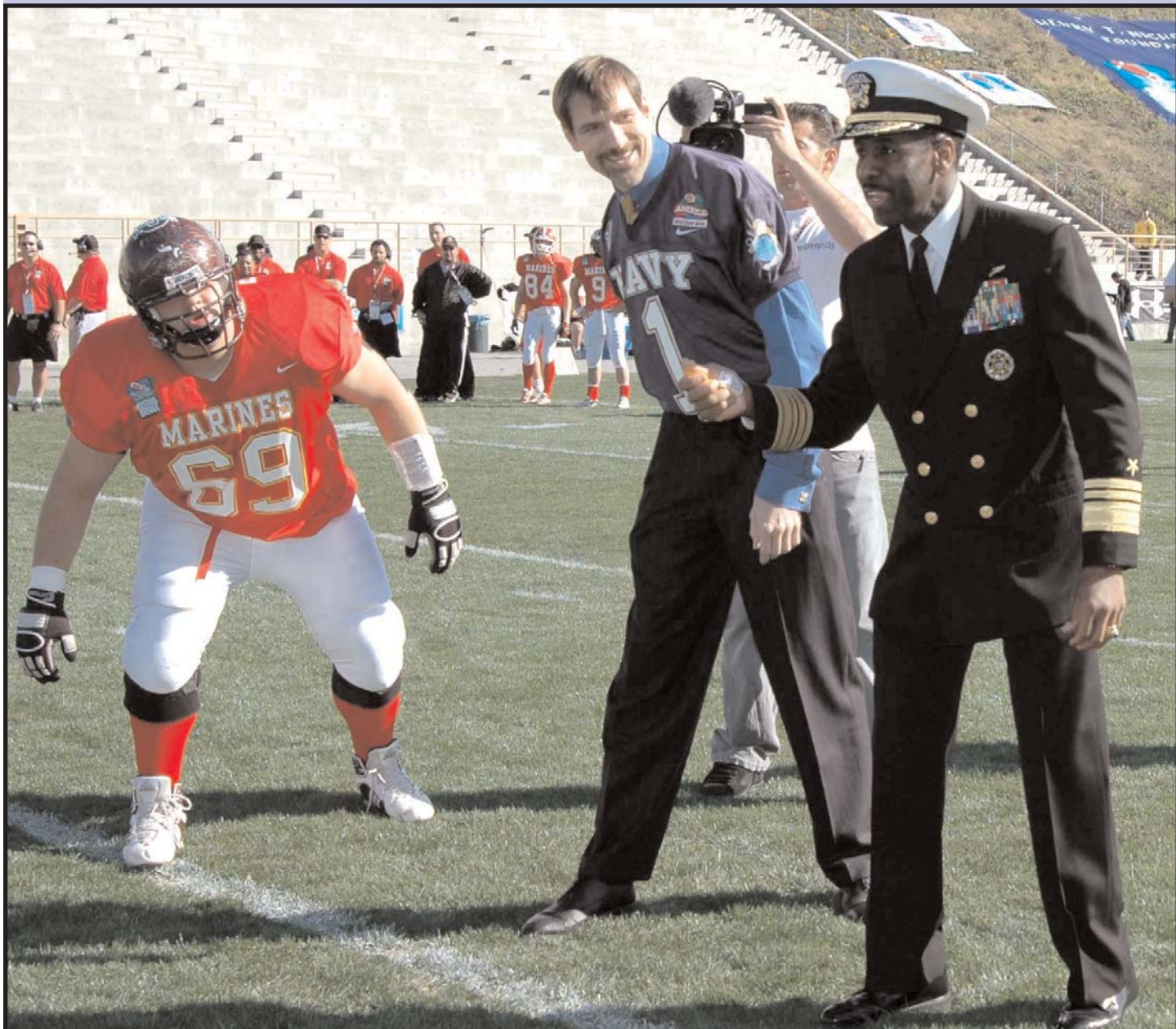


MERIDIAN



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www.nnoa.org



Above: Opposing players await Navy Inspector General Vice Adm. Anthony Winns' drop of the flag before racing downfield to recover a football to determine which team would receive the ball prior to the Jan. 26 Southern California Bowl at Cal State Fullerton's Titan Field. The game pitted high school all stars from Southern California inland counties against those from the coastal counties. The coastal team donned Navy jerseys for the game while the inland team wore Marine jerseys.
Photo by MC2 Timothy Whitman

**Inspector
General Does
Part to Recruit
Minorities**

**Jr. Officer Wins
Coveted
Coprenicus
Award**

**Talking with
Secretary
B.J. Penn**

**Military Couple
Says Military,
Happy Marriage
Possible**

NNOA

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****If you have questions or concerns about NNOA please contact the National PAO via email at karen.eifert@navy.mil or via our Website at www.nnoa.org ****



Greetings! This past few months has been an historical period for the National Naval Officers Association. Since the last publication of the Meridian, one of the founding members of NNOA passed, Capt. Kenneth H. Johnson, USN (ret). Capt. Johnson's minority recruiting efforts at the United States Naval Academy made a profound impact on the Navy at large. Prior to then Lt. Johnson's arrival at the Naval Academy, African American enrollment at the Academy made up about 1 percent of each incoming class. In the ensuing years as a direct result of his drive and leadership, an average of seventy-nine African Americans entered the Academy each summer and accounted for 5.6 percent of the incoming plebes.

Many of the senior African Americans in the Sea Service today were recruited by Capt. Johnson. Capt. Johnson's service in the Navy was a pivotal moment for African Americans and established the legacy upon which NNOA was founded. We also bid farewell to Cmdr. Christopher G Riley, USN. Chris was a 1992 graduate of the United States Naval Academy and a rising star in the Engineering Duty Officer

community. In his 15-year career he distinguished himself as a scholar, mentor and a dedicated family man.

You may recall my challenge to each of the local chapters to increase junior officer membership by 3% this year. I am thrilled to report that we have exceeded that goal by a fairly large margin. I would like to thank each of the local chapter Presidents for their dedicated efforts and, while we have reached our stated goal, we still need your continued support to reach out to junior officers.

We fell short of our goal of identifying ten Immediate Selection Reservation scholars and endorsing ten NROTC applications. I would like each chapter to review their scholarship processes to determine what changes are necessary to improve our effectiveness in identifying students for officer commissioning programs. We intend to conduct a special session during this year's conference to review best practices and discuss ways to improve our performance in this area. Identifying individuals for commissioning programs is core to our primary mission and I'm confident that we will improve.

In the fall of 2007 the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard released a unified maritime strategy. "The Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower" stresses an approach that integrates seapower with other elements of national power, as well as those of our friends and allies. A key element of this strategy is the development of relationships across cultural, historical and linguistic differences. Expanded cooperative relationships with other nations will contribute

to the security and stability of the maritime forces for the benefit of all. In support of the new maritime strategy, the 2008 conference theme is "Developing America's Future Leaders to Enhance Mission Readiness and Cultural Awareness". Several of the sessions during the conference will focus on the importance of diversity in mission accomplishment and readiness.

