marines across the fleet, N7 will work alongside the Navy's first-ever chief learning officer (CLO), John R. Kroger. Kroger, who was previously a professor at Harvard Law School and leader in residence at the Kennedy School of Government, will be responsible to lead and unify all Navy and Marine Corps formal education programs.

"What John brings is a tremendous amount of experience in running a university and that's a skillset we typically don't have well developed in the Navy," said Munsch. "He brings a number of new opportunities with other delivery mechanisms we can use for delivering education as well as the inspiration for the naval community college and how to go about setting that up. Here at N7, we focus more on the content side to update it in order to address the key operation problems we have going forward."

Since its inception, N7 has also been busy in other endeavors such as working with Coast Guard and Marines for a tri-sea service naval sea strategy, working with the joint staff and forming new warfighting concepts, and focusing on solutions to key operational problems in the Navy; however, academic education remains one of their top priorities for the foreseeable future.

"I would expect we see additional delivery mechanisms become available in the future including coursework which can be available all online, work that is hybrid, or what we call low residence where you might spend a few days of the month on a campus, as well as full blown programs which are in residence," said Munsch.

The purpose of N7 is to give the Department of the Navy a warfighting edge. They plan on doing that through warfighter development, academic education of Sailors and Marines, and warfare development, utilizing and inspiring ideas to better fight adversaries. They have potential to make an enormous impact on both Sailors' lives and the Department of the Navy as a whole. Education can help Sailors to better fight the adversaries, as well as prepare the Sailors when they hang up their uniform.



4



EDUCATION FOR SEAPOW

DECISIONS AND IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

ORGANIZATIONAL STEPS

NEW POSITIONS



DIRECTOR OF
WARFIGHTING DEVELOPMENT



CHIEF LEARNING OFFICER
FOR NAVAL EDUCATION

NEW SYSTEMS

NAVAL UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Will assemble the
existing naval
educational institutions
and activities into one,
united University System

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM ACQUISITION

Will better unify the
acquisition, design,
development, & execution
of all digital delivery
systems that provide
educational solutions

REPORTING ALIGNMENT

Will allow strategic
alignment of policy,
curricula, and acquisition
of naval education

NAVAL EDUCATION GOVERNANCE

A new Naval Education
Board and Naval
Educational Advisory
Board will be created

INITIATIVES



NAVAL COMMUNITY
COLLEGE



UNIFIED NAVAL EDUCATIONAL
STANDARDS



NAVAL EDUCATION
STRATEGY



STRATEGIC STUDIES
GRADUATE EDUCATION



REVIEW OF JOINT PROFESSIONAL
MILITARY EDUCATION



LEARNING AS A DESIRED
WARFIGHTING TRAIT



HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY AMERICA

Commentary by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Brent Pyfrom, All Hands Magazine

America's 244th Independence Day falls on Thursday, July 4, 2020. The day holds a special place in the heart of the country. As a matter of fact, it's the very basis of why we are a liberated country. Though 2020 has brought some challenges to the forefront, this Independence Day can still be celebrated proudly.

British-American Colonists wanted to break free of their mother country, Great Britain, and its government in 1775 because they were forced to pay taxes to England despite not having representation in Parliament. This tax fare created

tension among colonials, which lead to the 1773 mantra of the revolutionists: "No taxation without representation." This chant rang true on December 16 of the same year, and the Boston Tea Party became the first major act of political defiance in America.

Fifty-six delegates of the Second Continental Congress signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, officially severing their ties and political connections to Great Britain. Two of the signers, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, went on to become President of the United States. Ironically, both men died July 4, 1826, hours apart from each other from different causes.

America now stood as its own country with its own government, a new nation away from England's rule.

America was a different country then compared to now. 2.5 million people were living in the country in 1776 and today there are more than 330 million. The ideals were different, the structure was different but one consistent thing was, America

changed. It evolved. The sentence "we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..." is true based on how mankind is born but may be questionable on how all men are treated.

The Delegates of 1776 didn't want England's government but carried on England's slave trade. They didn't want England's taxes but also didn't bother to give representation to other races. The idea of all men being equal was good but the actions of the nation didn't live up to the sentence, otherwise slavery wouldn't have happened. The country still continued to evolve.

