

“As a Navy, we must seize this opportunity to engage in conversations about race relations and inclusion within our force. Now is the time to have open and honest conversations across our Navy. We need to identify what is really happening, understand where barriers exist and listen to all perspectives on how we can bring our unique skillsets together to tackle these issues.”

- Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday



Hard Conversations and Affecting True Change

By Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. John B. Nowell Jr.

Our nation has recently seen thousands take to the streets across the country to protest discrimination and injustice at all levels. There’s no doubt all of you are feeling a mix of anger, sadness and frustration.

We must all take an active role in preventing unlawful discrimination and harassment. Military and civilian supervisors must enforce equal opportunity policies and thoroughly investigate all incidents of harassment and take appropriate corrective action.

Frankly, we should all feel outraged at what has happened – that tragically, it took these events for us to realize that now is the time for each of us to step forward and have the hard conversations. We must use the momentum created by these events as a catalyst for positive change. We need to have a deeper inclusion and diversity conversation nationally, in our Navy and amongst our own teams.

Now, more than ever, your leadership and example are needed.

This is about always doing

the right thing, regardless of the consequences. It’s embracing the idea that our diversity is our strength because we come from all walks of life, with different experiences and different perspectives. If this sounds familiar, it should. It is the foundation on which we are building our Navy-wide Culture of Excellence (COE).



Let me be clear. While we have made progress, we are not where we need or want to be.

As we look at scaling some initiatives across the Fleet, I want to ensure that we are taking action at the unit level, too. There are things you can be doing now to prepare for the broader discussions that will come soon.

These conversations must happen at every level of leadership to include at the very top. Further, we need to take a hard look at how we are all affected by implicit bias

and systemic racism

While we have focused deliberately on inclusion and diversity in the past, we must do more and do it more quickly. I want to ensure that we are fully responding to this moment, as we work to facilitate enduring change.

I implore each of you to have these open and hard conversations. Remember, uncomfortable is okay. I have had to leave my comfort zone and I do not like it, but we must get uncomfortable if we want to effect enduring change.

Leadership requires that we create a space where each member of our team feels they can respectfully share points of view and discuss the challenges of current events. These discussions do not always have to be formal and command sponsored. They can and should come anywhere and anytime the opportunity presents itself.

I do not want to just observe the problem; I want to help fix it—I ask for that same commitment from each of you - I am so proud to call each and every member of our Navy team shipmate.

History and Hope: The Navy's Continuing Journey to Equality

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday recently spoke in a video message about race relations and asked this question:

"How can we contribute in a positive way to change things, so that these things never happen again?"

Gilday said that while he's been in the Navy a long time and has had a lot of experiences, one thing he will never experience is walking in the shoes of a Black American.

"As a Navy, we must seize this opportunity to engage in conversations about race relations and inclusion within our force," he said. "Now is the time to have open and honest conversations across our Navy."

One way to increase awareness and to get a better understanding of a complex subject, is to learn the story and the history that a vital part of our team, namely Black Americans, has with the U.S. Navy. It is a story that goes back to the beginning of the U.S. Navy, and its relevance continues today.

"This is a discussion that is not going away, nor should it," said Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. John B. Nowell Jr.

In celebrating racial diversity, Nowell noted that despite incremental progress, "We are not where we need to be." Calling for "open and hard conversations" in the ranks and "respect between team members," Nowell wants to "actively seek out all points of view, and most importantly, listen."

Only by fostering an environment where everyone can, "respectfully share points of view and discuss the challenges of current events" will we be able to "effect real change."

A desire to be a part of, "something greater than myself" is what drove now-retired Vice Adm. Kevin Scott, a Black American, to stay in the Navy for 38-years. In a recent interview he discussed the history of Black Americans and their struggle for equality.

Fed by incremental change throughout the decades, the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights act and even the Bill of Rights, are milestones that have resulted in what Scott calls "promissory notes toward that future."

Today, Black Americans make up nearly 21 percent of the Navy. That's a significant number given the fact that in 2019, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that Black Americans made up only 13.4 percent of the country's population.

During the Revolutionary War, according to Dr. John Sherwood, author of "Black Sailor, White Navy" and historian at the Navy History and Heritage Command, black Sailors made up roughly 10 percent of the service. That percentage rose during the

Civil War to between 17 and 20 percent.

