A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR AND STAFF

Every month, we focus on the Navy’s mission-focused people and technologies. As we survey how our naval forces continue to train, fight and equip the world’s toughest Sailor, we look at our advantage at sea and the capabilities of Sailors deployed around the world.

We begin and end this issue with the names of service members killed during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. This September, we hope the stories in this issue pay tribute to those who suffered from the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and those who served and sacrificed in military service since.

It is our mission to reach Sailors, so please share this issue, scan the QR codes, and follow our social media channels for the latest information for Sailors by Sailors.
STATEMENT FROM CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS ADM. MIKE GILDAY ON SERVICE MEMBER DEATHS IN AFGHANISTAN

The CNO issued a statement to the Fleet regarding the 12 service members killed in Afghanistan Aug. 26.

This is a solemn day for the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps team. Those warriors who died gave their lives to save thousands of men, women and children, Americans and Afghans alike.

Their courage and selflessness represent the highest ideals of America. We pay solemn tribute to their sacrifice.

To the families and loved ones who grieve – you are not alone. We stand beside you in this pain, humbled by the loss of these heroes, grateful that individuals of such valor chose to serve among us.
Shipmates,

In 2001, we went to war to protect our Nation and bring justice to those who committed cold-blooded attacks on our country. We went to war to defend our citizens, our friends, and our allies. We went to war to protect freedom—a fragile ideal, but one worth defending.

As the events in Afghanistan unfolded this past week, some of you may question whether your contributions and sacrifice were worth it. I want to be very clear: your service was not in vain, and it made a difference. For 20 years, you have deployed in support of the mission in Afghanistan. Whether on the ground, from the sea, or from the air, Sailors fought tirelessly to keep our homeland safe, and to uphold principles which we hold dear.

As a sea service, we maintain an enduring presence around the world, steadfast in our resolve to defend our Nation, our principles, and our allies. While we must remain focused, at the same time I encourage each of you to reflect on your service, reach out to those who may be struggling, and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to a grateful Nation. Your courage and commitment reflect our Navy’s and our Nation’s best virtues. Of this, you should be proud. Please also know that I am deeply humbled to serve both you and our Nation.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Admiral, U.S. Navy
A TOTAL OF 662 QUALIFIED EVACUEES FROM AFGHANISTAN LANDED AT NAVAL AIR STATION (NAS) SIGONELLA ON AUG. 22 AS PART OF OPERATION ALLIES REFUGE.

The initial group of evacuees arrived on a U.S. Air Force KC-10 Extender from Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar with two C-17 Globemaster III afterwards. Qualified Afghanistan evacuees landed at Naval Air Station Sigonella, Aug. 22, 2021, as part of Operation Allies Refuge, with more arrivals expected in the coming hours and days. NAS Sigonella is currently supporting the Department of Defense mission to facilitate the safe departure and relocation of U.S. citizens, Special Immigration Visa recipients, and vulnerable Afghan populations from Afghanistan.

"I could not be prouder of every single one of you," said Capt. Kevin Pickard, commanding officer of NAS Sigonella, to a gathering of personnel from the Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy and State Department at a captain's call before the first aircraft landed. "To see how this base is able to pull in support, all across Italy, is truly impressive. The people we're helping are going to be joining our American family. We're proud to welcome them with open arms."

NAS Sigonella personnel have designated two barracks buildings as temporary lodging on base for evacuees, along with Halal dining, religious and recreation areas.

"This is a short-notice mission that is a national priority for NAS Sigonella and team," said Rear Adm. Scott Gray, Commander, Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central. "They have moved heaven and earth to be ready to take care of folks leaving a desperate situation and are treating them with dignity and respect. They didn't just complete the mission. They went above and beyond to help the Afghan people to the best of their abilities and with hearts full of empathy."

Known as the "Hub of the Med", NAS Sigonella's strategic location as the Navy's only overseas air station enables U.S. allied, and partner nation forces to deploy and respond as required to ensure security and stability in Europe, Africa, and Central Command.

Operation Allies Refuge is the U.S. Department of State's mission for the safe evacuation of U.S. citizens, Special Immigration Visa applicants and other at-risk Afghans as quickly and safely as possible. Working in partnership with its allies in the Italian Air Force and Italian government, NAS Sigonella is serving as a transit location for evacuees before their onward movement to other locations.

For more information about what the Defense Department is doing in support of the evacuation of U.S. and partner civilians from Afghanistan, click here.
Today, together, we again embrace the most sacred duty – defending our nation and working to build a world more defined by peace than conflict. 

I join you as someone who loves the Navy – who spent twenty-six years in uniform and another seventeen striving to make sure you had the capabilities you needed to fulfill your mission effectively and safely. Serving you as your 78th Secretary of the Navy is a high honor. It also carries grave responsibilities to which I will dedicate all my skill and devotion.

You should also know I have a bias for action. Our Navy and our nation face critical challenges on multiple fronts.

Like Secretary Austin, I view our most pressing challenges as the four Cs - China, Culture, Climate, and Covid, and we need the resources and capabilities to address each now.

China is determined to reduce our military superiority. We will not let this happen. We will deter China's aggression, protect our national security, and preserve the peace. Our determination, our skill, and our courage will demonstrate our strength and conviction.

Culture comes down to one goal. Every Sailor and Marine – of all races, genders, religions, and ethnicities – must treat one another with dignity and respect. This is not just about doing the right thing. It is about ensuring our Navy and Marine Corps will be the most talented, most combat ready, most committed force possible.

Climate change exacerbates every challenge we face, from naval installations to frequent deployments. It is also a global struggle for resources that demands ingenuity and innovation. It demands solutions that mitigate climate damage while ensuring our operational success and competitive edge.

Lastly, we must combat Covid. This means we must continue to vaccinate our naval forces with expedience. If we are not vaccinated, we are neither deployable nor combat ready. Immediately, the Navy and Marine Corps will make every effort to vaccinate and care for our force and defeat the scourge Covid has inflicted on our troops.

Both our nation’s security and your success as Sailors and Marines require your enthusiastic, unwavering commitment. We will succeed or fail together. Accordingly, with a leadership ethos forged as a Destroyer Captain, I will strive to be direct and transparent with you about what we need to accomplish together.

Please know your safety and welfare will always be paramount to me, and I will work tirelessly with you to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

To do this, we must possess the resources needed to expand our capabilities. I will make that my top priority. I am committed to ensuring you have the tools and training you need to succeed, just as I am committed to confronting our maintenance backlog, managing our operational requirements, and building our Navy of the future.

When I began my Navy career over 40 years ago, as a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy, I looked up to then Secretary of the Navy Edward Hidalgo. Like me, he was an immigrant to this nation and, like me, his experience taught him why the world needs a strong United States Navy. Most of all, I understood that while I served our nation, he also served me.

The same is true today. I am your Secretary of the Navy Marine Corps Team, focused on your and our collective promise to our Constitution and nation.

We will succeed together. It has never been more important that we do.

Finally, a personal note. My wife Betty and I well understand the sacrifices your loved ones make and how crucial they are to our success. We are both honored to be back once again working shoulder-to-shoulder with you. We look forward to getting out to the Fleet and meeting you all soon.

Full Speed Ahead.

Very Respectfully,

Carlos Del Toro
Protecting the health of the force and warfighting readiness is of paramount importance. I thank and applaud all of you who have become fully vaccinated. Your action helps to ensure the health and safety of you, your family, your shipmates, and your mission.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) adversely impacts Department of the Navy (DON) force readiness and mission execution. Disease models indicate that Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the virus that causes COVID-19, will continue to spread throughout 2021.

Vaccination is the most effective tool we have to prevent widespread manifestation of COVID-19 in our force. Within the last year, millions of Americans have received approved COVID-19 vaccines in response to this emergency.