Plans for the 2008 conference progress nicely. Capt. Sinclair Harris and the Tidewater Chapter have done a great job of planning and coordination. This year the conference will be held in Portsmouth, Va. at the Renaissance Hotel, 23-25 July. Key events follow:

Opening session, 0800 - 0840 23 July 08.

Coast Guard Day lunch, 1130 - 1300, 23 July 08.

President's reception, 1830 - 2100, 23 July 08
Navy Day luncheon, 1200 - 1330, 24 July 08

Marine Corps Day lunch 1130 - 1300, 25 July 08

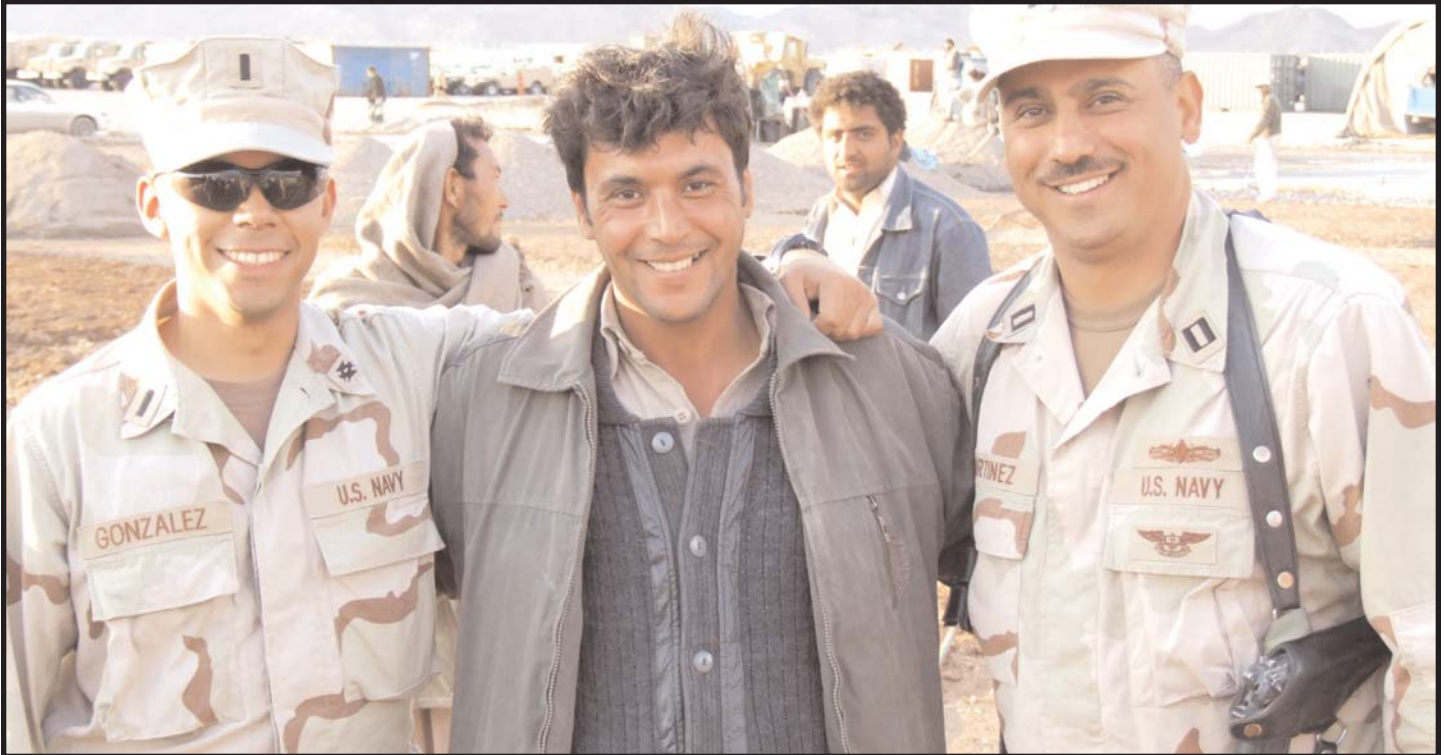
Award Banquet, 1800 - 0000, 25 July 08

We will also conduct a prayer breakfast, "Youth Day" and Spousal Workshop. Please check with your respective Regional Vice Presidents for additional details. I look forward to seeing you and record numbers of junior officers at the 2008 NNOA National Conference.

Warm regards,

Captain Bernard Jackson, USN (Ret.)
Executive Board President

(President@nnoa.org)



Above: Lt. Henry A. Martinez II poses with a local Afghani. Courtesy Photo

San Diego Officer receives Copernicus Award

By MC2 Justin Ailes, Naval Network Warfare Command Public Affairs

SAN DIEGO (NNS) -- A Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station (NCTS), San Diego communications/C4I plans and projects action officer, was recently selected as one of 14 other recipients to receive the Copernicus award.

Lt. Henry A. Martinez II was selected as the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association's Copernicus award winner.

The award, co-sponsored by AFCEA International and the U.S. Naval Institute in San Diego is presented annually to Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and civilians who demonstrate superior performance in a command, control, communications and computers/information technology-related job.

Martinez is assigned as plans and projects action officer at Naval Computer Telecommunications Station, San Diego. He served as a dual department head for communications department and facilities engineer for Multi-national Force,

Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan, 207th Regional Corps Advisory Group West Herat while on a 14-month deployment.

During this tour, Martinez developed strategic C4I plans for the Afghanistan government, Afghanistan National Army, Regional Command West Afghanistan, and NATO Coalition Forces (International Security Assistance Force).

His contributions included the construction of two 27-meter cellular towers and the development of a network plan for the 207th Regional Corps Advisory Group, West Herat, Forward Operating Base, establishing precedence for approved wireless networks in Afghanistan.

Martinez reflected on what accomplishments he felt an individual needed to achieve to be selected for the award.

"You really have to care about your work and strive to make a difference within our communications community and military. Bottom line, you need to take pride in your work and what you can do for your country," said Martinez.

Martinez, originally from EL Paso, Texas, began his naval career under the

delayed entry program after graduating from Ysleta High School in 1985. He was commissioned Aug. 1, 2002 and transferred to USS Peleliu (LHA 5), assuming the duties as the communications officer and electronics keying material systems manager.

He later transferred to NCTS, San Diego as a communications officer ashore from May 2005-March 2006. Martinez then volunteered for an individual augmentee (IA) and successfully completed his tour of Afghanistan in support of the global war on terrorism.

In addition to his many accomplishments during his IA tour, Martinez led a staff of 48 ANA officers and soldiers which he personally trained in all facets of computer and tactical communications.

Additionally, he established the first ANA Computer and Tactical Communications schoolhouse consisting of 18 computer workstations and several radio laboratory stations, providing ANA a multitude of courses in computer operations and radio communications procedures.

Martinez accredited much of his success to

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Military Officers Aim To Boost Minorities In Sea Services

**Published in The Day
by Jennifer Grogan
January 6, 2008**

New London, CT-- Navy and Coast Guard officers stationed in the region are reviving an organization that aims to bring more racial and ethnic minorities into the officer corps of the sea services.

In 2007, whites accounted for more than 80 percent of active-duty Marine, Navy and Coast Guard officers. Between 5 and 8 percent of the officer corps was black, and the percentage of Hispanics hovered around 6 points.