Except for the years from the end of World War I through the end of World War II, for the most part, black and white Sailors have always lived, worked, fought and died together at sea. There was no segregation or limiting of black Sailors to specific career fields or ratings, according to Lt. Dennis Nelson – one of the first black officers commissioned in the Navy.

Nelson wrote in-depth on the topic in his doctoral thesis, "The Integration of the Negro into the United States Navy, 1776-1947", a work that was widely acclaimed when the Navy officially published it in 1948.



It wasn't until World War I, and through the early years of World War II, that the Navy actively engaged in racial segregation policies among crews and limited Black Americans and other racial minorities to serving only in the ratings that involved mess duty, Nelson noted.

"From Revolutionary War days and until the latter years of World War I, the United States Navy had no definite policy of separation and segregation as had the Army," Nelson wrote. "Negros, though in a slave status – up and through the Civil War period – served in all ratings. This practice held until the early 20th Century."

The change, Nelson wrote, was brought on by "rabid racialism of Southern whites in the services and the influence and attitudes of white supremacy and intolerance exerted by rabble-rousing civilians."

At the beginning of World War II and as the numbers of Black Americans in the service increased, the Navy at first maintained segregated units ashore and even experimented with several ships crewed by all black enlisted led by white officers. None of these proved to be workable solutions.

Gradually during the war, Nelson wrote, the Navy started slowly to move progressively towards "development of the Negro into full Naval service participation"

and began training Black Americans in all career fields.

"Through a series of directives," Nelson wrote, the Navy "gravitated into a definite and stated policy of complete integration – from a policy of complete segregation and discrimination." Though the change started, he noted, "with all the earmarks of the usual ideological platitudes," it turned into "a practical and workable plan for the present and future treatment" of Black Americans in the Navy.

For perspective, the Navy's gradual move to total integration in the latter years of the war started four years before President Harry S. Truman officially ordered the racial integration of the armed forces on July 26, 1948.

Nelson's favorable appraisal of that Navy policy in his thesis was written a year before Truman's edict. The work was endorsed by then Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. Thomas L. Sprague as being a "fair and valid" appraisal of the Navy's policies in the publication's forward.

Even the New York Times chimed in on Feb. 8, 1948, in a review of Nelson's work that, "the fact that the Navy Department has published a critical analysis of its segregation policies by its only Negro officer is an indication of a changing attitude in that tight-knit officer corps."

Segregation policies in all the military branches, the Times wrote, deprived them of "the services of men they cannot afford, in time of crisis, to get along without." Prejudice, the Times concluded, has no place in the military.

"A man's courage and capabilities cannot be, and should not be, judged on the color of his skin," the review said. "It is encouraging to see a growing realization of this truth."

But despite this fantastic start, the numbers of Black Americans in the Navy decreased in the Cold War that followed World War II.

"One would have thought that the Navy would have rapidly integrated its force," Navy historian Sherwood said. By 1962 -- sort of the middle of the Cold War -- only 5 percent of the Navy was black and just .2 percent of the officer corps.

For comparison, he said, by this time, the Army's Black American population had become 12.2 percent of its force and 3.2 percent of the officer corps.

The Navy's low numbers throughout the 1960s and into the early 1970s were because of the draft.

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Watch CNO and CNP's Videos on Diversity

"As a Navy, we must seize this opportunity to engage in conversations about race relations and inclusion within our force. Now is the time to have open and honest conversations across our Navy." -CNO

"When the next new Shipmate reports in at your command, look beyond their gender, male or female, and realize this is a person with a potential for greatness." - CNP



Navy's Task Force One Navy to Fight Bias, Discrimination

Millions of Americans around the country are experiencing stress, heartbreak and trauma as a result of the recent uprisings and protests. Those same feelings are being felt at all levels of the Navy, from the most junior sailor to the top officials at the Pentagon.

Not only will the Navy not tolerate racism or discrimination of any kind, the service is kicking off a full-court press to seek out any practices, procedures and policy that support implicit bias and discrimination of any kind.

"Task Force (TF) One Navy" will be led by Rear Adm. Alvin Halsey who will report his findings to the CNO, Adm. Mike Gilday via the CNP, Vice Adm. John B. Nowell, Jr.

