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 Sailors, we look at our advantage at sea and the capabilities of Sailors deployed around the world.

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.

This month, we celebrate hispanic heritage and the Navy’s birthday. We wish you a safe spooky season!
Chief Navy Diver Zachary Hanson, MDSU-1 master diver and his team got underway aboard the icebreaker USCGC Healy (WAGB 20) in Seattle to conduct ice diving operations alongside U.S. Coast Guard divers. During their time aboard, Hanson and his team also provided training on the decompression chamber they brought with them.

"They [the Coast Guard] don't have a decompression chamber, but they're getting one," said Hanson. "We let them use ours for this mission conducted for the Office of Naval Research (ONR), and we helped train the Coast guardsmen divers on the operation, maintenance and transport of a decompression chamber."

Joint training operations like this help build interoperability between services in addition to innovating new tactics, techniques and procedures in an environment as challenging as the Arctic Circle. ONR and Healy's mission was to observe arctic ice. They used stationary weather buoys equipped with multiple devices to monitor the ocean, weather and the ice to better understand the Arctic environment, its importance to the world, and how to defend it.

During the mission, Hanson learned about the Arctic's diverse biosphere, which works to sustain life both above and below the massive ice sheet.

"Most people would think the Arctic wouldn't have any life under the ice, but when we were under there, we saw jellyfish and some kind of shrimp or krill," said Hanson.

The MDSU-1 team is uniquely qualified to support this type of mission. Hanson and his team used dry suits designed to protect divers against hypothermia while submerged in 30-degree water. The team also used a dual manifold/dual regulator system to ensure they could continue to breathe from their tanks if one of their regulators froze over and a special tool that helped keep everyone safe underwater.

"We've got an ice screw we can use if one of us gets lost under the ice," Hanson said. "Basically, you push it into the ice and hang onto it. With the strobe light on the back of our tanks, it's easy to see someone because the water under the ice is so clear."

Looking at polar ice from above the water, it might be easy to forget the ice is floating because it reflects up to 80% of sunlight, according to the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration. However, the light shining through the ice causes a brightening effect.

"It's got to be the clearest water I've ever dived in my life," Hanson said. "This time of year, there's sunlight 24 hours a day, and from under the ice, the light is a perfect white, like a kind of fluorescent light. This is because the ice is diffusing the sunlight and mixes with the perfect blue of the water, but when you're looking at deep water, the blue is only in your peripheral vision. Everything you look at straight on turns black. It's very surreal."

According to Hanson, most arctic dives are incredibly remote, and while some could argue the Beaufort Sea is as remote as it gets, the MDSU-1 divers had a unique lifeline right at hand.

"We're trained to call the Coast Guard if a diver gets in trouble," Hanson said. "But in this case, we were diving right off the side of a Coast Guard cutter, so we might have been in a super remote place, but the exact people we count on for help were right there."

As a component of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group (EODGRU) 1, MDSU-1 provides ready, expeditionary, rapidly deployable mobile diving and salvage companies to conduct harbor and waterway clearance, salvage, underwater search and recovery, and underwater emergency repairs in any environment.
The Naval Safety Command (NAVSAFECOM) is releasing the annual Fall and Winter Safety Awareness presentation for 2023, aimed at providing Sailors and Marines with information to safely enjoy recreational activities during the cooler months.

“We are excited to bring back the Annual Fall and Winter Safety Awareness Presentation for 2023,” said NAVSAFECOM Command Master Chief, CMDCM (AW/SW) Dean Sonnenberg. “The Fall and Winter presentation and media campaign builds upon our efforts from the 101 Days of Summer to create year-round safety awareness.”

Between Oct. 1 and March 1 of fiscal years 2019-2023, 149 Navy and Marine Corps members died in off-duty incidents. Of these, 73 were due to automobile crashes, 44 from motorcycle crashes, nine were pedestrian-related and another 23 were killed during off-duty recreational activities.

With a focus on ensuring the well-being of our naval personnel and their loved ones, the Naval Safety Command is committed to fostering a culture of safety all year long. As the temperatures drop and the weather becomes more unpredictable, it becomes increasingly important to be informed and prepared for the unique challenges that fall and winter can bring.