The rest of the officer corps comprises smaller percentages of other groups, including Asian, American Indian /Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian / other Pacific Islander.

"We're behind," said Lt. Mark Braxton, a civil engineering instructor at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London. "We don't look like what we should look like."

The organization they have reactivated is the New England Chapter of the National Naval Officers Association. It aims to help the Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Corps recruit, retain and promote officers from diverse races and ethnic backgrounds.

"We need a voice so people know how we feel," said Braxton, vice president of the chapter. "When things occur, we now have somewhere we can go to organize our thoughts, and we have a voice to address our thoughts."

The majority of the local

chapter's members are black, but members say they're interested in helping all groups that are under represented in the military.

Although public discussion of diversity in the military often focuses on the "don't ask, don't tell" policy, which allows gay people to serve if they keep their sexual orientation secret, NNOA does not have an official position on that issue.

"There are a lot of worthwhile and legitimate causes we could get involved in, but because we are a volunteer organization with some limited resources, we have to stay focused on our primary task, which is to enhance diversity in the sea services' officer corps," said Bernard L. Jackson, a retired Navy captain and national president of NNOA.

A NNOA chapter in Newport disbanded more than a decade ago because too few people were involved.

"When you look at the number of junior officers in that particular area, there is a

critical need for a chapter," Jackson said.

"Before, you didn't have anybody to go to and say, 'Hey, how do I promote my career? How do I stay on track?'" said Lt. Cmdr. Nigel Andre Sealy, the new chapter's president. Sealy serves as maintenance management officer at Regional Support Group Groton at the Naval Submarine Base.

Lt. Cmdr. Darell Singleterry, an instructor in the department of management at the academy, said that his interaction with NNOA members earlier in his career was one of the reasons he decided to stay in the Coast Guard.

"When you have conversations with senior successful leaders in the organization, you become motivated, you become invigorated to do great things and follow in their footsteps," said Singleterry, who also helped organize the local chapter.

Recent efforts to re-establish the association locally began when Rear Adm. Cecil

D. Haney, commander of Submarine Group Two, asked Lt. Cmdr. Thomasina Yuille to work on the project and suggested partnering with the academy.

"Personally, I was a little surprised we didn't have one up here," Haney said. "When you look at my goals for leadership, which are similar to my boss's and similar to the Chief of Naval Operations' goals, it is about professional development. I looked at this as a mechanism by which we could have good professional development."

Rear Adm. J. Scott Burhoe, academy superintendent, supported the idea.

"We need to have more minority officers and more women in our senior ranks so that those people who are in the organization can look up and see people who look like themselves," he said.

Sealy said the reactivation would not have been possible without the support from Haney and Burhoe.

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Above: New England NNOA Chapter Members pose with guests around the ceremonial cake. Photo courtesy of New England Chapter.

Rear Adm. Grooms talks about the future of Subs



Above: Rear Adm. Grooms takes time after a submariner briefing at the Army Navy Club in Arlington on January 24, 2008 to spend time mentoring local area midshipmen.. Photo by Lt. Karen E. Eifert

Rear Adm. Grooms Shares Thoughts: Sub Force, Future Sailor Roles

By Lt. Jennifer Cragg

Rear Adm. Bruce Grooms recently sat down with the Meridian Magazine to share his thoughts on his role as the Director, Submarine Warfare Division (N87), Chief Financial Officer of the Undersea Enterprise, and Chair of the Anti-Submarine Warfare Cross Functional Board.

"My role as the Director, Submarine Warfare Division is to help the Chief of Naval Operations to execute his Title 10 responsibilities, to maintain, train and equip combat-ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintain freedom of the seas and to ensure that the Submarine Force is properly funded and equipped with the necessary warfighting capability and capacity now and in the future," stated Grooms.

"The most rewarding part of this job is watching the budgeting process come together at year's end and to see that we properly armed our Sailors with the best tools available. I relish the opportunity to procure and field the absolute best technology and warfighting capability to

our waterfront Sailors and submarines," said Grooms.

At any time there are about 10 submarines forward deployed fulfilling theater and national objectives. And, according to Grooms, the product they deliver is critical to our current and future efforts in the global war on terrorism.

Helping to evaluate the success of these crews is part of Grooms' responsibility. After return from deployment, all submarine Commanding Officers brief Grooms and his staff on their experiences underway in order to help prepare other crews for future deployments.

"We receive candid feedback from the crews that highlights both their successes and concerns and then we take that information back to improve the tools and systems we provide to them," said Grooms.

"The most challenging aspect of this job is finding the right balance of equipment, capability and capacity while working within the limited resources that exist. There is a finite amount of dollars available yet there are many needs that must be fulfilled. Setting priorities and living within the resulting constraints is often very

challenging," said Grooms.

Grooms' next assignment will be as Commander, Submarine Group Two where he will be responsible for the operation and leadership of all east coast fast attack submarines. When looking back on the lessons he learned in reference to developing leaders, Grooms said "leaders should make sure they look very carefully at every individual and give him or her every opportunity to succeed."

And, Grooms knows something about developing young minds. In 2005, Grooms became the first African-American Commandant of Midshipmen at the U.S. Naval Academy. "At the Naval Academy," Grooms began, "my view was that there is a place for everyone in the service of our country and leaders should never close the door to their future possibilities without exhausting every opportunity for these young people to succeed."

And, succeeding is something that Grooms has a lot experience with. A member of the Submarine Centennial Seven, the group of seven African-Americans who commanded

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Navy Couple Believes: Those Who Serve Together, Stay Together



Above: Vice Adm. Nancy Brown, Director, Command, Control, Communications, Computer (C4) Systems, the Joint Staff (right), presents Lt. Cmdr. Darrell Nealy (middle) with an award for exceptional leadership in the Information Professional (IP) community at the 2007 Navy Information Professional Symposium. Courtesy photo.

By Lt. Jennifer Cragg

There are roughly 84,000 dual military service members in the armed forces today; and of that total, there are an estimated 18,000 who serve in the U.S. Navy. But, for the military couples who choose to serve their country together they face significant hurdles compared to that of the non-military couple. These struggles can include: extended deployments, individual augmentation, separate duty stations, competing work schedules and the most important, raising a family. Despite these challenges, many Navy families, such as the Nealys, have made the Navy lifestyle work for them and their family.

Lt. Cmdr. Darrell Nealy and Lt. Cmdr. Stella Bee Nealy have been married for more than two decades and for 22 of those years they've served in the U.S. Navy together. They have four children, ranging in ages from 18 to 23. One of their four children, 21-year old Preston Nealy, is currently serving in the U.S. Air Force. The other three are all successful college students with graduation dates looming soon. Darrell, 41, a native of Brooklyn, N.Y., began his career in the Navy by graduating from basic training at Great Lakes, Ill., and later Radioman Class "A" School in 1986.

Stella, 42, a native of Greensboro, Ala., started her career in the U.S. Navy graduating from basic training in Orlando, Fla., and later entered the radioman rating in December 1985. Fate took a hand when Darrell and Stella met at their first duty stations in Guam. They married January 1988.