"As a Navy - uniformed and civilian, active and reserve - we cannot tolerate discrimination or racism of any kind. We must work to identify and eliminate individual and systemic racism within our force," said Gilday. "That is why we are standing up Task Force One Navy, which

will work to identify and remove racial barriers and improve inclusion within our Navy."

Though the panel's structure will be predominately senior officers, enlisted and civilians, the group will involve and engage junior Sailors on the deckplates by driving the discussion from many different fleet concentration locations.

The goal - to promptly address the full spectrum of systemic racism, advocate for the needs of underserved communities, work to dismantle barriers and equalize professional development frameworks and opportunities within the Navy.

"We are at a critical inflection point for our Nation and our Navy and I want to ensure that we are fully responding to this moment as we work to facilitate enduring change," said Nowell. "We must use the momentum created by these events as a catalyst for positive change. We need to have a deeper inclusion and diversity conversation in our Navy and amongst our

own teams."

TF One Navy will focus its efforts in recommending reforms in several key areas. These areas include:

- Recruiting / Barriers to Service entry
- Pre-accession Mentorship frameworks / Scholarship opportunities
- Diversity of talent by community / Talent management
- Training / Education along the service member career continuum
- Detailing / Milestone job opportunities
- Fitness reporting / Evaluation systems
- Promotion / Advancement processes
- Military justice analysis of racial disparity
- Health care and health disparities

TF One Navy leadership and membership will represent the diversity of thought, experience, and perspectives within our Navy and will include membership reflecting the diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, age, and ranks from across the Navy.

What is this Culture of Excellence all About?

All organizations have a culture. Successful organizations, the Navy has learned, take an active role in shaping that culture as the foundation for everything they do.

That's why the Navy's efforts to build a "Culture of Excellence" within its ranks, isn't just a cute phrase. It's a rudder correction the service needs, leadership believes to get to an underlying attitude of excellence that can only come from changing culture from the deckplates up to the most senior levels of the Service.

"Aiming to simply avoid doing the wrong thing is too low a bar; we must actively pursue that which is right," wrote Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday in NAVADMIN 254/19, which announced the effort last November.

Though governed by a panel of senior officers, Navy officials believe the change must resonate with those on the deckplates, as well as senior leadership,

to be successful. Sure, it started with an overarching movement bringing together a myriad of existing and new programs that are set on a new focus for the service -- developing toughness, trust and connectedness in every Sailor, civilian and family member.

One example of the efforts underway that are designed to change the Navy from the core out is a concept of teaching the Navy's newest recruits "Warrior Toughness" which has developed at Recruit Training Command in the past year and a half. Teaching these concepts will spread in the near future to officer accession points, including the U.S. Naval Academy.

"I'm an old ship driver," said the Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. John B. Nowell, Jr., who is overseeing the Culture of Excellence efforts.

"[Back in my day] the initial reaction when something happened was to simply

tell everyone to 'suck it up' and drive on - we have to get past that - we have got to get to the point across the whole Navy that if you have to take a knee and recalibrate - it's not just OK, it's the right thing to do."

And that's the bottom line with this effort. Getting the Navy to a default of always doing the right thing at all levels, from the deckplates to the halls of the Pentagon, no matter what. This can only happen if the "right thing" becomes the Navy's default way of doing business thus - as natural an occurrence as taking a breath.

"To reach this vision of cultural excellence, the Navy must evolve beyond simply responding to incidents after they occur," Gilday said in the message. "Reactive strategies demand large amounts of our collective time and effort to target a relatively small population. Instead, we must proactively prevent incidents from occurring in the first place."

Culture of Excellence: SEA Faculty Advisors Reflect on Positive Change

"I remember when I joined the Navy; I didn't even think about going to a ship," said Master Chief Information Systems Technician Tiffany Laitola, a faculty advisor at the Senior Enlisted Academy (SEA). "Then, when I left school with orders to the Eisenhower as part of one of the first groups of females to ever be aboard a combatant ship, my chief looked at me and said, 'you're making history right now, do you know that?'"

Today, women serve in every rank from seaman to admiral. According to Laitola, as faculty advisors at SEA, Senior Chief Aviation Maintenance Administrationman Amyshirelle Santos, Senior Chief Yeoman Karen Tower and herself provide senior enlisted leaders with the tools to effectively lead the fleet and engage in conversations to spark innovation for the future.