One of the approved vaccines has received full licensure from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This licensure approval provides additional confidence and comfort in the safety of the most effective tool we have in our arsenal against this threat.

Considering this threat to the health and readiness of Service Members, vaccination against COVID-19 using a vaccine that has received full licensure from the FDA is now a mandatory requirement in accordance with the Secretary of Defense’s memo mandating Coronavirus disease 2019 vaccination for Department of Defense service members.

Additional implementation guidance will be issued via Navy and Marine Corps administrative message.

As the faithful maritime protectors of our country in peacetime and war, each of us must take ownership of our readiness to preserve and protect the force, and ensure the success of our mission.

**Effective immediately, all DON active duty Service Members, who are not already vaccinated or exempted, are required to be fully vaccinated within 90 days and all Reserve Component Service Members are required to be fully vaccinated within 120 days of this issuance with an FDA approved vaccination against COVID-19.**

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Service Members voluntarily immunized with a COVID-19 vaccine under FDA Emergency Use Authorization or World Health Organization Emergency Use Listing in accordance with applicable dose requirements prior to, or after, the establishment of this policy are considered fully vaccinated.

Service Members who are actively participating in COVID-19 clinical trials are exempted from mandatory vaccination against COVID-19 until the trial is complete in order to avoid invalidating such clinical trial results.

The order to obtain full vaccination is a lawful order, and failure to comply is punishable as a violation of a lawful order under Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice, and may result in punitive or adverse administrative action or both.

The Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps have authority to exercise the full range of administrative and disciplinary actions to hold non-exempt Service Members appropriately accountable.

This may include, but is not limited to, removal of qualification for advancement, promotions, reenlistment, or continuation, consistent with existing regulations, or otherwise considering vaccination status in personnel actions as appropriate.

Additional guidance will be provided with regard to reporting requirements of vaccination numbers on a weekly basis to Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower & Reserve Affairs).

The NAVY APP LOCKER serves as your one-stop shop for all U.S. Navy mobile applications.

**READ ALNAV 062/21 HERE**
U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND SUPPORTS U.S. DISASTER ASSISTANCE TO HAITI

U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND (SOUTHCOM) ESTABLISHED JOINT TASK FORCE-HAITI AUG. 15 TO CONDUCT U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SUPPORT OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF HAITI.

The task force is led by U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Keith Davids, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH).

In preparation for that mission, a 14-person SOUTHCOM Situational Awareness Team (SSAT) from SOCSOUTH arrived in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Aug. 15, where they worked with U.S. government diplomatic and disaster-assistance personnel to assess the situation in areas impacted by a 7.2 magnitude earthquake Aug. 14.

The team will join officials from the U.S. embassy and a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) deployed to Haiti Aug. 14, at the direction of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA).

A U.S. Air Force C-130 aircraft transported the SSAT team from Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla.

The team’s assessments will be used by SOUTHCOM mission planners to identify U.S. military capabilities needed and available to support U.S. foreign disaster assistance led by USAID/BHA and requested by the government of Haiti.

Additionally, the U.S. Navy is utilizing its Scan Eagle unmanned air system and P-8 Poseidon aircraft to provide aerial images of earthquake devastated areas. The images will be used by experienced disaster relief planners to determine where relief capabilities and supplies are needed immediately.

Two UH-60 and two CH-47 helicopters from Joint Task Force-Bravo are also en route to Haiti, where they will provide critical airlift support to ongoing relief efforts.

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The U.S. military relief mission will join ongoing U.S. Coast Guard support operations in the Caribbean country.

SOUTHCOM remains in very close contact with its chain of command, the U.S. State Department, and USAID, the lead federal agency for U.S. foreign disaster assistance, and is ready to provide additional support, if asked.

Historically, U.S. military capabilities are needed most in the critical early stages of a disaster relief operation, when fewer resources, capabilities and disaster-response experts are available to help victims and impacted communities.

As those disaster-relief missions progress and more experienced experts arrive to aid longer-term recovery and reconstruction, U.S. military capabilities are no longer requested, and roles previously performed by military units and troops are assumed by other, more experienced relief organizations.

SOUTHCOM has supported USAID/BHA-led disaster relief missions in Haiti in the aftermath of previous disasters, most recently in 2016, after the nation was struck by Hurricane Matthew.

SOUTHCOM has also assisted Haiti in preparing for natural disasters with the construction of emergency operations centers, disaster relief warehouses, fire stations and community centers that double as shelters.

The command has also previously donated search and rescue boats, as well as transport vehicles to Haitian emergency response and civil protection agencies.
NAVY ANNOUNCES FISCAL YEAR 21 SPECIAL LEAVE ACCRUAL

Sailors unable to take leave due to COVID-19 restrictions now have extra time to use their leave because the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs has approved Special Leave Accrual (SLA) for fiscal year (FY) 2021. This change was announced in NAVADMIN 159/21, released July 28.

SLA is authorized for Sailors who performed active service in FY21 and allows them to carry over more than 60 days of leave into the next fiscal year. Sailors may not, however, carry more than 120 days of leave as part of SLA. This SLA approval only protects a Sailor’s leave balance as of September 30, 2021, and will not affect leave earned after that date unless additional SLA is authorized for that fiscal year.

We sought this approval, recognizing that leave is vital to morale, level of performance and career motivation for our Sailors,” said Vice Adm. John B. Nowell, the chief of naval personnel. “I will ask that Commanders continue to encourage and provide Sailors with the opportunity to use their leave as much as possible in the year in which it is earned.

Sailors have until Sept. 30, 2024 to whittle their balance back down to the 60-day limit.

At the end of normal fiscal years, unused leave exceeding 60 days is lost. SLA temporarily increases that limit up to 120 days. This extra allowed leave balance will be noted in a Sailor’s Leave and Earnings Statement (LES). A Sailor’s SLA balance is calculated as the difference between “Combat Zone LV Carryover Balance” on their LES and the authorized maximum leave carryover balance, which is 60 days.

No action is required by either the Sailor or their command to retain this leave, as it is automatically tracked by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

Enlisted members with 120 or more days can sell back unused leave, however, the law limits this to once in a career and only up to 60 days. Officers are not authorized to sell back leave in this situation.

For more information on military pay entitlements and instructions on how to read an LES, go to https://www.dfas.mil/MilitaryMembers/payentitlements/aboutpay/.

For more news from Chief of Naval Personnel, follow us on Facebook and at https://www.navy.mil.

ENAVFIT ACTIVE-DUTY PILOT PROGRAM TO KICK OFF

eNavFit is the Navy’s new performance evaluation interface scheduled to replace NAVFIT98A. eNavFit gives the Navy a more modern approach streamlining the administrative functions associated with evals and fitness.

“Change is the only constant in a continual effort of process improvement,” said Rear Adm. Holsey, Commander of Navy Personnel Command, “While NAVFIT98A has served us well, it’s time for a 21st Century solution in our performance evaluation transformation.”

The eNavFit interface will minimize the need for the hard copies, reduce unit-level administrative obstacles, and automate submittions to PERS-32 for entry into a Sailor’s Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) record.

The eNavFit interface expands the capabilities of NAVFIT98A by enabling fleet users to perform all the functions that they need to create, edit, and route reports in addition to providing the ability to digitally sign, validate reports, and electronically submit.

This is a significant deviation from the existing software that requires wet-signature and manual validation by Navy Personnel Command.

“Many of us have used NAVFIT98A for quite some time and we are accustomed to the nuances of the software,” said Cmdr. Kristie Colpo, Officer in Charge, Performance Evaluation Training Task Force. “With eNavFit, we look forward to using an interface that allows us to write, route, review, rate, digitally sign, and submit performance appraisals online.