Twenty years later, the Nealys have enjoyed their time serving in the U.S. Navy

together. Their shared history has provided a solid foundation and a unique bond allowing both their careers and marriage to grow. This foundation has provided them with lessons that they would not have learned elsewhere.

"The best lesson I learned, which has been so many, would be diversity, unity, team work - knowing that I can't do it by myself. I have learned how to be friends with people of different backgrounds," said Darrell.

"I echo what Darrell says, I truly do," added Stella. "The Navy has taught me one of the biggest lessons that I can do anything I set my heart and mind to when given the opportunity."

The Nealys are truly a success story. Since their graduation from basic training, they have optimized deckplate leadership and along the way have become a dual Navy asset to their individual commands, the Information Professional (IP) community, and countless other service men and women serving in the Information Systems Technician (IT) rating and others around the world. Darrell added that during the course of their careers they have both been rewarded for their hard work, dedication and devotion to the Navy. Awards received or warfare pins obtained by one would inspire the other to work harder to the same level of excellence.

"We have always done everything together. If you see one win something; the other would soon win something. When I won Sailor of the Year, she won too," said Darrell.

Both Darrell and Stella would end up win-

ning Sailor of the Year twice in their naval careers.

Ultimately, Darrell and Stella pushed each other to the point of each of them obtaining a commission through the limited duty officer pipeline for the Communications-Surface designator within four years of each other. Darrell received his commission Nov. 1, 1995, and Stella was commissioned April 1, 1999.

Along their road from enlisted to officer, good quality, effective leadership was a consistent factor that not only motivated them, but the countless Sailors they served with. "Effective leadership employed by Sailors during wars of the past or even when we joined the Navy some 22 years ago have not changed all that much, only people have changed. The requirement for proper personal example in leadership remains the same for us today as it did when we joined the Navy. It is our responsibility to set a good personal example, and as leaders we are on duty 24 hours a day," said both Darrell and Stella. "As leaders of men and women we must constantly be aware of our actions as they relate to leadership. A leader who does not have the respect of his or her Sailor will be ineffective."

While good leadership has been their family's motto throughout the past two decades, like his wife, Darrell continues to receive accolades from his former and current commands for his sound leadership.

In May 2007, soon after Darrell assumed the duties as executive officer at Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station, San Diego, he was selected as the 2006 VICE ADM. Richard W. Mayo Award Winner for inspirational leadership within the IP Officer Community. And, prior to Christmas, Darrell and his family received an early present - they were informed that he was selected as one of the 2007 Department of the Navy Chief Information Officer Information Technology/Information Management (DoN CIO IT/IM) Excellence Award winners. Darrell is expected to receive this award in February 2008.

Like her husband, Stella isn't a novice when it comes to awards. She has been awarded four Outstanding Military Women of the Year awards, and two Sailor of the Year awards.

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Navy IG, Rushmore CO Advertise Navy to Aid Recruiting Efforts

By Lt. Karen E. Eifert

Navy Inspector General Vice Adm. Anthony Winns and Commanding Officer of USS Rushmore (LSD 47) Cmdr. Calvin Slocumb participated in the first-ever national all-star football classic with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) and local high schools in Southern California on January 26 to aid minority recruiting in the Navy.

The All-Star Classic took place at California State University Fullerton and consisted of two, back-to-back all star games. The first was the Southern California Bowl, a high school game pitting the best high school football seniors from Southern California coastal schools against their inland counterparts. The coastal team donned blue jerseys labeled for their "Navy" mascot, while the inland team wore red jerseys for their "Marine" mascot. The second game, the American Heritage Bowl, was a match-up between the best players amongst HBCU seniors across the country to include Howard University and Hampton University.

Navy support for the event came from a number of commands including Navy Recruiting, USS PELELIU (LHA-5), and NAVSPECWARCOM as well as other commands and detachments in the San Diego area, with central coordination carried out by Navy Region Southwest under the command of Rear Admiral Len Hering. Noting the exceptional diversity and recruiting potential the games presented, as well as an unprecedented community outreach opportunity Hering spoke with the Navy's Inspector General, Vice Admiral Anthony Winns about flying to California to support the event.

Vice Adm. Winns agreed to participate in the event to support the Navy's focus on recruiting, developing, and retaining top-notch minorities on its way to becoming a top 50 employer. Winns said it is a well-known fact that young people are increasingly influenced by their parents and community leaders, and he saw this event as a unique opportunity to actively engage the people who influence future leaders.

"I was able to demonstrate the Navy's commitment to community support through outreach. As well, I supported our recruiting efforts to showcase the Navy's exciting career opportunities to a diverse group of young

Americans," Winns said. "I was able to establish relationships with majority and minority community leaders and influencers such as college presidents and football coaches, who will assist in promoting and attracting future leaders in the Navy."

Winns, who works at the Washington Navy Yard, said that purpose of the event helped him overlook the fact that he traveled 3,000 miles the day before the games began only to travel another 3,000 miles to return to Washington, D.C. after the games ended.

Commanding Officer of USS Rushmore (LSD 47) Cmdr. Calvin Slocumb, who also supported the effort during the media day, the day prior to the games, spoke of the importance of Sailors reaching out to young men and women of all nationalities and origins in order to attract the best talent.

"The Navy needs to look for the talent that's out there in our younger generation, in our high school athletes as well as our college athletes," said Slocumb. "...It's important that we always look for people that have different skills and things to bring to the Navy to help make the Navy stronger."

Winns and Slocumb maximized the time

they had in support of the all star-games talking with radio, print and internet reporters. Be sure to watch this event one of the four times it airs on ESPNU in February, twice on February 4 and twice on February 8.

"This was a great chance to recruit top candidates for the Navy and to support our vital diversity initiatives," said Capt. Matt Brown, a Public Affairs Officer for Navy Region Southwest who Rear Admiral Hering asked to help plan the Navy outreach portion of the event. This is the first time these games have been run, and it was really exciting to see these incredibly talented athletes on board a Navy ship, with the SEALs, and especially out on the field performing so well. We would love to have these guys on the Navy team and hope they will see the great opportunities the Navy represents so they can maximize their potential for years to come."

The all-star classic was sponsored by the Henry T. Nicholas III Foundation and the associated FightOn Foundation. Game proceeds will benefit the families of fallen Navy and Marine personnel.

*MC2 Timothy Wightman
contributed to this story*



Above: Commanding Officer of USS Rushmore (LSD 47) Cmdr. Calvin Slocumb presents former NFL great from the Los Angeles Rams Leroy Irving with a command ballcap following Slocumb's comments during a luncheon celebrating the inaugural Southern California Bowl Jan. 25 at Cal State Fullerton. Photo by MC2 Timothy Wightman.

A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT: New England Chapter Returns

NEW LONDON, CT -- Although the Coast Guard Academy and the Naval Submarine bases are separated by the Thames River, they were ceremonious and historically joined with the recent reestablishment of the New England Chapter of the NNOA.

The New England Chapter of the NNOA celebrated their official reestablishment on 29 November at the US Coast Guard Academy Officer's Club following a lengthy hiatus. The outreach of the chapter is expected to expand throughout the New England area bases including the Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT; the Naval Submarine Base in Groton, CT; Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, ME; Naval Station in Newport, RI and USCG District 1 in Boston, ME in addition to numerous tenant area commands.