"The facilitation and the hard conversations that we have here involve a lot of self-reflection, and we challenge people in order to help them grow as leaders," said Santos. "Without mentorship, you can't get anywhere. No one is born knowing all the answers, and we're facilitating topics with leaders to help Sailors not make the same mistakes we might have. Let us help you, that's what mentorship is about."

Laitola added that although she has experienced hardships as a woman in the military, one way she feels we can grow as a Navy is by having open and honest dialogue about these issues. The mindset promoted at the SEA ensures future Sailors do not have to experience the same adversities.

"I had a lot of struggles as a junior Sailor," said Tower. "If someone can learn from my struggle and then not have to go through it themselves, then why wouldn't I try to pass that advice on to them?"

Tower says having knowledge passed down from her leadership was something she wished she had more of as a junior Sailor. She believes teaching leaders to do it now is a key building block in creating the "Culture of Excellence" the Navy is striving for.



As an overarching movement underway within the Navy, the Culture of Excellence is bringing together a myriad of existing and new programs that will develop toughness, trust and connectedness in every Sailor, civilian and family member. This proactive approach to making the Navy a better place to live and work relies in part on leveraging inclusion and diversity, identifying obstacles at the individual, group and organizational level and working together to resolve them.

"We're very adamant about cultivating a Culture of Excellence," said Laitola. "Part of that is having open and honest communication and holding people accountable when something is wrong no matter how minute it might

seem. During the (SEA) course, we encourage our senior enlisted to think about what their Sailors might be going through and to take a step back to look at it from a different perspective."

Santos agreed that gaining perspective is one of the most important parts of the training they give at the SEA, and meeting Sailors from different rates and areas of the Navy is an invaluable tool to build better leaders.

"Think about everything we have to offer, not even just as females but as humans," said Santos. "If you discount any demographic or any point of view, then you're eliminating knowledge and experience. It's not about male vs. female or junior vs. senior enlisted, it's about the Navy and creating a Culture of Excellence."

Tower said she thinks Culture of Excellence is about equal opportunity and everybody getting the chance to succeed or fail. We learn what needs to be changed or improved through our failures.

"I understand that change is uncomfortable," said Tower. "But change is necessary, and I'm happy to be part of this team because we foster change here. I think it's important for those people, who don't like change, to come here and broaden their horizons."

Laitola has been in the Navy for 26 years, Santos for 22 years and Tower reached 20 years in June. They all feel the Navy is changing for the better and are gratified knowing they are key players in making the ideas for a better fleet a reality.

"The mindset is changing," said Santos. "To know that gone are the days where someone is judged based on their gender makes me ecstatic. Knowing that people are being judged off their character and their expertise is amazing, and we can't go anywhere but up from here."

History and Hope: The Navy's Continuing Journey to Equality...Continued

"When you have a draft, the Navy becomes very, very desirable for all races," Sherwood noted.

Because many wanted to avoid serving in ground forces in Vietnam, the Navy decided to up its enlistment standards, taking only those who scored the highest on the primary academic entry-level benchmark -- Armed Forces Qualification Test.

"This meant that Navy recruiters could easily hit 102 percent of their quota by enlisting the highest scoring candidates on the AFQT," Sherwood said. "Because of, quite frankly, institutional racism within the United States, Black Americans as a race did not have the same level of education as many in the white populous, which led to lower average test scores."

With the end of the draft in the early 1970's the Navy's recruiting hey-day ended, too. With recruiters struggling to make their quotas, the Navy started taking more lower-scoring Sailors into the ranks. Though this opened up the door for more Black Americans, they qualified for fewer career fields in the Navy. As a result, the number of black Sailors in deck, the galley and laundry swelled.



This dynamic led to unrest in the ranks and, in some cases, riots on a few Navy ships, Sherwood said. At the root was this de-facto discrimination in job selection. Also, black Sailors had few role models and advocates from their race in their chain of command. They saw white Sailors getting the "good jobs," Sherwood said.

"If you score low on the tests, regardless of race, not only do you end up in a certain assignment, but you cannot get into A Schools, either," Sherwood said. "Therefore, you cannot get promoted in many cases."

Also, there were few, if any, "African-Americans in middle management roles," these Sailors could "share their problems with," Sherwood said.