“Our challenge is not only to make the interface functional, but also to make it user-friendly. We are working very hard to accomplish those tasks and anticipate a win for the fleet. Having never used NAVFIT98A for 20 years, there will be a learning curve.”

The active duty pilot program is expected to wrap up in late October. The feedback gathered will be used to make adjustments needed prior the Fleet-wide rollout scheduled for December 2021.

READ THE FULL STORY ON NAVYMIL

GOATS AND GLORY CONNECTS WITH GAMERS

HEADSETS ON, CONTROLLERS IN HAND, AND NOW ALMOST FULLY RELOCATED TO THEIR NEW Digs IN MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, THE NAVY’S ESPORTS TEAM IS COMPETITION READY.

Composed of eleven active-duty service members, the Goats and Glory team competes in a wide variety of games, matches and online tournaments. Their goals are to connect with other gamers, share their passion for games and answer questions other gamers have about the Navy. The team members also livestream their gameplay to the Navy’s Twitch channel to reach a diverse and growing community in the esports realm.

“Esports is a relatively new but essential part of the Navy’s outreach mission because it provides a platform for people to interact with Sailors and learn more about the opportunities the Navy provides, while sharing a mutual passion for gaming,” said Cmdr. Howard Bryant, Director of Outreach and Diversity at Navy Recruiting Command (NRC). “Ultimately, the team shows that Sailors are just like everyone else – they have hobbies, interests and families. Being in the Navy doesn't preclude those things.”

Engagement in this space has expanded opportunities to reach high school and college-aged students that have grown up online and have many talents or interests in the online technical space. As most of the esports activities happen virtually, it has made outreach to the gaming community is a great tool for exploring this very large and active community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We've been minimally impacted by COVID” said Chief Operations Specialist Jonathan Figliola, who plays on the Goats and Glory team. “Early on, we implemented six-feet social distancing and teleworking for our team members. Now we’ve all been vaccinated, so we’re ready to participate at in-person competitions as things open up. While COVID-19 is still very present in most aspects of life, Goats and Glory is focused on virtual events and tournaments, but they look forward to the day when traveling will become less restricted. They will be ready to meet members of the gaming community and compete at in-person events.

“The team has a few more virtual events planned this year, but we are gearing up to travel in the near future,” said Information Systems Technician 1st Class Rod Camiso, another member of the Navy’s esports team. “It seems that many people don’t know much about the military, and are curious. Seeing the team at in-person events may encourage more people to ask questions.”

Goats and Glory also hopes to connect with other targeted groups and individuals to network and share ideas. Meeting people online through shared passions, or in person at gaming events can often be the only opportunity many people will have to interact with a Navy Sailor and ask questions, particularly in areas of the country that don’t have a Navy presence. In the end, the esports team is looking to make community connections and dispel some misconceptions the public has about the Navy.

Follow Goats and Glory on America’s Navy Twitch channel at https://twitch.tv/americanavy.
The challenges of military life have not decreased over the past decade. Although supporting ground combat operations in the Middle East has become less a part of our recurring deployment plans, the need for a forward deployed and stabilizing presence in the world remains high. loved ones: The Navy, in particular, provides that first line of defense due to our mobility and expeditionary ethos.

For Sailors, accepting that challenge also comes with the need to plan and prepare for managing operational stress. Combat and Operational Stress Control (COSC) programs are used by military units worldwide to prevent, identify, and manage stress in order to avoid stress injuries and support individuals in sustaining performance through times of hardship. COSC practices and interventions help operational units to prepare for challenges and proactively manage combat and operational stress symptoms before they lead to declines in individual and unit readiness.

Building toughness and resilience through a peer-to-peer methodology is critical to sustaining a Culture of Excellence. NAVADMINS 222/19 and 332/20 mark the expansion of operational stress control programs and the way ahead for the fleet rollout of Expanded Operational Stress Control (E-OSC). Command Resilience Teams (CRTs) are in the process of adopting this approach through tools like the Stress-O-Meter, Unit Assessment, and Buddy Care, which support leaders and commands to better anticipate potential challenges related to Sailor resilience and make timely, flexible interventions.

A 12-month pilot kicked off in October of 2020 to demonstrate how this training could be effectively delivered to fleet commands. Data collection for that pilot is ongoing and has already informed revisions to the E-OSC curriculum. While outcome data related to destructive behaviors is premature, the qualitative responses have been consistently favorable. Sailors across all ranks have expressed a real need for this type of programming.

E-OSC is a peer-to-peer program that integrates COSC practices with resilience and mindfulness training to improve the psychological readiness and toughness of Sailors and units. Developed by the Naval Center for Combat & Operational Stress Control (NCCOSC), the comprehensive curriculum is based on best practices for managing combat and operational stress, and for building resilience and mental toughness to improve individual and unit readiness. Evidence-informed practices can enhance resilience and toughness through adaptive coping, positive mindset, behavioral regulation, problem-solving, sleep, physical fitness, mind-body practices, and social support.

At each command, E-OSC is an important component of the CRT. The Team Leaders (TLs) take a 2.5-day training and become part of a network of E-OSC TLs across a variety of commands. The tools that are learned will help TLs offer good perspective to other leaders who seek them out for advice. Currently 10 classes per week are offered virtually in different time zones to support commands around the globe. Students must have a computer with a camera and be able to access Zoom. In order to register for training, Sailors must be appointed by their Chain of Command as either the TL or ATL. Once they have this duty they can sign up here.

E-OSC is best seen as a grass roots, local effort, nested within a COE. This program improves the lives of Sailors across each command. It is a unique opportunity to work “peer to peer” or “shipmate to shipmate” to improve the way we operate as individuals and also in our relationships and care for each other.

This course can be used by Sailors at every level, to build lifelong skills that sustain health, improve performance, enhance camaraderie, esprit de corps, and support mission accomplishment.

Leadership training for E-OSC is rolling out Navy-wide. The first E-OSC Team Leader (TL) and Assistant Team Leader (ATL) courses started in July 2021 and will continue through mid-December 2021. Thirty trained facilitators are available to help ensure ample training opportunities are provided. Every command in the Navy with more than 30 personnel is required to have an E-OSC team. Larger commands can appoint more E-OSC team members as needed.

Each command has a CRT, and the E-OSC TL is an important member of the CRT. The TL and ATL are responsible for the implementation and management of the E-OSC program at each command. According to program documents, each E-OSC TL will:

- Serve as a member of the CRT
- Brief leadership on the E-OSC program and requirements
- Establish and train an appropriate number of team members
- Plan and conduct E-OSC training
- Establish the E-OSC Command Consultation and Support elements to include, Buddy Care, Unit Assessment, and the Stress-o-Meter
- Market and promote the E-OSC program
- Document E-OSC training and Command Consultation and Support Activities

For more information you can visit the E-OSC website.
By Dr. Randi Reich Cosentino, USNCC President

A FOCUS ON TRI-SERVICE EDUCATION:

The U.S. Naval Community College (USNCC), was initially conceived as a recommendation stemming from the Education for Seapower (E4S) study in 2018. Spearheaded by Secretary of the Navy, Richard V. Spencer, the E4S study sought to assess whether naval education institutions were keeping pace with rapid changes in society, geopolitics, technology, and to make recommendations for knowledge-based continuous learning throughout the naval services.

The mission of the USNCC, which began in earnest in 2020, is to advance warfighting advantage and enhance operational readiness by providing world-class, naval-relevant education to a globally deployed force. The USNCC will develop warfighters across the force who are committed to lifelong learning, are steeped in naval traditions and values, have sound ethical decision-making ability, possess improved critical thinking and technical skills, and have a deep understanding of the complex maritime environment in which they operate. The USNCC serves Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen through a unique consortium model in which the USNCC partners with targeted colleges and universities to supplement its own course delivery.