“Our primary goal is to empower naval personnel, their families and the community with the knowledge and tools they need to have a safe and enjoyable fall and winter season,” said Sonnenberg. “We believe that by working together, we can help create a safe environment for everyone.”

NAVSAFECOM will produce a variety of Fall and Winter Safety media products, which will be available on the NAVSAFECOM website and via social media. The presentations are designed to be tailorable to individual command needs and objectives.
Utilitiesman 2nd Class Dodanin Argumedo, assigned to the Utilities Energy Management (UEM) of Public Works Department (PWD) at Naval Station (NAVSTA) Rota, is the water utilities shop lead petty officer and the base backflow prevention program manager.  

"I'm responsible for maintaining NAVSTA Rota's fresh water and sewage utility systems, 250 fire hydrants, and completing ship-to-shore water connections in support of U.S. naval ships," explained Argumedo. "As the back flow prevention manager, I ensure that the base's potable water from the pier/air terminal/base housing is maintained by providing preventative maintenance to ensure no back flow fails allowing untreated water to enter our water supply."

Argumedo, originally from Houston, Texas, joined the Navy in 2015. Previous assignments include Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 303 in San Diego, two tours with Public Works Department Souda Bay, Greece, and Naval Construction Mobile Battalion (NMCB) 5 and NMCB 1 both based in Port Hueneme. Argumedo arrived to Naval Station Rota in 2022.

"My favorite thing about this command is that they are always challenging me in every aspect to become a better mentor and leader which I sincerely appreciate being molded into the leader I want to be," he said. "I also appreciate the fact they back you 100% in whatever goals you set to achieve."

Outside of his daily duties, he serves as the command indoctrination and sponsor program coordinator, command financial specialist, urinalysis program coordinator, and president of the Second Class Petty Officer Association (SCPOA).

He also holds an associates degree in general education and is working towards his bachelor's in human resource management stating, "I love helping those who want to improve their careers or lifestyle in general."

Being stationed in Rota has been a great duty location for him and his family. He appreciates being closer to his wife's family in Finland and the opportunity to visit them more often. When he's in Rota, Argumedo stays busy with working out, hiking, snowboarding, break dancing and sampling delicious foods!

"One of my hobbies is body building," said Argumedo. "I just competed in men's physique class A over the weekend and won first place!"

Argumedo works hard both in and out of work. He's always looking for opportunities to help his fellow Sailors and coworkers, or give back to the local community.

"My door is always open," he said. "I enjoy when other commands reach out for help or assistance, and I always enjoy coordinating volunteer events which is how most commands on base know me. I hope I can maintain that status of being able to give back to the communities around base and Spain!"
Lt. Rich Morales serves the fleet as the Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division (NSWC PCD) acting executive officer and fleet liaison officer. He has been assigned to NSWC PCD for nearly two and a half years and is responsible for leading a diverse team of service members to use their unique skillsets to enhance the NSWC PCD mission—to dominate the littorals. By ensuring his team’s service backgrounds are correctly applied to a code or project, he leverages their fleet knowledge and experience to provide the Navy with the best technology and support possible.

“I joined the Navy because I wanted to make a difference, and I felt like the Navy provided me the best opportunity to do that, while also allowing me to see the world from a unique perspective that standard tourism couldn’t provide.”

In 2015, he received his commission and bachelor’s in aerospace engineering from the U.S. Naval Academy and earned his wings within the rotary wing community in 2017. This Chicago native recalls the impact of his upbringing within his Hispanic household—Mexican and Puerto Rican—and how it helped him get to where he is today.

“The two biggest takeaways were the importance of a strong work ethic and the benefits of a close community and family,” said Morales. “The drive to achieve a set goal and having a strong team to help achieve that goal is a proven method for success and I’ve seen that within the Navy as a whole, as well as in my own career. I’ve had several family members serve in various branches of the military, and seeing their success during and after their military careers, taught me the value of that drive and persistence.”