Again, the Navy needed to change. The watershed moment was the appointment of Adm. Elmo "Bud" Zumwalt as the Chief of Naval Operations. Just 49 years old at his

selection, he became the youngest CNO in Navy history. A three-star at the time of his appointment in 1970, he was selected over many officers senior to him.

Zumwalt hit the Navy like a ton of bricks, working to reform and rebuild the Navy as it came out of the Vietnam War. He was known for issuing "Z-Grams", his version of NAVADMIN messages of today, in his attempt to fix what he saw as wrong in the Navy.

Five months into his tour as CNO, Zumwalt put the Navy back on the path to equal opportunity with "Z-Gram #66" entitled "Equal Opportunity in the Navy."

The message came shortly after meeting with both black officers and enlisted Sailors.

"Prior to these meetings, I was convinced that compared with the civilian community, we had relatively few racial problems in the Navy," Zumwalt wrote. "I have discovered that I was wrong--we do have problems."

What struck Zumwalt the most, he wrote, was the "depth of feeling of our black personnel that there is significant discrimination in the Navy" and that he "did not realize the extent and deep significance of many of these matters."

Zumwalt sought to open up communications. He created command minority affairs teams to "learn what and where the areas of friction are" and to help the Navy "develop a far greater sensitivity to the problems of all our minority groups so that we may more effectively go about solving them." However, he admitted that "much remains to be done."

The Navy has done much to level the playing field for those entering the Navy. Starting in the 1970s, the Navy has offered academic skills classes to help all Sailors raise their entry test scores to qualify for more career fields.

With his efforts, racial tensions declined gradually in the Navy for the rest of the 1970s and '80s. However, because the Navy is a reflection of society, it remains with us today.

As with Zumwalt's desire to "develop a far greater sensitivity," retired Vice Adm. Scott says a greater understanding of racial discrimination and how it affects people is needed within all ranks to move forward.

Scott explained that much of discrimination is very subtle and as a young Black American growing up in Portsmouth, Virginia, and New York City, it was something he became very sensitive to and something most minorities learn at an early age. When he sees it, it becomes a gnawing feeling in his stomach that never seems to go away.

Even in the 1980s, Scott, a career helicopter pilot, told of being the only black member at many of his squadrons. Through this isolation in the Navy, along with other experiences throughout his life, he developed a "keen sense of observation" towards racial attitudes.

"It's like I was wearing [night vision



goggles], and no one else was," Scott said. "I could see things and observe things that other people would not ever see or sense."

Things, for example, as simple as getting a cup of coffee with white friends out in town were studies in race relations for Scott. Negative racial attitudes, even when not overt, came through in body language, tone of voice and actions towards him while simply taking his order, when the person before got a different brand of help.

"You become hyper-sensitive to everything," he said. "And more often than not, you are the only one who notices it."

This acute awareness, he said, is at the crux of how Black Americans and many others feel after the death of Mr. George Floyd – that enough is enough.

If he sees a role for the military in affecting change for the better, it's to be an example for the rest of America.

"Since desegregation, the military has been that beacon in the darkness," he said. "Though it, too, has had major challenges along the way – and still does – it still as an institution continues to give our nation hope."

What the military brings to the table is that everyone who enters is taught, "Responsibility, accountability and respect for others." This, he says, is putting back into the American culture citizens of all races who can be the example for others by being aware and sensitive and willing to listen to the concerns of others.

"There's nothing, I think, in this world as powerful as hope," Scott said. "And when it comes to doing the right thing, people have to stand for it; you can't assume it's there or that somebody else is going to take care of it."

Your Legal and EO Courses of Action Against Discrimination

Equal Opportunity

Legal

If you've been harassed or discriminated against, know your resolution options.

Reports can be filed anonymously, formally, or informally. Regardless of the avenue, commands need to resolve all complaints quickly and fairly.

The Informal Report System is the quickest way to resolve a complaint and the preferred option as it uses one of three ways to deal directly with those involved:

1. Direct Approach - The individual addresses the concerns verbally or in writing with the involved person or persons.

2. Third-Party - The individual requests assistance from another shipmate or the chain of command to help resolve the issue.

3. Training Request - The individual requests that Equal Opportunity or Harassment training be conducted in the workplace.

If you decide on the informal route, report the behavior to leadership at the lowest appropriate level and as early as possible to prevent any escalation.