The USNCC will offer transferable associate's degrees and stackable certificates, delivered asynchronously online, in fifteen Naval-relevant fields - from technical (e.g. cybersecurity, data analytics, engineering) to non-technical (e.g. military studies, organizational leadership).

At the heart of each of its programs is the USNCC-delivered Naval Studies Core Certificate, which will address critical thinking, research/writing, and communication, in the context of the Naval Services. This certificate builds from the service member’s individual responsibility, to an understanding of the force, the relationship of the military to the nation, and to our allies and adversaries across the globe. The USNCC will recognize the value of training and prior experience by ensuring that service members receive appropriate credit for prior military training and that they have access to seamless pathways to relevant four-year degrees.

USNCC PILOT I

The USNCC began enrolling enlisted service members from the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard in January of 2021. Approximately 550 service members, hailing from all three services, 39 states, and representing the ranks of E3-E8 enrolled in its initial Pilot.

The purpose of the pilot was not only to further service members’ education in the naval relevant fields of data analytics, cybersecurity, nuclear engineering, and military studies, but also to collect data to allow the USNCC to understand student interest, motivations, challenges, as well as determine program design, partnership approach, and to establish relevance.

Students have a range of educational experience and background. Of surveyed students, 40% indicate that they are first-generation college students. Forty-six percent of the participants indicate that they have prior higher education experience (but no degree), and 44% are new to online education.

Students express satisfaction with their USNCC Experience. Pilot students indicate a greater than 80% satisfaction with their partner college, and a significant majority of students felt they were placed in an appropriate course. The participating students shared their appreciation of the streamlined administrative tasks and clear communication from USNCC and partner colleges.

Faculty indicate that the students are prepared for success. Eighty percent of participating faculty noted that their USNCC students were as, if not more, engaged than non-USNCC students they have taught, indicating that enlisted service members are prepared for academic success.

Students see the relevance of what they are learning. Although students were not afforded choice in Pilot I, and were assigned to programs and courses that were not always their primary rating/MOS, close to 75% indicated that the courses were relevant to their military experience and/or future studies.

Lessons abound to make improvements for Pilot II and beyond. Student feedback will continue to help shape pilot II and beyond. Specifically, the USNCC will focus on ensuring the appropriate placement of students into course levels, and meeting students where they are academically.

The USNCC will continue to select partner institutions that understand and provide flexibility to the enlisted service member, and are ready to work with them as they balance the competing demands on their time. These lessons and many more will contribute to how the USNCC will continue to shape its offerings and its development to meet the needs of the services and communities throughout the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

For more information about USNCC, visit usncc.edu.
20 YEARS SINCE
THE TERRORIST ATTACKS ON
9/11

Stories from Naval History and Heritage Command
Illustrations by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kyleigh Williams
and Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Janine Jones
8:46 am – Flight 11 crashes into floors 93-99 of the North Tower of the World Trade Center

9:03 am – Flight 175 crashes into floors 75-85 of the WTC’s South Tower
The 9/11 Terrorist Attacks

From Naval History and Heritage Command

On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, 19 terrorists from the Islamist extremist group al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial aircraft and crashed two of them into the North and South Towers of the World Trade Center complex in New York City. A third plane crashed into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia.

After learning about the other attacks, passengers on the fourth hijacked plane, Flight 93, fought back, and the plane was crashed into an empty field in western Pennsylvania about 20 minutes by air from Washington, D.C.

The Twin Towers ultimately collapsed, due to the damage from the impacts and subsequent fires. Nearly 3,000 people were killed from 93 different countries. Most of the fatalities were from the attacks on the World Trade Center.

The Pentagon lost 184 civilians and servicemembers and 40 people were killed on Flight 93. It was the worst attack on American soil since the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941.

After the Taliban refused to turn over the mastermind of the attacks, Osama Bin Laden, Operation Enduring Freedom officially began Oct. 7, 2001 with American and British bombing strikes against al Qaeda and Taliban forces in Afghanistan.

Initially, the Taliban was removed from power and al-Qaeda was seriously crippled, but allied forces continually dealt with a stubborn Taliban insurgency, infrastructure rebuilding, and corruption among the Afghan National Army, Afghan National Police, and Afghan Border Police.

Bin Laden would go into hiding for nearly 10 years.


To learn more about the terrorist attacks on 9/11, visit the Naval History and Heritage Command's webpage about the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks on 11 September, the Department of Defense and all of the branches of the Armed Forces began efforts to document the attacks.

The Naval Historical Center (the predecessor of NHHC) activated its reserve unit, Navy Combat Documentation Detachment 206 (DET 206) to assist in the documentation efforts.

Over the next ten months, DET 206 reservists and NHC Historians interviewed hundreds of individuals who were in the Pentagon on the day of the attack or were directly involved in the Navy’s response and the work that followed.

The Navy Archives has received permission to release a portion of the oral histories to the public for the first time since they were recorded. The oral histories that have been authorized for release can be found at the link above.
9:37 AM – FLIGHT 77 CRASHES INTO THE PENTAGON
In the minutes before the plane hit the Pentagon, Petty Officer 2nd Class Kevin Hazelwood was in his office space on the fourth deck of the E Ring between Corridors 5 and 6. They were watching the coverage of the attacks in New York City and he wondered if they would be next.

Then the plane hit.

Even though he was physically thrown by the force of the blast, he immediately gathered his wits and headed towards the point of impact. He wanted to help. But the smoke and the heat just got stronger and denser as he got closer, so he had to turn back. He evacuated the building.

Once outside, someone tried to take him to triage for an injury he had sustained at some point. They put him in a van going to Fort Belvoir.

However, when the van got stuck in traffic, he jumped out and went back to the crash site. He worked to clear personnel away from the building and handed out water and food to rescuers.

Then he and another Sailor decided to go back into the building to try and help rescue efforts. They went in through the basement and made it to the inner courtyard. They gave fire teams their information on the building and the office layout. Then they went back into the area around the Navy Command Center. They searched through every space they could get into, but soon realized that from that point on it would all be recovery and not rescue. He reported back to his commanding officers who had set up temporary offices at the Navy Annex.

“THOSE WERE MY FRIENDS IN THERE THAT I NEEDED TO BE HELPING AND I DIDN’T FEEL COMFORTABLE LEAVING IT TO SOMEONE ELSE THAT I DIDN’T KNOW.”

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS KEVIN HAZELWOOD

Click here to read his oral history of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Seaman Sarah Cole served in the CNO Intelligence Plot (CNO IP) in the Navy Command Center. The CNO IP team, along with everyone else who worked in the Navy Command Center, had just moved into their new space a few weeks prior.

The morning of the attack, she was catching up on some projects following a week of leave. Sometime after the first plane hit the World Trade Center, the CNO IP Assistant Officer in Charge asked her to run some briefing materials up to the office of the VCNO, so she did not go to the morning intelligence briefing or the post-briefing hotwash.

When the plane hit the Pentagon, all of the people attending the hotwash in an office around the corner from her desk were killed.

Cole was blown out of the space through a garage-door-sized hole and went into shock. Even in shock, she attempted to help others make it out of the Command Center. She also stayed in the alley between B and C Ring to assist injured personnel once they’d made it out of the building. Eventually though, she was evacuated from the building.

Outside, she rendezvoused with others who had gotten out of her office. They went around the exterior of the building to the crash site to assist however they could—putting up tents and handing out food. Eventually she made it home to her infant daughter.