In attendance were many distinguished guests including guest speakers Rear Admiral J. Scott Burhoe, Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, Rear Admiral Cecil D. Haney, Commander Submarine Group Two, and Captain Sinclair M. Harris, NNOA Eastern Regional Vice President. Lt. cmdr. Thomasina Yuille, Mistress of Ceremony/Immediate Past President, did an eloquent job in both her opening prayer and introductory remarks for the ceremony. She explained that in February 2007, Rear Admiral Haney approached her about restarting a NNOA chapter in the local area and how the chapter arrived at this Reestablishment Ceremony 9 months later. Chaplain Yuille failed to mention her personal daily efforts in the reestablishment of the chapter every day since that faithful conversation with Rear Admiral Haney.

Yuille coordinated with local Navy and Coast Guard Academy Leadership to recruit chapter



Above: New London Deputy Mayor Kevin Cavanaugh, JROTC Executive Officer Muhammad Tahir, New London Mayor Margaret Mary Curtin, and JROTC Commanding Officer Vannessa Blanco, pose with Submarine Group 2's Commander, Rear Adm. Cecil Haney in the gymnasium of New London High School during a visit to the area. Following a personnel inspection of the JROTC unit, Haney watched unit drill teams showcase their skills. Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Steven Myers

officers and membership. As the ceremony progressed a vision for the future of the sea services was embodied as young Coast Guard cadets read the NNOA mission statement, vision statement, guiding principles and national goals. A united theme emphasizing the importance of diversity in our nation, now and in the future, was presented by the guest speakers. The Ceremony was attended by approximately 64 active and retired military and civilian guests representing 20 local commands and organizations.

The Chapter president challenged each member of the audience to recruit and identify students for Naval ROTC scholarships, the Coast Guard's College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI) program, and appointment to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Among the first order of business for the chapter is to develop a scholarship committee to identify future officers in the local community and provide professional educational training for all chapter members.

Grooms Continued from page 5

Submarines during the first 100 years of the U.S. Submarine service, he received the 2000 National Society of Black Engineers Golden Torch Award for Lifetime Service and the 1999 Vice Adm. Stockdale Award for outstanding leadership while commanding the fast-attack submarine USS ASHEVILLE (SSN 758).

Grooms believes that the young enlisted Sailor and/or officer today should be thrilled about the direction of our Navy, and especially the submarine force, is going. "We are the best in the world at what we do, we go to sea in the most advanced and capable platforms ever con-

structed, we execute real world missions that matter, we lead the most talented and diverse forces we have ever had, and we do it all 24/7 worldwide," said Grooms.

Grooms offers advice to Sailors and officers starting out on their careers. "The best advice I can give is to go to your command eager to learn, qualify on a watch station as quickly as you can, be the very best watch officer on the ship, and become indispensable to the Executive and Commanding Officers. These efforts will help you start on the right foot and propel you to success," said Grooms.

Grooms said as leaders the key is to recog-

nize that everyone comes from diverse backgrounds and that diversity is vitally important to the submarine force and the entire Navy.

"We strive to be representative of the diversity of the nation that we are defending. Diversity in our ranks significantly adds to the richness and perspective of our force and makes us better.

Our efforts in the area of enlisted and officer accession, enlisted career stewardship, and officer mentorship programs are showing measurable results. We still have room for improvement, but I am encouraged by the results so far," said Grooms.

Building the Network: Engaging and Connecting with Chicago Area Children



Above: Speaking to a group of students at Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory High School, Chicago, Capt. Yolanda Reagens, Special Assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations for Diversity, discusses her decision to attend the U.S. Naval Academy, pursue post-graduate degrees, and stay Navy. Photo by Lt. Jeffrey S. Gray.

By Lt. Jeffrey S. Gray, Naval Service Training Command

CHICAGO - From Nov. 28 to Dec. 2, Navy officers visited 12 high schools and two elementary schools in Chicago to implement a major initiative to engage, to encourage, and to increase minority candidates applying for the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) Scholarship Program and the U.S. Naval Academy.

The initiative, dubbed "Building the Network," was a combined effort of the U.S. Naval Academy, the Navy Recruiting Command, the Naval Service Training Command, the Navy Operational Support Center, Chicago, and the Navy Diversity Directorate.

"The goal of our concerted effort is to maximize the Navy resources in the Chicago area in support of outreach activities and build lasting relationships with the high schools we visit," said Cmdr. David R. Klain, Commanding Officer, Navy Recruiting District, Chicago.

"Moreover, last week's school visits offered us an opportunity to engage with potential NROTC and Academy candidates and influencers at a much more intimate level."

In addition to the high school visits, members of the Navy Reserve Component were provided information about the NROTC Scholarship Program.

"Our information brief to our Reserve members was very well received. One participant remarked this is the first time he's heard this information in 15 years of reserve service," said Klain. "I believe we hit the right market - a number of Reserve members are interested in having their children apply, a number of members had relatives or friends who they wanted to steer to apply, and a couple of them want to assist by making presentations."

A team of Navy representatives, including a senior officer, junior officer, and a midshipman, visited each of the high schools. The team members represented a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Each

person discussed his or her respective decision to pursue a career in the Navy, the challenges of educational attainment, and the excitement of serving in a variety of exotic locales around the world.

Capt. Yolanda Reagens, special assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations for Diversity, and a 1983 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, impressed upon students at Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory High School that the Navy provides "opportunities for education and a career, but it's only an opportunity if you take advantage of it."

Giving students her resume, Reagens pointed out the Navy not only provides her with a competitive salary, but it has also paid her tuition to obtain two Master's degrees, one in National Security Studies and one in Education.

"You're fortunate to have a unique group like this provide you with information and varied perspectives on career options in the Navy,"

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Building the Network Continued...



Above: Entertaining questions from students at Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory High School, Chicago, Lt. Juan Ubiera, Officer Programs Recruiter from Navy Recruiting District, Phoenix, talks about his decision to initially enlist in the Navy and later pursue a college degree and commission in the officer corps. Photo by Lt. Jeffrey S. Gray.



Above: Taking time out from his high school presentations, Capt. Leonard Jones, Professor of Naval Science and Commanding Officer of Savannah State's Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps unit, spends time reading with children at the Sue Duncan Children's Center, Chicago. Photo by Lt. Jeffrey S. Gray.

said Reagans. "When I was in your shoes, many years ago, I didn't have anyone to talk to who'd had first hand experience in the Navy. I had to make my decision to join on my own."

Lt. Juan Ubiera gave students a unique perspective on the Navy as a viable career option. Ubiera, a Navy officer recruiter from New Mexico, provided students with an exception-

al story of personal achievement and dedication to the Navy.

Ubiera confided in the students that as a high school student he just didn't apply himself.

"I graduated 420th out of a class of 426. However I didn't let that deter me from going to college," said Ubiera. "But when I got to college, I still wasn't ready to take my studies seriously. So, after about two years

of college, I decided to join the Navy. It was during my enlistment that I found I could be successful at doing whatever I applied myself to doing. Knowing I could be successful, I also knew I wanted more responsibility and money, so I decided I wanted to become an officer."