If a formal complaint is necessary, your first stop should be with your Command Managed Equal Opportunity program manager or Command Climate Specialist. Either of these experts can walk you through all the options, formal or informal and explain the process.

We know it can be difficult to come forward with complaints like this, so some individuals may want

to remain anonymous, that's okay.

If you prefer to go with an anonymous report, you can use the Opportunity Advice Line at 800-253-

0931 or 901-874-2507. This option gives the comfort of anonymity while still giving an avenue to report inappropriate behavior.

Regardless of how it is reported, all reports are treated the same by the command and will be investigated fully, once the commander accepts the complaint.

More information is available on the Navy Personnel Command's Website at https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/21st_Century_Sailor/equal_opportunity/Pages/ResolvinganIssue.aspx

It's the responsibility of the chain of command to receive, process and resolve any reports of harassment and unlawful discrimination.

Formal reports must be made within 60 days of the offending incident, and in the case of a series of incidents, within 60 days of the most recent incident. Commanders may accept reports beyond this time frame if circumstances warrant.



Reports can only be made against a single alleged offender. In a case where there's more than one alleged offender, a separate report must be made for each. Complaints against groups, such as "the chain of command" are not allowed. Each report is adjudicated on its own.

Everyone involved has legal rights to fair treatment. This means that once a command has made their decision in a case, the findings must be discussed with both the complainant and the alleged offender.

Both the accused or accuser have the right to appeal a command's decisions on formal harassment or unlawful discrimination complaints. There are two levels of appeal, and are not automatic. They must be formally requested and have filing time limits.

The first level of appeal is to the echelon 2 commander in the chain above the command which investigated the report and made the determination. It must come within 7 days of the command notifying the individual of their findings.

Further appeals go directly to the Secretary of the Navy for a final look. This review must be requested within 30 days of the echelon 2 commander's decision in the case.

Reasons for appeals at either level could be perceptions that regulations were incorrectly applied or that facts were incorrectly weighed or even ignored altogether. Also, for either level of appeal, decisions can be made that the initial report or the previous appeal was either made in good faith or not and the appeal authority can take corrective or even punitive measures as they see fit.



Service as a mother, a daughter, and both

Having a mother in the military isn't always easy on a daughter. There are a lot of missed moments and missed opportunities during crucial periods in life. Being a mother in the military is just as hard. Chief Navy Counselor Samantha Lee is about to know both.

Lee's mother, Lynette Smith is a retired Air Force senior master sergeant who served for 23 years. While Lee didn't go into the Air Force, and instead chose to join the Navy, she still credits her mother for the inspiration. Now, Lee's daughter Amiyah is a member of the Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps and she intends to follow her mother's footsteps. She will enlist in the U.S. Navy following high school graduation.

"Amiyah's Marine instructor tries to convince her otherwise, but her Navy instructor outranks him and helps keep her on track," said Lee, smiling.

Lee is grateful that she could be as much of an inspiration to her daughter as her mom was for her.



"For many years my mother was a single mom raising us up in a military environment," said Lee. "Seeing her be there for my

sister and me, and still be that stellar mom, very much involved in our lives while serving her country as a rock star in the Air Force, was very inspiring to me. Watching her succeed so well and still be a mom really made me respect her and look up to her. Honestly, I didn't see that outside of my home, as far as my friends' parents go. I was really fortunate."

Lee is not the only one of Smith's daughters to follow in her mom's footsteps and join the military. While Lee joined the Navy, her sister, Michelle Williams, joined the Army.

Although neither chose the Air Force, they grew up knowing the value of service to their country.

"My Navy recruiter really identified with me and just made me realize that the Navy was the way for me," said Lee. "I used to think I was going to go Air Force and follow exactly in my mom's footsteps but this has worked out very well for me."

Smith is happy knowing her career and her sacrifice are serving as a guide path for her daughters, and her daughter's daughter.

"It makes me proud," said Smith. "It makes me feel like I did something positive for my daughter to inspire her and give her something she could carry with her through her life. I'm very proud of my daughters, and I'm so happy that Sammy (Lee) was able to become a DLCPO (Division Leading Chief Petty Officer). She's in the job that she is supposed to be in because she cares about people,

and she's always talking about the positive impact she has been able to make and will continue to make as she lives out her dream."