“THEN HE CALLED MY NAME AND I TURNED TO WHERE HIS VOICE WAS COMING FROM. HE WAS RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME AND HE WAS CURLED UP IN THE DEBRIS, RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY FEET. I DIDN’T SEE HIM AT FIRST BECAUSE HE WAS JUST DUSTY, JUST LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE THAT HAD FALLEN.”

SEAMAN SARAH COLE

Click here to read her oral history of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.
Friday [Sept. 14] turned out to be a tough day. We all got to NNMC [National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda, Maryland] early in the morning and boarded the buses for the 4-hour ride up to Earle, New Jersey. Eventually, we all got unloaded, checked aboard, got our rooms, unpacked our seabags, and checked into our workstations. Then, within an hour of arriving, there was an announcement that there had been a change in the mission. The hospital ship was going to be used to provide comfort, meaning living spaces, food spaces, and showers for the rescue workers. And except for a very core crew, everybody else was told to pack their seabags to go home.

I can remember being very disappointed because I thought there was going to be a big mental health portion of this. And I was ready to go. When anything this terrible happens to our country, we all want to pitch in and help. Then, all of a sudden, you were being told to go home.

Cmdr. Terry Dwyer, who is in charge of sick call operations, pointed his finger at me. I looked at myself and looked beside me as if to say, “Who is he pointing at?” He then said, “We need you and the rest of the mental health folks. You are going to be a part of this mission.”

We were not actually on the ship as a SPRINT [Special Psychiatric Rapid Intervention] team. When the ship goes out configured as a 250-bed hospital, it goes with dedicated mental health assets. I and one of the psychiatrists are part of the mental health assets. The unit is composed of myself as a psychologist, LT [Lieutenant] James Reeve, a psychiatrist, and a psych tech. We actually work in the trauma area. When patients come in and they have psychiatric problems, they will be triaged to us. And if they need further acute kind of treatment, they are actually moved onto the medical wards awaiting transfer off the ship.

It just so happens that on the 250-bed configuration there is also a psychiatric nurse, but she actually works on the medical wards. If the ship was going out in the 500-bed configuration, there is an extra psychiatrist and another psych tech that comes along. I asked for both of them to come out with the ship. What we actually had as mental health assets was myself, two psychiatrists, a psych nurse, and three psychiatric technicians. It also turned out that both of the chaplains who were out there were also trained in responding to disasters.

As the mental health people aboard the ship, I saw a dual mission. Part of that mission was to take care of the rescuers and part of the mission was to remember to watch the staff to make sure they were also taking care of themselves as they provided care for these folks.

I had a lot of mixed feelings as we neared our objective. There was a somberness and a pride. As we crossed the bay from Earle, NJ, we could see the smoke in the distance and that gave me a very somber feeling. We knew where we were headed. But as we went under the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge ... it is interesting. I am actually a little bit sad about this. Cars and trucks would slow down and you could see people wave and they would be beeping. Right away, you knew the ship was a tremendous symbol of comfort and hope coming to the people. The Navy was coming to really help out in this disaster. So I had a sense of pride that I was a part of this tremendous operation.

We were still far enough back so you could see the skyline of New York with some smoke. Unless you had a picture in your hand that showed you where the two towers stood, you would not know that something was missing. We did not park right there by the World Trade Center. Our berth was about 2 miles further up the river. Immediately, we were interested in getting down and seeing “Ground Zero,” and starting to make connections. The master chief came in and said, “Would you like to go down?” I have made arrangements.” And I said, “Absolutely.” So I, the chaplain,
Camaraderie and bonding were immense among the rescue workers at Ground Zero. Thousands of policemen, firemen, and rescue workers, along with a bucket brigade, were trying to take the piles apart bucket-by-bucket and continue to look for survivors. At the same time, there was a tremendous camaraderie and bonding among the people. As you looked in their faces, there was that same immensity. The same thing there. You saw the pictures on television, but standing there amidst this huge amount of devastation and destruction.

Then we walked into the site. There were two huge five-story piles of rubble. One cannot grasp the immensity without standing there. You see a picture of the Grand Canyon and then you stand on the South Rim. Seeing the picture and then seeing it for real, you understand the immensity. The same thing there. You saw the pictures on television, but standing there amidst this huge amount of devastation and destruction.

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As the days went by, we began seeing fewer people coming to the ship. We then began talking to some of the policemen and learned that they were making the transition from search and rescue to recovery. Even though it was not formally announced, you could see it was becoming more and more like a construction site. People who had previously been working 17 and 18 hours a day and were unable to drive home ended up eating and sleeping on the ship. Now they were starting to go home and be with their families. So fewer people were coming aboard.

At that time, we were able to contact a group of psychiatrists who respond to disasters. They were needing to help some individuals and work with individuals. We also worked with groups. We worked with sick call.

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someone he could talk to about this. So I was really the first person he had an opportunity to sit and be able to tell his story to.

There is something else worth mentioning. Sick call is right below the flight deck. There were people with carts taking supplies across the flight deck and a few times there was a rumbling noise. As I talked with him, I could see the fear on his face as he looked up. I reassured him that they were just moving supplies. And he said, "That is the sound the building made when it came down."

On another occasion, some policemen were providing supplies to the ship. One was very badly dehydrated and fainted. As his buddy went to grab him, he twisted his knee. We got them both up to sick bay. The one who fainted was in one bed and his buddy in another. As we took care of them, we learned they had lost one of their bosses in the collapse of the towers. And they had been working tremendously long hours - 18, 19, 20 hours. They were not getting to go home. And now both were feeling very guilty. "I am not out working but maybe after a couple of hours."

Here was this man with a splint from his hip down his leg taking care of his knee saying, "Gee, I will be back in a couple of hours." And here is his buddy, terribly dehydrated, saying, "I need to get back."

While all this was transpiring, five or six of their comrades showed up. We got them to talk about their loss. It was almost as though we were having an intervention with them right there - with the two buddies in bed and them. Part of the reason we could do this was because of the existence of this close-knit group.

When the two were well enough to go, we would not let them leave the ship until they ate. The whole group went to the chow hall accompanied by two of our officers. We watched them from a distance and could see them getting back together as a group, joking and talking.

The departure from New York was a tremendous experience. We were all out on the flight deck on either side all lined up at parade rest. I was facing up toward the George Washington Bridge. The Office of Emergency Management pier was right there. There were cars parked on top and you could see a couple of police cars and a few reporters with TV cameras.

It was 11 am on Monday 1 October. The tugs came in and the untying began. As we pulled away from the pier, we all saluted and held the salute. And people on the pier began to applaud, wave, and yell "Thanks a lot." It was a very emotional experience.

As we went down the Hudson River, we all moved to the port side of the ship to salute the World Trade Center and the people there as we went by. But just before we got there, a fireboat pulled up on either side and let loose a huge spray - their way of saluting us! Then, as we approached directly across from the World Trade Center, we all stood at attention and saluted. As we did so, police boats put color in the water - red, white, and blue. It was just phenomenal and very moving.

I do not think anyone could say that sending the Comfort to New York was not the right thing to do. I spent a lot of time in the CASREC (Casualty Receiving) area where people arrived and departed and talked to hundreds of them. To a person, they were all extremely grateful for the comfort we provided in terms of the Navy being there.

Not only providing them with a place to get away, and a place to sleep in quiet, but a place where they could get regenerated before going back down to Ground Zero. But the one thing they all commented on was the tremendous care and hospitality that all the staff on the ship showed them. No matter what they wanted people would go out of their way to get it for them or help any way they could.