Prior to his current position, Morales helped manage the NSWC PCD Unmanned Aerial System Program and Airfield Operations. His fleet aircraft was the MH-60R Seahawk helicopter and its primary missions were anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, electromagnetic warfare, command and control, and non-combat operations.

“My time in the cockpit has taught me the importance of communication and leadership in order to maximize mission effectiveness and safety,” said Morales. “Conversely, my time here, has also shown me a vital part of the mission. One of the things I enjoy most about NSWC PCD is seeing people from so many different academic, technical, or military backgrounds come together to help the fleet be the best fighting force possible. During my time in the fleet, something I did not see was just how vast the technical support network that kept us going really was, but now I can share that perspective firsthand.”
Everett Alvarez, Jr. was born in Salinas, California, in 1937 and became a Naval officer after earning a Bachelor’s degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Santa Clara in 1960. He underwent flight training and served with various squadrons before being shot down over North Vietnam in 1964. Alvarez endured years of captivity and was finally released in 1973, earning accolades such as the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroism and dedication.

Joe R. Campa Jr. was born on February 6, 1953, in Los Angeles, California. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1974 and began his naval career as a radioman. Over the years, Campa worked his way up through the enlisted ranks, demonstrating leadership and dedication to the Navy. Joe R. Campa Jr.’s appointment as the first Hispanic MCPON was a historic moment in the Navy, symbolizing the Navy’s commitment to diversity and equal opportunity.

Rear Admiral Yvette Davids made history as the first Hispanic American woman to command a Navy warship, the frigate USS Curts (FFG-38), before assuming her role as Chief of Staff at U.S. Southern Command in June 2020. Davids is now acting commander of Naval Surface Forces and Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet. Her role as Chief of Staff at U.S. Southern Command underscores her expertise in military strategy and international affairs, contributing to her reputation as a trailblazing and accomplished naval officer.

Celebrate Hispanic Heritage
**ENLISTED ADVANCEMENT REQUIREMENT REMINDER!**

Are you ready to advance? Have you completed an Enlisted Leader Development Course? Beginning in 2025, candidates for E-6 and E-7 will be required to complete the Intermediate Leader Development Course and the Advanced Leader Development Course respectively before taking the advancement exam.

*Enroll in a course now through the ELD SharePoint.*

Leaders are responsible for ensuring their Sailors understand the ELD framework. Learn more at [www.netc.navy.mil/ELD](http://www.netc.navy.mil/ELD).

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**NAVY 248TH BIRTHDAY COMMEMORATION EXECUTION ORDER**

**NAVADMIN 233/23**

This message is a Chief of Naval Operations Execution Order for events in support of the Navy’s 248th Birthday celebration Oct. 13. The order is to be carried out in accordance with OPNAVINST 5770.9C (Outreach: America’s Navy) and NAVADMIN 187/23 (248th Navy Birthday Planning Order).

**MONTGOMERY GI BILL PROGRAM UPDATE**

**NAVADMIN 226/23 | FACT SHEET**

Service members are no longer automatically enrolled in the Montgomery GI Bill Program during their first two weeks of initial entry training. Members must now make a selection between their 180th and 270th day of active duty, after being counseled by their command. Members who do not disenroll in writing prior to day 270 will be automatically enrolled in the MGIB and have their pre-tax pay reduced by $100 a month for 12 months. Service members are no longer automatically enrolled in the Montgomery GI Bill Program during their first two weeks of initial entry training.

**NAVY ESPORTS TEAM – CALL FOR APPLICATIONS**

**NAVADMIN 224/23**

Sailors E-5 and above can apply now to join the Navy’s Esports Team, which supports recruiting and outreach efforts by engaging with prospective Sailors online and at gaming venues. Applicants must meet recruiting duty qualifications and will be screened for team fit.