Smith said both of her daughters are extremely successful and driven women, and she is honored to be the inspiration for the next generation of women in the military.

Amiyah is also extremely



proud of her mother. During a recent visit to Amiyah's school, Lee conducted an inspection for her NJROTC unit.

"Everyone loved her," said Amiyah. "I'm proud of my mother. I'm joining the United States Navy because my mother raised me right."

Samantha Lee is a career recruiter for Navy Recruiting District Raleigh, North Carolina. She has 21 years in and hopes to exceed her mother in years and paygrade.

"It's all just family competition", said Lee. "You should see how my sister and I bash each other over the Army/Navy game!"

As an Air Force veteran, that's one family argument Smith is happy to sit out of.

New Navy Logistics Ships to Highlight Inclusion and Diversity

Within the year, a new class of fleet replenishment oilers will begin appearing in the fleet. The Navy decided the namesakes for these state-of-the-art vessels would be American heroes in the nation's fight for equal rights and justice.

The new John L. Lewis-class of fleet oilers will play a critical role in the future of fleet underway replenishment. The Navy's current plan is to build 20 ships and six of those ships already have names.

The lead ship is the USNS John L. Lewis. It is named for Rep. John L. Lewis (D-Ga.), a life-long civil rights activist and current congressman whose district encompasses much of the city of Atlanta, Ga.

During the 1960s Lewis was on the front lines of the civil rights struggle in the Deep South. In 1961 he participated in the "Freedom Rides," which challenged the segregation of southern interstate bus terminals and was one of six leaders who organized the 1963 March on Washington, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., made his landmark "I Have a Dream" speech.

"If someone would have told me when I was growing up in rural Alabama — during the height of the civil rights movement — that one day I would have a series of ships named after me I would have said, 'you're crazy,'" Lewis said during the ship's May 2019 keel authentication.



It's Lewis's hope, he said, that anyone who sees the ship in the fleet would remember the fight he and others waged to obtain equal rights for all. His remarks also honored the diversity of the team of builders working on the ship.

The USNS John L. Lewis is slated to enter service within the next year.

Building of the second ship of the class, the USNS Harvey Milk has also started. This ship's namesake is a Navy veteran, as well as gender and gay rights advocate, Harvey Milk. In 1977, Milk became the first openly gay person elected to public office in the state of California as a member of

San Francisco's Board of Supervisors.

His first act as an elected official was to introduce a bill that outlawed discrimination based on sexual orientation. It was quickly approved and signed into law. Less than a year later, Milk and Mayor George Moscone were shot and killed by Dan White, a disgruntled former city supervisor.



Milk spent nearly five years in the Navy during the Korean War. He enlisted in the Navy on June 16, 1951. After boot camp in San Diego, he transferred to airman apprenticeship training in Jacksonville, Fla. While there, he was selected for Officer Candidate School in Newport R.I. and was commissioned an ensign on July 24, 1952.

Milk then completed diving officer training and was assigned to the San Diego-based submarine rescue ship Chanticleer where he deployed to the Western Pacific and Korean theater of operations, netting Milk both the Korean and United Nations Service Medals.

In 1954, Milk transferred to the Norfolk-based submarine rescue ship Kittiwake before leaving service in February 1955.

Construction on the Milk was kicked off with the cutting of 100 tons of steel in December 2019. The next milestone will be a keel authentication ceremony.

The next two ships are named for former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Earl Warren as well as Senator and U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy -- both of whom played vital roles in the 1960's civil rights movement.

Warren served as an Army officer during World War I. His legendary status in civil rights history, however, came as the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme court. It was on his watch in 1954 that the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* made its way to the court. The "Warren Court" unanimously voted that segregation of schools was unconstitutional. Under Warren's tenure, the court also sought electoral reforms, equality in criminal

justice and the defense of human rights.

As the U.S. Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy believed that voting rights were the key to racial justice. That led to his collaboration with his brother, President John F. Kennedy, in developing the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Robert F. Kennedy's Navy service isn't as well-known as that of his two brothers. Joseph P. Kennedy died on a top-secret mission in 1944 while serving as a pilot in the European Theater. John served as a P.T. Boat Commander in the South Pacific.

Seeking to follow his brothers to war, Robert joined the Navy Reserve at age 17 in 1943. Most of his Navy career, however, was spent in the V-12 Navy College Officer Training Program.