Uberia was accepted into the Enlisted Commissioning Program and went to college at Norfolk State University in Virginia. While at Norfolk State, he participated in NROTC. He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in computer science and was commissioned an Ensign. After his first tour as an officer, he was accepted to attend the Naval Post-Graduate School where he earned a Master's degree in physics.

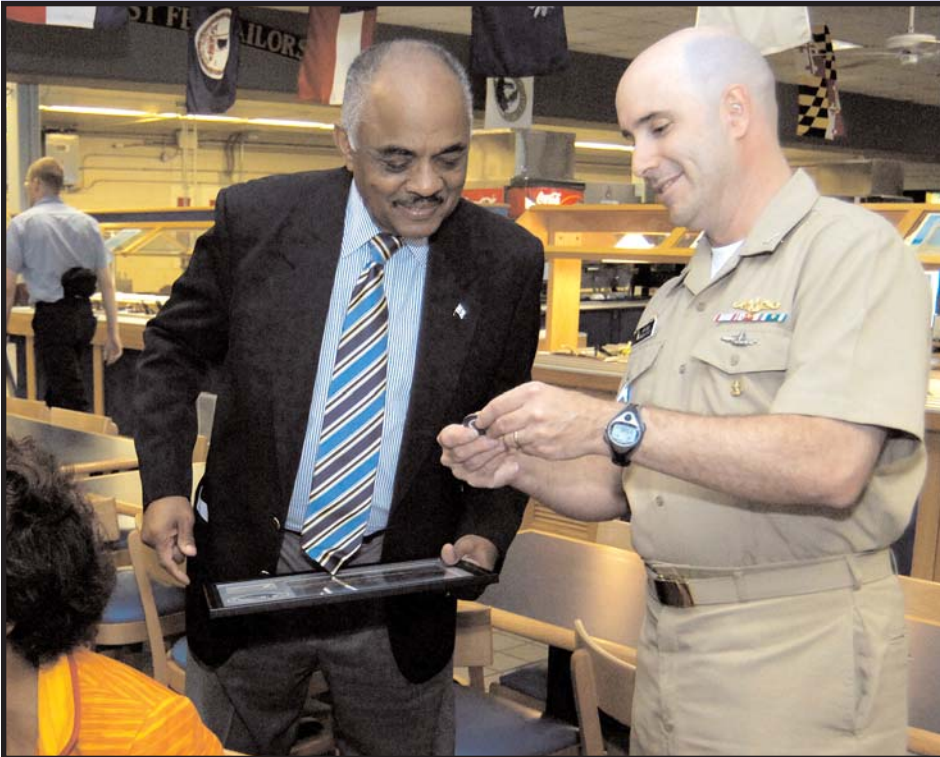
"I love the Navy and what it has helped me achieve personally and professionally," said Uberia.

NROTC Midshipman Andrea Kaltenbach, a junior at Northwestern University, told students at Brooks High School students her reasons for choosing to apply for the NROTC scholarship were influenced by her family situation and her desire for personal development.

"I have three brothers and four sisters and I knew my parents would have a difficult time paying college tuition for all of us," said Kaltenbach. "On a personal level, I wanted more from the college experience and I think NROTC and choosing to be a Marine Corps officer will assist me with discovering who I am, what I'm capable of, and help me find out what my limits are."

In addition to the high school visits, members of the outreach teams visited Beasley Academic Magnet Elementary School and the Sue Duncan Children's Center. At Beasley, Lt. Cmdr. Robin Lemon-Soape and Lt. Cmdr. Matthew Bowman, from the Navy Diversity Directorate, conducted an informal focus group with a class of eighth

Continued page 15



Above: Capt. Mark S. Ginda, commanding officer of Submarine Base New London, presents a command coin to Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Installations and Environment) B.J. Penn. Penn visited Groton to tour the facilities and review its sustainment program. Photo by Mr. John Narewski

A Few Words with Secretary Penn

Interview by Lt. Karen E. Eifert
Tell us what it means to be the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and the Environment.

It means I again have the privilege to serve the Department of the Navy by formulating policies, plans, and procedures for effective management of Navy and Marine Corps real property, housing and other facilities consisting of 81 Navy and Marine Corps installations, 86,000 buildings, the workplace for 776,686 people on 4,484,000 acres with a plant replacement value of over \$215 billion; environmental protection, planning, conservation and compliance both ashore and afloat, as well as natural and cultural resource conservation and protection, environmental restoration and marine resource protection; safety and occupational health for both military and civilian personnel; BRAC; the Competitive sourcing program; and the U.S. - Japan agreement to realign U.S. forces in Japan and relocate 8000 Marines and their fami-

lies from Okinawa to Guam. I was born and raised in a small town in Indiana that did not have a lot of minorities. In fact, my High School graduating class had four African Americans out of 240 graduates. My parents, our church and my teachers had the greatest influence on my life. They provided me a solid, humble environment while always emphasizing the importance of getting a good education. The phrase "it takes a village..." was applicable to my childhood since everyone seemed to only want what was best for you. Friends, neighbors, teachers and other parents would correct misbehavior and offer encouragement. One of my high school teachers that had been a submariner in the Navy is the person who encouraged me to go to college and further my education. Since he attended Purdue and was a positive influence, it seemed logical that I should attend Purdue. Although I grew up in Indiana I consider myself a Boilermaker instead of a "Hoosier" since I went to

the other school.

You went on to become a pilot at a time when there were barely any black officers. Can you speak to that and the challenges you face while serving in the military? It was very challenging when I first joined the Navy, partially because it was a new, very structured experience, and there were no other African Americans to associate with. Our attrition was very high during flight training - it seemed that only one African American a year would make it through the pipeline and get designated. It was intimidating at times and made worse when classmates and later squadron mates would ask why someone said or did something they thought was inappropriate. I still communicate with some of my preflight classmates and early squadron mates. Once designated and commissioned, I joined the approximate 200 African American officers in the Navy. In fact, Chaplain Parham was the senior African American and Sam Gravely was a "God" since he was commanding a DER out of Pearl Harbor. I well remember Captain Frank E. Peterson, USMC, the first African American Marine, to qualify as a Naval Aviator. He went on to become the first African American Marine Corps General Officer and ultimately retired as a Three Star! All the services had tumultuous times during the late 60's and early 70's. There were riots aboard ships and other events that changed behavior. I am very encouraged by the vast improvements that we have made and continue to make since then. Today, in my opinion, the Navy is one of the greatest institutions for diverse Americans to advance, and accomplish their personal goals. I would not be where I am today if it were not for some mentors who encouraged me to work hard, persevere and came to my defense when required. I have tried to continue that tradition by encouraging all men and women in our Navy to do the very best they can and take advantages of the opportunities offered by the Navy, and to help others help themselves.

Continued on page 12

You were the EA-6B Prowler pilot of the year in 1972. Were you surprised by that achievement? What was your competition like? I was surprised to be assigned to the Navy's first fleet operational EA-6B squadron. I felt I was well trained and thus well qualified.... however, I was also humbled as the competition was very keen. Oh, by the way, after winning the competition, I received a "B" in airmanship on my next FITREP.