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**CALL FOR BLUE ANGELS ENLISTED APPLICATIONS**

**NAVADMIN 215/23**

Interested in joining the U.S. Navy Blue Angels team? The Navy’s flight demonstration squadron is accepting enlisted Sailor applications for upcoming seasons. Applications due May 3, 2024. E-5 and E-6 Billets available in the following ratings: AD, AE, AME, AS, AT, AZ, HM, LS, MC, NC, PR, and YN

**CPO Billets available for: ATCS, AEC, MCC**

**FY24 JAG CORPS IN-SERVICE PROCUREMENT PROGRAM SELECTION BOARD**

**NAVADMIN 231/23**

The FY24 Judge Advocate General’s (JAG) Corps In-service Procurement Program selection board will convene no earlier than February 2024. This opportunity provides outstanding enlisted personnel the opportunity to earn a commission in the JAG Corps – open to E-5 through E-7 active duty enlisted Sailors and Navy Training and Administration of the Reserves personnel in any rating.

**SENIOR ENLISTED ACADEMY UPDATE**

**NAVADMIN 217/23**

Starting in FY26, all U.S. Navy Active Duty, Training and Administration of the Reserves and Selected Reserve SCPOs will be required to complete the Senior Enlisted Academy in Newport, Rhode Island, or attend either the Air Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Marine Corps Senior Enlisted Academy, Coast Guard Senior Enlisted Leadership Course, Army Sergeants Major Academy, or the Joint Special Operations Forces Senior Enlisted Academy in order to be eligible for advancement to Master Chief Petty Officer.

**FY24–25 SECNAV TOURS WITH INDUSTRY ANNOUNCEMENT**

**NAVADMIN 211/23**

This NAVADMIN announces details for the FY24–25 Secretary of the Navy Tours with Industry program. This program is a unique and non-traditional opportunity for exceptional E-6 to O-6 Active Component and Training and Administration of the Reserves Sailors to work with partnering corporations. In the past, fellows have been assigned to Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, Tesla, Deloitte, Verizon, FedEx, Morgan Stanley, Space X, and Lockheed Martin.

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**HAVE AN OPINION ON YOUR NAVY EXPERIENCE?**

Voice it in the 2023 Workplace Gender Relations (WGR) Survey! Go to [www.netc.navy.mil/ELD](http://www.netc.navy.mil/ELD) to complete the survey.

If you received a letter from the CNO, use that ticket number, or you can look up your ticket number on the website. Don’t have a ticket number? You can still take an abbreviated version of the survey using your DoD ID number.

**NAVADMINS CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

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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.

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After decades of holding the weekly Pass-In-Review (PIR) ceremony on Fridays, beginning October 5, 2023, the event will be conducted on Thursdays at Recruit Training Command (RTC), the Navy’s only boot camp.

PIR, also known as graduation, is held 48 times a year for the 40,000+ recruits and their families and friends who travel to the Chicagoland area from all of the country and world in support of their new Sailors’ accomplishment.

Bumping up the ceremony a day grants the families more time to celebrate this momentous occasion together. Capt. Ken Froberg, Recruit Training Command’s Commanding Officer shared “as we looked at how we fostered Navy family connections, we realized with a rather minor change in schedule, we could strengthen these existing or new connections with graduating Sailors and their families as they set out on the next chapter of their Navy journey.”

For years, the graduation day has been a symbol of pride and honor for the recruits, but it also brought with it a hint of sadness, as the allotted time for families to spend with their freshly graduated Sailors was minimal. But we were also missing out on a chance to better familiarize our new members with the wealth of resources at their fingertips. “Our Meet your Navy Family campaign is designed to educate new Sailors and their families not only about the opportunities here at Naval Station Great Lakes, but around the world” said Froberg. “By actively sharing information about our Ombudsman program, Fleet and Family Support Center services, United Services Organization opportunities, or even our Morale Welfare and Recreation programs, we can start that conversation between a Sailor and other Sailors, or with their family, and then give them the opportunity of time to check out the local offerings on liberty. We are also connecting Navy families with the National Museum of the American Sailor here locally, to illustrate a key partner in learning about our naval heritage through the Naval History and Heritage Command nationwide network.”

Presently, Sailors are afforded off-base liberty following the ceremony with the amount of time dependent on where they are headed to for their follow-on training at their prospective “A” Schools. Those staying in Great Lakes for their schooling are afforded Friday through Sunday for liberty, whereas, those going out of state are only given Friday for liberty as they transfer to their next commands on Saturday. Thus, they only have about eight to nine hours to spend with their families after having been separated for nearly three months during training.