As I was getting ready to go on the mission, and even after I had gone, many neighbors asked my wife how she felt about my being away. And her response was, "That is what they are trained to do. And he has an opportunity to do what he should be doing."
PHOTOS FROM THE FLEET

The Naval Service—forward deployed and capable of both rapid response and sustained operations globally—remains America’s most persistent and versatile instrument of military influence.
Leaders from the sea services discussed integration, Arctic domain readiness, facilities and maintenance readiness, and Indo-Pacific security during the first day of the exposition. The exposition, which was held August 2-4 at Gaylord National Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland brought together U.S. defense industrial base, private-sector U.S. companies, and key military decision makers for an innovative, educational, and professional maritime-based event.

U.S. Navy League Chief Executive Officer Mike Stevens highlighted the importance of getting back to business and maintaining the relationships formed during the first exposition since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. “SAS would not be possible without the more than 27,000 participants, 270 speakers, industry and international partners working together to build partnerships in the challenging atmosphere we’re in,” said Stevens.

“If you look at what the service chiefs have done over the last couple of years, working together to build a tri-service, maritime strategy, figuring out how to bring all these components of naval power together, it’s really remarkable,” said The Honorable James F. Geurts, performing the duties of the Under Secretary of the Navy, during opening remarks at day one of SAS. “It’s always a great honor to hear them in their words, talk about how they see the future unfolding and how they’re working together to generate the capabilities and we all need as a nation.”

Adm. John Richardson, U.S. Navy (ret.) 31st Chief of Naval Operations moderated the tri-service maritime leadership panel where Adm. Mike Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations Operations; Gen. David Berger, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps and Adm. Karl Schultz, Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard discussed the unique opportunities and challenges commanders face while operating on land, sea and air.

The sea service chiefs identified best strategies for connecting the gaps between sea and shore capabilities for maritime forces. Adm. Gilday stressed readiness, training, capacity and Sailors as key areas to addressing geopolitical and technological changes and maintaining an advantage in strategic competition.

“Having individual Sailors and Marines who are able to embrace the Navy’s signature behaviors and show up as the best technician through revolutionizing training programs [for example, Ready Relevant Learning] will ultimately allow us to surpass our counterparts.”

Berger echoed the commitment to building a modernized tri-service team that expands the military’s advantage at sea. “Being able to train and educate through wargaming, experimenting and exercises are crucial to building maritime leaders who are able to fight from and compete from the sea. The building and blending together of the services is what it will take to work,” said Berger.

Leaders also spoke on the operational challenges and security risks in the Indo-Pacific and Arctic region through fleet modernization and investing in emerging technologies to promote an agile and competitive maritime force.

The Navy League’s Sea-Air-Space Exposition was founded in 1965 as a means to bringing the U.S. defense industrial base, U.S. private-sector companies and key military decision makers together for an annual innovative, educational, professional and maritime-based event.

Sea-Air-Space is the largest maritime exposition in the U.S. and continues as an invaluable extension of the Navy League’s mission of maritime policy education and sea service support.
WHAT IT TAKES TO REMAIN WORLD’S PREEMINENT FIGHTING FORCE

By David Vergun, DOD News

The United States has always been a maritime nation, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said.


Sea control and power projection are critical to sea power superiority, he said. “In my mind, no one has ever done it better than the United States Navy, in the history of the world. The same is true for air and space and cyber in our ground forces. In fact, our joint force is second to none.”

How the department invests in time and how it allocates financial resources and talent is going to set the agenda for future generations to come, Milley continued.

“Failure to recognize, adapt and capitalize on the changing character of war and failure to see the future produces devastating consequences. And it did for our military. It resulted in losses on a scale that’s difficult to fathom that none of us alive today have ever experienced,” he said, referring to the hundreds of thousands of U.S. service members killed in World Wars I and II after the nation was slow to arm.

“Those technologies are available right now to every country in the world. There’s nothing particularly secret about many of them. And I would argue that the country that masters those technologies ... is likely to have a significant, and perhaps decisive advantage,” he said.

“IN MY MIND, NO ONE HAS EVER DONE IT BETTER THAN THE UNITED STATES NAVY, IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.”

ARMY GEN. MARK A. MILLEY
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Milley said that all of these new technologies, along with maintaining current readiness, are expensive.

“There are very few things as expensive as preventing a war. But there are two that are more expensive. One is fighting a war. And the most expensive of all is fighting and losing a war,” he pointed out.

These and dozens of other emerging technologies are going to fundamentally change the conduct of warfare, he said.

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SPACE COMMAND, NAVY KEEPING OPEN LINES OF COMMUNICATION

By C. Todd Lopez, DOD News

The oceans are big, but space is even bigger, the commander of U.S. Space Command said.

Still, the Navy and Space Command share a lot in terms of what they do, and there’s opportunity for both organizations to learn from each other to increase their effectiveness in carrying out their missions.

“Just like the Navy protects our sea lines of communications, U.S. Space Command’s mission is to protect our space lines of communications,” Army Gen. James Dickinson today told attendees of the 2021 Sea-Air-Space Exposition at National Harbor, Maryland. “Despite considerable differences in maritime and space operating environments, the strategic level objectives of naval forces and space forces are more similar than they are different.”

Dickinson said there’s a “natural synergy” between naval and space operators that, if taken advantage of, could yield benefits for both.

“I think the opportunity for further integration between the Navy and U.S. Space Command is quite frankly boundless — or infinite,” he said.

One of the roles of the Navy, Dickinson said, is to keep open sea lines of communication, which means ensuring the safe and free movement of people and cargo over the world’s oceans. That’s similar to the mission of U.S. Space Command, he said, which involves ensuring the United States can continue to operate safely and freely in space without interference from adversaries.

“Both are central to free and open opportunity to traverse and enjoy the benefits of their respective domains,” he said. “Today, we’re pretty good at operating in vast areas of the universe — or space; however, our ability to operate freely in it is being challenged, and significantly challenged, every day. That’s not unlike the circumstances the Navy faces, too, in the world’s contested waters.”

Dickinson said some examples are Lagrange points, which are locations in space where the gravity of the moon and Earth are balanced.

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COMMANDER, U.S. SPACE COMMAND

"These gravity wells are ideal for positioning spacecraft where they can remain indefinitely with only using a small amount of fuel,” he said.

He compared the importance of those locations in space to the small islands in the Pacific Ocean that the Navy would like to keep secure to ensure continued free navigation of the oceans and security in the Pacific.

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The Navy values partnerships to strengthen productivity and operability. At the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD), naval aviation bridges medicine with technology where both civilians and military partner to enhance safety among aviators, aircrew members, and maintainers.

“We’ve integrated aeromedical expertise with engineering to improve and advance engineering design for aviation and warfighter technology,” said Cmdr. Matthew Doubrava, NAWCAD’s flight surgeon and Aeromedical Monitoring and Analysis branch head, part of the command’s Human Systems Engineering Department (HSED).

“We do this so we have greater survivability of our aircrew, greater lethality of our operational forces, to promote aviation safety, and prevent mishaps.”

In or out of the Navy, it’s rare to find medical experts working alongside engineers and technologists. NAWCAD’s aeromedical initiative takes common problems experienced by the fleet with their human systems – anything that the aircrew touches, or that touches the aircrew – and improves them for today’s service member, with a greater human-centric perspective.

For the first time the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) has provided certain clinical-type billets to a research and developmental organization. Today, Medical Corps and Medical Service Corps psychologists, physiologists, optometrists, audiologists, and physicians work closely with mechanical, aerospace, electrical, chemical, and other engineers. These medical officers bridge a gap by providing a fleet operational perspective and biomedical expertise to civilian engineers advancing Navy and Marine Corps platforms and equipment.

NAWCAD is the Navy’s largest warfare center with over 300 labs advancing capability and operational readiness for naval aviation and warfighters.