Although that was 36 years ago, I have little doubt that although "it might not be pretty", I could still get aboard now (during the day). I would hope today's pilots would fly circles around me. (But I still have it in me.)

And from reading your bio, you were the Commanding Officer of NAS North Island, California. I'm sure that had a lot to do in paving the way for what you do today. What kinds of issues did you deal with during that tour? My role as CO at NAS North Island had a lot to do with paving the way for my current position. I experienced many of the same issues we deal with today, although on a smaller scale. Then, as I do now, I had to keep the priorities of the Navy in constant balance. Tactical goals, as well as safety, legal, and environmental issues were always things that had to be considered. A good Navy leader has to always be aware of the many factors that must be considered, and convey the priorities to those supporting you. Then, as now, I had subject matter experts who were superstars.

You handle a number of controversial issues in your current job. Can we talk sonar? It's all over the papers. People say the Navy kills whales. Can you speak to how the Navy views sonar, as well as the recent court ruling? The Navy is responsible for protecting this country. What many people don't realize is that the Navy is also committed to protecting our precious wildlife and marine mammals. In fact, the Navy will spend \$18 million this year on Marine Mammal research. Rightfully, many people are concerned about the well-

being of whales. I feel fortunate to have a role in ensuring that the military mission of the Navy is accomplished along with our environmental mission to protect ocean life. A few groups make unsubstantiated claims about the Navy's impact on Marine Mammals. I am committed to properly researching this issue and implementing protective measures based on sound science.

And then there's the Outlying Landing Field issue in eastern North Carolina. Can you speak a little about what that is, some of the citizen concerns and how the Navy is handling them? The Outlying Landing Field is needed to increase scheduling capacity and operational flexibility to meet the Fleet Response Plan, and provide a training environment for aircraft carrier pilots that more realistically represents conditions at sea, resulting in better training fidelity. We are no longer considering the Washington County site but are considering two sites recommended by the state of North Carolina and three sites recommended by Virginia. The Navy Environmental Impact Statement will fully examine all potential environmental impacts at each location and ways to mitigate such impacts. The Navy is committed to working closely with federal, state and local officials throughout the process to identify opportunities where the OLF can bring positive benefits to the State and local communities.

And what about moving 8,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam? Why are we doing that? Under the October 2005 agreement, "U.S.-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future" (ATARA), the U.S. and Government of Japan agreed to realign U.S. and Japanese forces throughout the Pacific. As part of this realignment effort, the USG and GOJ agreed to relocate 8,000 Marines and 9,000 dependents from Okinawa to Guam by 2014. This move is a key piece of the overall strategic alignment in the region. Guam is ideally suited to support stability in the Pacific. It is positioned to defend other

U.S. territories, the homeland, and economic and political interests. Additionally, Guam, unlike Japan, provides for freedom of action as it is a U.S. territory. It reduces Japan's burden of hosting the U.S. military in crowded areas suffering from urban encroachment. Forces positioned on Guam will positively impact Japanese security as the Marine Corps will have a more robust presence in the Pacific. **Are you willing to share any of the mistakes you made while coming up the ranks then that are mistakes you still see junior officers making today?** While neither I nor you have enough time to discuss all my mistakes while coming up through the ranks...the two things I continually impress upon others is "expect what you inspect," and "trust but verify." These are items that you can and should use in all facets of life. I continue to learn this lesson to this day...which is why I have a very close group of friends whom I would trust with my life. The Navy requires 120% to be successful. If you are not willing to give the full measure, maybe you should do something else.

Can you speak a little about how you transitioned from military to civilian life? Was it as smooth as you seem to make it look? I have a saying: "Retire early, and retire often." The transition to civilian life was smooth because Loretta did not let me have time off after retirement: plus, I have been able to stay in close contact with select Navy colleagues in professional as well as social atmospheres. With the skills learned in the Navy, job offers were fairly abundant. Thankfully, technological advancements have made it easier to stay in touch with Shipmates in the Navy, and I encourage junior officers to stay in touch with the men and women with whom they serve. You may be surprised by who may open doors for you or provide life changing recommendations.

How do you feel about the diversity efforts the Navy has underway

Continued on page 14

Those Who Serve Together, Stay Together Continued...

"It felt very good to win these awards. When we came into the military, I wanted to go out to sea, but a lot of the sea billets were not open to me at that time. But, [serving in the military] and being a mother, parent is very challenging to juggle everything. And, to [be recommended for] this award from my chain of command was amazing," said Stella.

Stella has received the Outstanding Military Women of the Year award for leadership while stationed at four different commands during a span of 14 years. She received her first award in 1991 while stationed in Guam. Another four years would pass until she received her second nod, in 1995, while teaching at the Service School Command, San Diego. Just a shy two years later, Stella received her third award while stationed at Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station, San Diego. Another seven years would pass until she would receive, for the fourth time in her career, while aboard USS Cleveland (LPD 7) serving as the Combat Systems Department Head.

Both Nealys not only strive in their professional lives, they have pursued their educational dreams by obtaining both a bachelor and a master's degree together. They both hold a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems with Stella graduating as Magna Cum Laude and a Master's degree in Information Technology from the American

Intercontinental University. In February 2004, Darrell laterally transferred from the Limited Duty Officer (LDO) to Information

Professional (IP) Officer. He possesses subspecialty codes for Communication (5302S) and Information, System, Operations (6100Q) for professional experience and education, and is Acquisition Information Technology - Level One certified. He is Surface Warfare Officer qualified, and Information Professional Basic Intermediate and Advanced qualified. The intermediate qualification is a standard qualification that officers in the IP field must complete. This qualification, among others, combines legacy radioman information, networks, network security, transmission paths, major systems and knowledge management. In November 2004, Stella laterally transferred from LDO to an Information Professional (1600) officer as well. She was "deep selected" three years early to the rank of Lieutenant Commander this is a major accomplishment. The norm is 10 years from the date of commissioning you can expect to make Lieutenant Commander Stella was selected at her seven-year mark.

She possesses the subspecialty code for Information, System, Operations (6100Q) for professional experience and education, and she is Acquisition Information Technology - Level One certified and Information Professional Basic and Intermediate qualified. Stella is also a Certified Knowledge Manager. She wears the Joint Service Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (five awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (five awards) and various other service and unit awards.

"I was the second person in the

Information Professional community to receive the intermediate qualification, whereas my wife was the fourth to obtain it," said Darrell.

He wears the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (six awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (five awards), and various other service and unit awards.

"It seems that during my career I have always been at the right place at the right time. I always stand out in the crowd. I don't mind taking on the issues and dealing with issues firsthand," said Darrell.

One day, the Nealys plan on retiring from the U.S. Navy. While that date is unknown, Stella has some ideas for her future after the Navy.

"After leaving the Navy, I would like to teach elementary school students. It has been something that has always been a passion of mine. I love kids, and I know that quality learning starts at a young age. I want to get back to what I remember when going through elementary school. I remember every teacher from every grade because of the impact they had on my learning. I think that is something that I would like to give back," said Stella.