“MCPON’s recent Calls to Action were very clear – never be satisfied by the status quo – holding the graduations on Fridays minimized the time family members and guests can spend with their new graduates and limited opportunity to learn about the resources, programs, and benefits available to both family and service members before setting off around the world. We’re changing that, to demonstrate our commitment to fostering a healthy quality of service for all our Sailors, including our newest ones,” added Capt. Froberg.

The Navy recognized the importance of fostering strong family bonds, realizing that a day’s delay could make all the difference in creating lasting memories and also saw the strong opportunity to better educate both our Sailors and their families.

“I challenged the RTC team to innovate new concepts in order to maximize our performance as an organization which includes our families,” said Capt. Craig Mattingly, Commander, Naval Service Training Command. “I am proud of the efforts the RTC team has made towards putting families of our newest Sailors first by shifting graduation day. This change has a tremendous impact on the quality of life of our next generation of Sailors. This change is an example of how we should continue to examine our processes to get real and get better. The RTC team is better, and our Sailors and their families are going to benefit.”

Boot camp is approximately 10 weeks and all enlistees into the U.S. Navy begin their careers at the command. Training includes five warfighting competencies of firefighting, damage control, seamanship, watchstanding, and small arms handling and marksmanship along with physical fitness and lessons in Navy heritage and core values, Warrior Toughness, Life Skills, teamwork and discipline. More than 40,000 recruits train annually at the Navy’s only boot camp.
In the realm of elite military training, U.S. Navy special operators have carved out a legendary reputation for pushing even the most formidable individuals past their known limits. These warriors embody qualities of mental resilience and unwavering determination. They also share an unbreakable spirit of camaraderie and brotherhood that serves as the bedrock of their strength.

At the heart of their warrior spirit is a training regimen that exceeds ordinary combat drills and physical exercise. The Naval Special Warfare (NSW) combatives program is a fusion of multiple martial arts disciplines. This amalgamation is more than just a mix of fighting techniques; it is a conduit through which operators hone hand to hand and hyper-enabled operator combatant skills, forge bonds, and fortify their mental resilience.

Contrary to what one might assume, stepping into the world of Naval special warfare combatives program is a far cry from the tense, grim atmosphere of hand-to-hand combat. Instead, newcomers are greeted with smiles, energetic music, and a surprisingly fun atmosphere.

“What is so special about the NSW combative program is that it is a melting pot,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 John Kelly, an operator who was instrumental in the evolution of the NSW combatives program. “From Male to Female, E-5 to 0-5, all are welcome.”

A typical day at combatives training transcends physicality. The spirit of camaraderie among participants enables them to navigate chaos with a sense of calm and unity in an algorithmic like training that escalates through a series of moves and counter moves which cycle an operator into dominant positions that can solve any realistic combat contingency situations.

According to Command Master Chief Christian Hartwell, assigned to NSW Basic Training Command, commitment to discomfort and pushing boundaries intertwines with daily life. The decision to go to combatives every day, embodies the warrior spirit and resilience against the allure of the easy path.

“I live between my office and the training location, and I have a decision to make every morning,” said Hartwell. “Do I make the easy choice, turn right, and come to work, or do I make the hard choice and turn left and go to combatives? By turning left, and just showing up, mentally I have already won that day because it is not easy, especially Fridays. Fridays are a nightmare.”

On Fridays, operators participate in marathon sessions. Marathon sessions, devoid of clocks, last one hour and test mental fortitude, teaching operators to stay focused and composed even in extreme fatigue. Belts, earned through discipline and commitment, mark progress, shaping operators into better individuals.

“We take the clocks down,” said Chief Petty Officer Ronald Gilb, assigned to the NSW combatives program. “No one can see how far into the roll they are and it’s a mental exercise more than physical. When you’re physically engaged in combatives that long it is incredibly exhausting, especially if you’re on the receiving end of that session. If the guy that you’re with is a little stronger, a little more skilled, a little faster, and has a little more in the tank, it can be a very humbling experience.”