By late 1945, the war was over. At his request, the Navy allowed Kennedy to leave officer training and instead finish his service onboard the USS Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., as a seaman apprentice. Seaman Kennedy served on the ship named for his fallen brother throughout its shakedown cruise before leaving the Navy on May 30, 1946. Kennedy was assassinated in June of 1968 after winning the California Democratic Primary.

Two more Lewis-class replenishment ships are named for outspoken 19th Century abolitionists and advocates for women's voting rights; the USNS Lucy Stone and USNS Sojourner Truth.

Stone was an ardent abolitionist and vocal advocate of equal rights for women. In 1847, Stone became the first woman from Massachusetts to earn a college degree. Throughout her life, she spoke out for women's rights and against slavery at a time when women were discouraged and often prevented from speaking publicly.

Truth, born into slavery as Isabella "Belle" Baumfree in Swartekill, New York, escaped to freedom with her infant daughter in 1826. She won a court case to gain custody of her still enslaved son in 1828, becoming the first black woman to win a legal claim against a white man.

She changed her name to Sojourner Truth in 1843 to reflect her desire to spread "the hope that was in her." She worked for the abolition of slavery and helped recruit black troops during the Civil War. In 2009, a bust of Truth was unveiled in Emancipation Hall, part of the U.S. Capitol Visitors Center, making her the first Black American with a statue in the Capitol building.

Zumwalt's Lasting Legacy as Told through 121 Z-Grams

Naval History and Heritage Command has transcribed each of Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt's Z-grams in order for people to learn more about just how profoundly the Navy's 19th Chief of Naval Operations impacted and changed the Navy during his tenure from 1970 to 1974.

On Zumwalt's tombstone is the word "Reformer." This is apt because he probably did more to change and advance the Navy than anyone since World War II. Via directives called Z-grams, he shattered barriers for women and other minorities to advance and paved the way for them to be treated the same as their colleagues. He embraced equal rights for all, and fought hard for the Navy to embrace them too.

Before issuing Z-gram 66 titled "Equal Opportunity in the Navy," for example, Zumwalt sat down with black officers and enlisted men and their wives and discussed issues of discrimination and racism.



"Prior to these meetings, I was convinced that, compared with the civilian community, we had relatively few racial problems in the Navy," he said in the Z-Gram. "However, after exploring the matter in some depth with these two groups, I have discovered that I was wrong—we do have problems, and it is my intention and that



of Secretary [of the Navy John] Chafee to take prompt steps toward their solution."

Zumwalt admitted in the same message that any solutions he implemented would only be first steps, but beginning to solve the problem of discrimination within the Navy was nonetheless among his top priorities.

A couple of years later, the Navy, and the military in general, was feeling the stress of a mass exodus of people getting out. It was transitioning to an all-volunteer force from one made up significantly of draftees, and in Z-gram 116, titled "Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women," he took the first steps to fully integrate women into the Navy—aboard ships, in staff positions, command ashore, access to most ratings, etc.

"I believe we can do far more than we have in the past in according women equal opportunity to contribute their extensive talents and to achieve full professional status," Zumwalt stated in the message.

When he retired, the Navy

had black admirals and women were flying aircraft. If this was all he did, his legacy would be guaranteed. But he put the lives and wellbeing of all Sailors on his agenda. In Z-gram 9, he created the meritorious advancement program for petty officers. In it, he stated, "I am concerned that there may be a small number of petty officers who are obviously superior performers but who have not been advanced in rate even after five or more examination attempts. These petty officers have demonstrated by continued superior performance that they are qualified for advancement to higher rate and that they merit special advancement consideration."

He also created the ombudsman and sponsorship programs and the Sailor of the Year award, among other changes documented in his famous fleet-wide messages. To read more about Zumwalt and his Z-grams, visit the website of the Naval History and Heritage Command:

www.history.navy.mil



“ A diverse and inclusive DoD draws out and builds upon the best in each of us; it builds esprit de corps, forges teamwork, and brings out the best between us. In short, it brings out the best in America. We all agree that it is time to lead once again on this issue as America’s most respected institution, and a globally-recognized leader when it comes to building diverse, winning teams, and creating opportunity for all. ”

-Mark T. Esper, Secretary of Defense