More than a dozen of the labs are dedicated to human systems research where teams of scientists and engineers work to improve equipment such as visors, goggles, hearing protection, helmets, seats, suits, mission systems, and other research dedicated to human capabilities that require this type of gear.

The staggering complexity of NAWCAD’s human systems lab are a testament to the sophisticated approaches it takes to solve problems that humans encounter in flight. These labs look at everything from approaches it takes to solve problems and operational readiness for naval aviation and our warfighters.

Where aviation and medicine come together

The history behind naval aviation’s aeromedical partnership can be described with three different periods or milestones. The first period was during the Second World War where naval aerospace medicine started performing experiments for supporting the fleet.

A classic example is experimentation surrounding dive-bombers and the accelerations they were exposed to when delivering a payload. The Navy stood up its Naval Aerospace Medicine Research Lab (NAMRL) in Pensacola to explore these problems. NAMRL was instrumental in developing selection criteria for aircrew personnel, and today the is located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base where it joined with the Navy Environmental Health Effects laboratory creating the Naval Medical Research Unit Dayton in 2010 as part of Congressional Base Realignment and Closure.

The second period came after WWII, when the U.S. entered the Jet Age, and aircraft took a tremendous leap in capability and performance. Research began to look at the more aggressive acceleration forces from faster aircraft, the higher altitudes the aircraft performed in, and the survivability from high-speed escape systems created by ejection seats. NAMRL provided critical training systems and high-G centrifuges to train pilots.

But the need for aeromedical research took a big jump during the third period: the Space Age. The Space Age presented all-new physiologic and engineering problems that hadn’t been considered. Here we faced problems that involved unbelievable acceleration forces, microgravity, working in space outside the spacecraft, and walking on the moon.

The early astronauts trained in Pensacola where researchers developed much knowledge during astronauts’ training in the centrifuges. During the Gemini Project, aerospace research advanced into the areas of longevity of spaceflight and extravehicular activity. The U.S. learned enough to put people to the moon safely.

Once that goal the United States reached this goal, research began to wane. By 2005, Congress consolidated all DOD aerospace medicine activity to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base so the Navy and Air Force would work together on aeromedical research.

Things took another turn in the early 2000s when aircrew flying F/A-18s and T-45s began reporting physiological episodes with symptoms ranging from headaches to水 survival situations.
dizziness both during and after flight. Around 2010, the Navy Safety Center started documenting all these events when it became obvious aviation that needed a clearer understanding of what was causing the wide array of issues pilots were experiencing. The issue ultimately rose to naval aviation’s number one safety priority in 2017, and the Physiologic Episode Action Team (PEAT) came to life.

“Here we realized we needed to get back into aeromedical research to protect our aircrew. It was a direct result of the PEAT’s activities,” said Cmdr. Doubrava. “They recommended that the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) expand their in-house aeromedical expertise, and that helped drive the aeromedical team’s expansion and engineering partnership here today.”

The underlying point to NAWCAD’s partnership is how research will answer questions for the fleet to get the mission done. Doubrava says it’s not how well can this lab do this job, but how well can this lab support the idea of increasing lethality of our operators and improving the survivability of the aircraft in various environments.

“Much of NAWCAD’s research and development strives to prevent an aviation mishap,” said Doubrava. “But when we can’t, we want to make it survivable.”

Lt. Travis Doggett, research physician and biomedical consultant, said the partnership between Navy medicine and the civilian engineers is important because it bridges a direct line from the fleet to the labs where engineers get a taste of what Sailors are going through.

“As medically trained officers with fleet experience working directly with operators, we’re able to bridge that expertise from a medical point-of-view to the engineers developing technology,” said Doggett.

“We provide vital biomedical guidance to assist in their research and development of new or existing equipment advising whether it will be healthy to the aviator and aircrew. Will this system increase pain or other bodily problems? Applying our combined fleet experience and medical education to research, development, test, and evaluation of aircrew equipment helps NAWCAD achieve a better product, thus increasing survivability, lethality, and performance of the human operator.”

Lt. Cmdr. Micah Kinney, an optometrist and vision scientist, said the partnership is monumental because it brings a broader perspective and louder voice from the fleet. When a service member has an issue with a piece of equipment and they voice it to NAWCAD, it can be tested in a lab, improved, and sent it out to the field.

“Laser eye protection, night vision systems, and more compatible prescriptive eyewear is something we want to have readily available for aircrew when the need is there or a threat exists,” Kinney said.

“In the fast-paced aviation environment, our aircrew need to have the best vision possible and not delay a decision in flight because they couldn’t see. Or, for example, if prescription eyewear interferes with noise cancelling headphones, we need to address that as a whole system. These are the outcomes we are working for here.”

Lt. Cmdr. Kyle Shepard, an operational audiologist and researcher, discussed the importance of the aeromedical team’s focus on prevention of physiologic events and injury.

“Shifting from a reactive model of care to a proactive, preventive one is how we as a military can continue to improve,” said Shepard.

“We are good at managing and treating injuries after they happen, however, we make a real impact by preventing mishaps in the first place. Noise-induced damage accounts for the #1 and #2 injuries in the military every year – tinnitus and hearing loss respectively – and many of these injuries are avoidable. Balancing effective protection while maintaining function for the warfighter is not a one-sized fits all solution. Environments are complex and the ability to communicate in these environments is paramount. Our goal is to enhance communication and adequately protect individuals while considering their specific tasks within diverse environments.”

Whether NAWCAD is developing new equipment, or improving what’s already in the military’s toolbox – like uncomfortable aircraft seats, weighty suits or how tightly a cranial fits on a person’s head – the warfare center aims to improve function, increase safety, and prevent injury for everyone on the flight line.

The joint military and civilian team is listening – all you have to do is let them know.

“When fleet data comes back to us, we are put in the position to influence the acquisition of the next generation of equipment to prevent these problems,” said Doubrava.

Action reports and physiological representatives at the Navy Safety Center are a few ways we find out these problems. We encourage aircrew to let us know so we can gain insight, and ultimately save lives.”

NAWCAD advances capability and operational readiness for Naval Aviation and our warfighters. The warfare center is where naval aviation takes flight through research, development, test, evaluation, and sustainment of both fielded and not-yet fielded naval platforms and technologies that ensure America’s Sailors and Marines always go into conflict with significant advantage.

With sites in Patuxent River, Maryland, Lakehurst, New Jersey, and Orlando, Florida, the command is the Navy’s largest warfare center with a diverse force of military, civilians, and contractors building the Navy of today, the Navy of tomorrow, and the Navy after next.
LSE 2021 is a Chief of Naval Operations-directed live, virtual, and constructive, globally integrated exercise that spans multiple fleets. LSE 2021 is designed to refine how we synchronize maritime operations across multiple fleets in support of the joint force. The training is based on a progression of fleet battle problems and scenarios that will assess and refine modern warfare concepts, including distributed maritime operations, expeditionary advanced base operations, and littoral operations in a contested environment.

“We have shifted focus from the individual Carrier Strike Group to a larger fleet-centric approach, challenging fleet commanders’ abilities to make decisions at a speed and accuracy that outpaces the adversaries,” said Adm. Christopher W. Grady, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command. “LSE is more than just training; it is leveraging the integrated fighting power of multiple naval forces to share sensors, weapons, and platforms across all domains in contested environments, globally.”

Evaluating and improving naval integration and the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps’ ability to integrate all domains in a high-end global conflict is a necessary investment in the current and future readiness of our forces.

“LSE 2021 provides our Navy-Marine Corps team the opportunity to plan, direct and establish full spectrum naval operations. We must build naval readiness and advance the art and science of naval warfare to be ready to fight tonight - the stakes could not be higher,” said Adm. Samuel Paparo, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet. “The international rules-based order is essential to our nation, and our partners and allies for peace, security and stability.”