Guiding them is Ricky Lundell, a civilian martial arts coach who stands as a luminary in Brazilian jiu-jitsu and judo with fourth-degree black belts and numerous international championships. Most notably, Lundell is a former Cael Sanderson D1 wrestler. Lundell’s coaching prowess spans from high school wrestlers to UFC fighters. Assisted by Lindsey Lundell, the combatives program has been tailored meticulously for NSW operators.

Lundell paints the picture of the NSW combatives program as an operational art form training that imparts the skills vital for close combat. “[This style] revolves around operating downrange,” said Lundell. “It’s about mastering the essential skills of shooting, moving, and communicating, while also enabling operators to effectively break contact or control adversaries. Staying on your feet is crucial for staying operational, and our training empowers operators to do that.”

Gilb emphasizes the profound impact of this training on operator performance, especially in close combat scenarios. He explains the essence of mental fortitude and combat skills are woven into the fabric of this training.

“Hand TO hand is very good at gunfighting, but every situation does not warrant a bullet. The NSW combatives program builds confidence in operators to be able to stay on their feet and keep operating in close combat,” said Gilb.

Lundell furthered that the combatives program trains operators to be more versatile and capable of handling combat in any environment.

“Our unique combatives trains operators how to remain in a dominant position,” said Lundell. “It’s the only program that continuously applies moves from multiple disciplines to keep opponents down. Through maintaining dominance, operators gain a significant tactical advantage, and build confidence in handling any variety of situations.”

It is through this art that operators embrace the value of patience, strategy, and adaptability. Each session at the Naval Special Warfare Advance Training Command combatives facility becomes a vital lesson in problem-solving and empowers operators to remain calm and focused amidst the chaos they might face during critical missions. Participants recognize that the skills learned in combatives prepares them to face adversity in all aspects of their life.

“This program is not just beneficial for mental or physical strength,” said Lundell. “I have guys come up to me and tell me that the discipline and commitment they learned through the training has made them a better husband, a better father, a better teammate, better at receiving instruction, and even better a leader.”

Through the voluntary commitment, dedication and perseverance, participants strengthen unit cohesion, forging an invaluable asset within their sacred training ground on the mats.

“Currently combatives sustainment is a completely volunteer program,” said Gilb. “I invite any operator to come and leave their ego at the door. In the end, the combatives program is more than a training ground; it is a crucible where warriors are not only forged but where bonds are created, and spirits are lifted. It is a testament to the enduring power of camaraderie, brotherhood, and the unbreakable warrior spirit.

“The struggles, victories, and defeats shared during combatives training form an unbreakable bond, becoming a lifestyle during missions, where trust in one another is paramount,” said Hartwell.

Naval Special Warfare is the nation’s elite maritime special operations force, uniquely positioned to extend the Fleet’s reach and gain and maintain access for the Joint Force in competition and conflict.
WHAT COMPELS BUSY PEOPLE TO TAKE ON MORE WORK THAN IS ASKED OF THEM? WHO WOULD LOG OFF FROM WORK AT 4 P.M., GRAB A TRASH BAG, AND PICK UP LITTER FROM A TWO-MILE STRETCH OF THE BEACH?

Many people at Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Pacific, it turns out, earlier this summer. Before that, many attended a Walk/Run/Jog Event in May to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month. And before that, in March, some of those volunteers collected contributions to a donation drive for local community service organizations in honor of Women's History Month. At least 20 people, including a steering committee and department representatives, regularly contribute their time to leading NIWC Pacific's Women of the Workforce (WoW), a special interest group built on a grassroots ambition of the workforce to organize around a sense of social responsibility.

"Balancing my daily job responsibilities and contributing to WoW while maintaining a high level of performance in both areas can be challenging," said Fan Champagne, a NIWC Pacific engineer in the Fleet Installation, Engineering, and Logistics Department. Champagne co-chairs WoW with Bethany Taylor, a scientist in the Finance Department.

"But promoting the visibility and representation of women in the workforce and encouraging women to take on leadership positions are important to me," Champagne said. "When women hold influential roles, it sends a powerful message about the importance of gender diversity and inspires others to pursue leadership positions."