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness."

-First 2 paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation which freed slaves who were enlisted in the Confederate Army. The slaves in the Union States remained enslaved. After conflict and political exchanges, the Civil War ended, and June 19, 1865, came. This was the last documented record of slavery and became the

oldest nationally celebrated Freedom Day from slavery. Eventually, it was dubbed "Juneteenth". To this day, this is seen as Independence Day to many Black Americans, though not officially recognized by the entire country according to PBS.org.

The stars on the original American flag were depicted in a circle so all the Colonies would appear equal. Now, with slaves being free, it seemed as though the idea of the original flag was correct but it wasn't true yet and America was still evolving.

In 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn, in Greenwich Village, N.Y., which was a gay club. The raid itself started a riot that spilled into the surrounding neighborhoods and lasted six days. The riots were a critical moment in the gay rights movement. The LGBTQ community were another set of humans who weren't openly accepted in the American population, so they would frequently meet in clubs and bars where they could express themselves in a safe space. In the '60s police would harass the clubs and bars because public homosexual behavior was illegal.

History.com states, one year later, to commemorate the Stonewall Riots, the first documented gay rights parade was held. Throughout the years, many injustices and protests took place on behalf of the LGBTQ community. In 1980 the Democratic Rules Committee stated it will not discriminate against homosexuals. Wisconsin became the first state to outlaw homosexual discrimination and eventually, many years after, the Supreme Court declared same-sex marriage legal in all 50 states. The history runs deep but the country evolved.

Today, Americans of different races now hold some form of government seat, and as a whole, there is more unity within the population. There is still an underlining conflict though and it stems from "all men are created equal". These are the words that founded this nation, and these are the words that have sparked the evolution of civil rights throughout history. America has created its way to become a land of liberty with a mix of conflict and unity. As a people, Americans have eventually stood to defeat evil intentions and morally incorrect ways of life. This is exactly how the country continues to evolve.

The Fourth of July is America's Independence Day. The day is meant to be proud of the nation as a nation. The rights that Americans have is, in fact, part of what makes the nation a democracy. Today's current situation of injustice, discrimination, growth of knowledge, and community protests are all part of what makes this nation. It's our freedom

to protest for change. Even John Adams protested the exact date of the country's independence by turning down invitations to appear at July 4th events, according to History.com.

Even in today's Navy, acceptance and equal treatment have been a struggle but has happened. Take the stories of Carl Brashear, The Golden 13, and many others who helped paved the way for Black-Americans today. Their lives were major stepping-stones which allows Sailors to have the difficult conversation of race and equality today.

"When that happens (racism), I want you to think about is approaching that person," said Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Mike Gilday. "Think about dignity and respect. Think about having a private conversation – an honest conversation in educating them. Make them more self-aware of what they did and what they said. If we don't do that, racism, injustice, indignity, and disrespect – it's going to grow and it's going to continue. And we'll have more weeks like we've had this week. And we'll be disappointed. We'll be more disappointed in ourselves because we let it happen. We let it happen."

"I'm really proud of the Navy. I'm such an optimist about not only where we've been but where we are going. Let's make it the best Navy possible. Let's make it the best Navy for everybody. Thanks. Thanks for listening. Have a good night."

According to media outlets around the nation, today there are protests spreading throughout the country because of the civil unrest of Black-Americans being killed with no justice to the alleged murders. The protests are filled with Americans of all ethnicities and preferences and it is displaying the pride of being American, the right to protest and bring about change. The Navy is a melting pot of all Americans and the same change is happening within the fleet.

Times change, but the American way is to correct mistakes, forge ahead with new ideas, and accept that "all men [and women] are created equal." While it is important that the nation celebrates its progress, it is similarly important to acknowledge its shortcomings. America has gone from one type of nation to another that is filled with people of all ethnicities, cultures, preferences, and ideals but it is still, America, and she stands on her own. Still, she evolves.

Happy Fourth of July America.

Resource: History.com, CNN.com, Navy.mil, PBS.org