Included in the exercise will be evaluations of experimental technology from a variety of warfare areas including unmanned technologies.

“LSE will test our commanders’ abilities to deliver coordinated effects, from all directions, any time or all the time. It will help us build the necessary muscle memory to do this routinely at the operational to strategic levels of war,” said Adm. Robert P. Burke, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe. “By exercising the full weight of our operational fleets, working together in a global mindset, we will truly harness the inherent flexibility of naval forces in controlling the sea and projecting power.”

LSE 2021 is part of an on-going series of exercises that demonstrates the U.S. Navy’s ability to employ precise, lethal, and overwhelming force globally across three naval component commands, five numbered fleets, and 17 time zones.

For more information go to: https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Blogs/Detail/Article/2711004/large-scale-exercise/
"Don't give up the ship!" Captain James Lawrence' last words on the USS Chesapeake still echo through the Navy today.

During the War of 1812, the 36-gun frigate met her fate as she collided with HMS Shannon under the leadership of her renowned hero.

"It was a pretty intense battle at sea," said Craftmaster Senior Chief Boatswain's Mate Harry Hladun III. "Lives were lost... and with all the damage the Chesapeake lost its maneuverability and collided with the Shannon. Captain Lawrence was shot by a sniper."

He commanded the crew "fight her till she sinks." The Ceremonial Barge Chesapeake, also known as the Chief of Naval Operations' Barge, was named in honor of USS Chesapeake.

"[The] Ceremony Barge of Chesapeake is authorized for official business by U.S. Navy flag officers, general officers, Service Secretaries and above," said Hladun. "So it's a true platform for fostering international relationships. Obviously, some pretty important people have been on board, and I think it's good for maintaining relations with our allies."

Chief Engineer, Engineman First Class Jonathan Martell says the barge provides a more relaxed environment for its guests. When most people think about business meetings, they think about an enclosed conference room.

The crew transforms the barge into a meeting-place on the waters of the historic Potomac River. This provides a unique experience for distinguished visitors, who are able to discuss important topics near some of the most iconic American scenery there is to see. You can capture people's attention this way.

"One of my favorite things to do is brief the history of the barge to these admirals, and foreign attaché, and dignitaries," said Martell. "[We] get to show them the little tour of the boat and some people's eyes light up, and they see how well she looks for being almost 60 years. It's a very unique vessel in the Navy."

Hladun emphasizes that there is a lot of tradition and history in their surroundings. The barge is located in one of the oldest Navy installations, the Washington Navy Yard, or the quarterdeck of the Navy as Hladun puts it. Guests get to see the Capitol, the Washington Monument, Fort McNair, Mount Vernon, and all the sites and memorials around Fort Washington.

There are only seven billets available, so it is very competitive. Martell says that applicants must submit a biography and a professional photo. All applicants are screened, must be second-class swim qualified, and have to pass a pass-or-fail color vision test.

"Don't give up the ship. It means to give it your all," said Martell. "Each one of my Sailors, day in and day out are asked to do something; or, when we need to get the job done, there are no questions, no hesitation. We get it done. We all look after each other... whether it be the health of the Sailors or getting the boat ready. We push to get both taken care of and make sure everyone is all good to go and on the same page. No one gives in, no one gives up."
When Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class Zachary Williams, a Recruit Division Commander (RDC) at Recruit Training Command (RTC), spotted a certain recruit across the pool where he is currently working as a water survival instructor, it was all he could do to keep from approaching the recruit whom he’s known most of his life: his younger brother.

Caleb Williams, 18, of Carrollton, Georgia, arrived in June for training at the Navy’s only boot camp where his older brother, Zachary, 24, of Carrollton, Georgia, trains recruits. “When I saw him at the pool the first week, he definitely looked different without all that hair he had,” said Zachary. “I did speak with his RDCs, so they were then aware that Caleb is my brother.”

Zachary arrived to RTC in March 2020 to become an RDC and trained, or "pushed," four divisions during his first year. He is currently in the middle of his one-year pause from pushing, which allows him to hold a facilitator job at RTC. He chose water survivor instructor at the USS Indianapolis combat pool where recruits are tested in their first week of training. He qualified to be such an instructor by already having search and rescue training and certification. “When I saw him at the pool it was different not being able to talk to him like I wanted to, but it was nice to see him after being in ROM (Restriction of Movement) for a bit,” said Caleb. “I haven’t seen him since, although I do see his truck when we march by his parking lot.”

It was six years ago when Zachary, fresh out of high school, chose to enlist, especially since he comes from a military family. “I felt it was the best option for me as I had just graduated high school and really didn’t want to go to college. “So when I decided I wanted to get out of Carrollton for a while, I chose Navy,” he said.

The further he advanced in his Navy career, the more he felt compelled to become an RDC. When the opportunity came, he contacted his detailer. “I thought it would be great to kind of show other Sailors that you don’t have to go straight down your rate, you can branch out and still do fine,” he said.

Six years later, Caleb followed suit, having seen his brother thrive especially during the times he would visit Zachary. “When I would visit him, I’d listen to his stories about the Navy and the experiences he’s had so he was a positive impact on me in joining,” said Caleb, whose rate is information systems technician. “My dad was a CTO (cryptologic technician communications) so I think I got the interest in computers from him.”

Zachary said he was able to put his brother more at ease as Caleb could learn first-hand what being in the Navy was actually like currently instead of going in blindly. However, one thing Zachary did make his brother go blindly into was not revealing any inside information pertaining to training as he upheld the values of being an RDC. “I left a lot of it up to him. Caleb wanted all the secrets, I said, not a chance. As an RDC, I wouldn’t want someone to do that to one of my recruits. It ruins the fun of it and that’s the biggest part of boot camp, learning to work as a team,” said Zachary.

“After everybody found out my brother was here as an RDC, they were asking me all kinds of stuff and I said, ‘Man he didn’t tell me nothing!’” Caleb confirmed.

During their final training week, recruits undergo their crucible event, Battle Stations 21, a comprehensive test of the skills and teamwork learned during their eight weeks of basic training, at the USS Trayer, a 210-foot Arleigh Burke-class destroyer simulator. This 12-hour event culminates in a capping ceremony where the recruits earn the right of a Navy ball cap to replace the recruit ball cap that each recruit wears during training.

On July 28, Caleb stood weary but proud with the rest of his division during the capping ceremony. When the moment came for the RDCs to hand each of their recruits a ball cap, a facilitator ordered Caleb to about face. As he turned around he came face to face with his smiling brother who was there to hand him his coveted ball cap.
"It was really exciting! It was really cool to turn around and see him standing right there; I didn't expect it all," said Caleb. "It was definitely a real cool surprise and unique, and it made this moment even more extra special."

The brothers were able to share such a rare moment during the momentous ceremony as the rest of the recruits received their ball camps. Zachary leaned in to offer Caleb brotherly and Sailor advice by reminding him to never forget why he is here.

"I feel like a lot of Sailors lose sight of that, of the bigger picture, so I told him to always remember that," said Zachary. "We also talked about Battle Stations a little as well because he's been asking me in letters about it and I told him, 'Nope! You have to figure it out on your own buddy!' I'm proud that I feel like I set a pretty good example of what you can do so far in the six years I've been in the Navy. Whether it's been picking up rank quick or starting a school or RDC, I feel I've set a good example for him."

Boot camp is approximately eight weeks and all enlistees into the U.S. Navy begin their careers at the command. Training includes physical fitness, seamanship, firearms, firefighting and shipboard damage control along with lessons in Navy heritage and core values, teamwork and discipline. More than 40,000 recruits train annually at the Navy's only boot camp.

For more news from Recruit Training Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/rtc