Both NIWC Atlantic and NIWC Pacific charter women's advisory groups, open to all civilian and military personnel, in 2012 for development of a culture in which women and men work together toward satisfying and rewarding careers. Carmela Keeney, NIWC Pacific executive director at the time, and Fleet Installation, Engineering, and Logistics Department Head Mavis Machniak, who is also WoW executive champion, led an inaugural WoW presentation in January 2013. The event included a Grace Hopper Brown Bag Women Luncheon. Rear Adm. Grace Hopper was a computer scientist and one of the Navy's first female admirals.

Since then, volunteers — committee members, department representatives, and other helping hands — have organized monthly events, most recent of which was a Women's Equality Day Panel and Potluck held August 23. The Center's WoW, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

office, and its Culture Team hosted the hybrid in-person and virtual event, where workforce members shared their personal and professional backgrounds and experiences in the workplace.

After talking mental health over appetizers at Liberty Station, clearing 25 13-gallon bags of trash from the community, and sharing potluck dishes over a panel, WoW's in-person events are back in full swing, many accommodating virtual access for colleagues at the Center's other sites. From those in San Diego, WoW committee members started getting the feedback a year or so ago. We're ready for more in-person events.

"I became more involved with WoW in 2020 and I really appreciated that I was a part of this amazing special interest group," Champagne said. "I was able to maintain my mental health during the pandemic because of WoW. I was able to collaborate with different groups at the Center and virtual event, where workforce members shared their personal and professional backgrounds and experiences in the workplace.

"The networking opportunities are for everyone in the workforce, and they're really impactful," Champagne said. "These events enable men and women to connect, learn from each other, and develop professionally."

What is it, then, that compels busy people to take on more than is asked of them? What does it say about the workforce that so many are willing to go above and beyond their regular roles to contribute to a sense of community? "Increased awareness, knowledge sharing, professional development, networking, and team building throughout our workforce are all important factors for a healthy culture at NIWC Pacific," Executive Champion Machniak said.

"The success of the WoW lies in the passion and motivation of its members, from both the steering committee and department representatives. Their enthusiasm in planning and executing Center-wide events throughout each calendar year is simply amazing."

NIWC Pacific's mission is to conduct research, development, prototyping, engineering, test and evaluation, installation and sustainment of integrated information warfare capabilities and services across all warfighting domains with an emphasis on basic and applied research and tactical systems afloat and ashore in order to drive innovation and warfighter information advantage.
Halloween Safety Tips

1. Tricks or Treats?
It’s essential to inspect the collected candy and treats. Look for any signs of tampering, such as torn wrappers or opened packages. If anything appears suspicious or not properly sealed, discard it. Avoid homemade treats or items that are not commercially packaged. While many people are well-intentioned, it’s best to stick with factory-sealed candy and treats.

2. Makeup Over Masks
Masks can limit a child’s field of vision, making it challenging to see potential dangers like oncoming traffic or uneven sidewalks. Consider using makeup or face paint to create the desired look without obstructing vision.

3. Stay Visible
Ensure that children are easily seen by drivers and other pedestrians, incorporate reflective elements into their costumes. These can include reflective tape, stickers, or patches strategically placed on the costume. Glow sticks or LED necklaces and bracelets are excellent options to make kids more visible. Carrying flashlights can also help illuminate the path and make it easier for children to see where they are going and for drivers to spot them.

4. Always Spook in Groups
Going trick-or-treating in groups provides safety and supervision. Children should always have at least one responsible adult or older teenager accompanying them. This ensures that there is someone looking out for their well-being and can respond to any emergencies.

5. Paws Off the Candy
Halloween candy can be toxic to pets, especially chocolate, xylitol (a common sugar substitute), and raisins. Keep all candy and treat bags out of reach of pets to prevent accidental ingestion. Ensure that your children are aware of the importance of not sharing their Halloween candy with pets, as even small amounts of certain ingredients can be harmful to animals. If you suspect your pet has ingested something harmful, contact your veterinarian immediately.