While Stella will most likely pursue teaching, Darrell would rather continue in his career field - C4I.

Regardless of where they both end up they know that they will forge ahead with the same values that have made them successful so far faith, family, leadership, and the ability to deal with all problems head on together.

Coprenicus Continued...

his mentor, Lt. Cmdr. Darrell Nealy, executive officer at NCTS, as well as Lt. Victor Gonzalez, Lt. Cmdr. Christopher Kolodziej, and Chief Boatswain's Mate (SW/AW) Anthony Lewis.

"I have to acknowledge Navy Embedded Training Team Lima 2006-2007," said Martinez. "We as a team set the standard so high that no other team can ever ascertain. NAVY-ETT-LIMA made a real impact not only to Afghanistan National Army, but also to the local community. We all did it for the future of Afghanistan."

Martinez encourages others to strive for

success. "Take ownership and accountability, as well as pride in what you do," he said.

d. The Copernicus Awards will be presented at the annual Armed Forces communi-uni-



Above: Just before promoting. Courtesy photo.

Military Officers Continued...

"Unless you have that leadership from the top, believing in it, you wouldn't be able to get these things going," he said.

Yuille, a chaplain at the Naval Submarine School in Groton, presided over the chapter during the initial organizing.

"People feel like they have a place to turn to," she said. "NNOA builds relationships, networks and just that support that people will have now that they didn't have before. And with that, hopefully, we'll see an increase in retention."

The chapter's members have contact-

ed local schools, including New London High, Norwich Free Academy and Three Rivers Community College, to speak with students about the military, and they are looking for professional training opportunities and volunteer projects to work on.

The national association gave the chapter \$1,000 to offer scholarships, and the members hope to expand the scholarship program in the future. They meet once a month, with committees meeting more frequently.

Membership is open to active duty, reserve and retired officers, cadets at the academy and interested civilians - of any

race or ethnic background.

"We let everyone know about organization, and a lot of minority officers are interested and see the benefit of it," said Sealy, the chapter president, adding that white officers, too, could benefit from membership.

"This is a strategic imperative because not everyone is going to look like the leadership of the past," Sealy said. "You can't. The numbers aren't there anymore."

"My desire is to one day not need an organization like NNOA," Jackson, the national president, said, "but right now, there is a need."

Secretary Penn Continued...

right now? The numbers are still at around 8% for African Americans. We have, what, eleven flag officers now? What's your take on the progress the Navy is making in achieving diversity? We currently have 4,299 African American Navy officers, 11 of which are Flag Officers. We also have 1,245 African American Marine Corps officers, 7 of which are general officers. While there is always progress to be made, change does not occur overnight...it's a constant battle, and the war is not yet over. I was a "Special Assistant" for a CNP and two CNOs. We continue to make progress in our recruitment and promotions. We definitively have the right people in the right leadership positions to make change happen for the positive...starting at the most senior positions.

How did you view your responsibility toward mentoring junior officers when you were coming up through the ranks? And, how about mentoring those in your office? Like voting, I think mentoring is a privilege and a personal responsibility, especially to our young. Every person in the U.S. has an opportunity to make a difference in someone's life by directly impacting the future based on their own past experiences. Until you have someone to look up to and someone who is watching you progress, you are

an island...when you build a partnership (which is what I consider mentoring), you often-times do not know what you are capable of accomplishing. While I reach out more to some than others (unfortunately there are those that will not even make eye contact, until they are in serious trouble), I mentor everyone who will listen, and give their full effort. All I ask is that they learned from their mistakes, and my mistakes, and are willing to work to make things better for themselves and others. When a squadron CO, I challenged the department heads to develop their JO's, and they were evaluated accordingly. At North Island, I could be driving down the street, see JO's and have them come to my office for career counseling. Since college, my philosophy has been to help others help themselves. I don't know if you read Adm. Mullen's change-of-command speech when he became the CNO, but he mentioned how his Division Officer, Lt. Bill Kelly (who happens to be African American) trained him to be a Naval Officer. Bill did a fantastic job.

Ken Johnson. He's a founder of the NNOA who recently passed away. How would you personally characterize his contribution to NNOA and the Navy's diversity effort? Ken Johnson is the father of NNOA. I mentioned earlier that the DoD had a tumultuous period during the late 60's. One of the problems was the paucity

of minority officers. Ken had the vision that if he could increase the minority input at the U.S. Naval academy with an intelligent, quality person, the Navy would be better off. While in the Candidate Guidance Office at the USNA, then Lt. Johnson conceived and implemented his plan...and NNOA was born. One of the primary goals of NNOA was to increase the recruitment of minority Officers into the Naval Academy and Naval Service. At the time we had less than 200 African-American Naval Officers and you could count the number of African-American USNA Graduates on both hands. As I said, today we have 4,299 African Americans serving the worlds finest Navy. Ken's dream has flourished for 37 years and is a great tribute to Ken. Although I grieve this loss, there are far too many wonderful memories of him, including the founding of NNOA, to ever be forgotten. When I was a JO, no one told me the do's and don'ts for being successful. When I was President of NNOA, I realized that was still a problem so I emphasized professionalism and mentorship since NNOA was the perfect venue to reach large numbers of minority officers. I think it may have worked since some of the JO's in NNOA at that time are Flag and General Officers and 06's today. I think there should be an effort to get retired officers involved in an NNOA sponsored mentorship program.

Because Our Strength Comes from Our Diversity



There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit.. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord and there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.. But the manifestation of the spirit is given to each one for the profit of all” (1 Corinthians 12: 4-7)

In Chapter 12 of first Corinthians, the apostle

Paul carefully developed a metaphor illustrating of the human body to describe the relationship between the members of the Corinthian church and their different spiritual gifts to each other and the church. There are two primary points that Paul makes in this passage of scripture.

First, that all members and their gifts are equally important in God's eyes. Next that all of the gifts possessed by the individual members of the church of Corinth complemented each other allowing these members to function as one. An organization that is better and stronger through cooperation, vice individualism. These two thoughts exemplify great teams or organizations, and remain relevant today.

They are relevant to the

success of the Sea Services. We each have our own individual strengths, purposes, and talents yet no one branch is more important than the other and together we are an unstoppable force able to project power ashore or maintain safe transit through the shipping lanes which influence the globalization process.

When we look at diversity from the perspective of different gifts, talents, and strengths vice race or ethnicity, we can approach 2008 with a new appreciation of our differences and our strengths, resolving to refine and cultivate them. With our new resolve we can apply Paul's teaching that we are all equally important in God's eyes and in the defense of this nation, remembering that

Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen complement each other in the implementation of our Cooperative Strategy for the 21st Century.

The implementation of this strategy is crucial for the deterrence of terrorism and the spread of the democratic lifestyle. Finally, in verse seven Paul summarizes his thoughts by stating that our spiritual gifts, our strengths, and talents are dispersed individually for the profit of all. The citizens of our country and our allies equally benefit from the spiritual gifts and strengths of Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen.

**God Bless
Chaplain Philip Ridley
chaplain@nnoa.org**

Building the Network Continued...

graders. The purpose of the focus group was to solicit comments from the students on a comic book in development by the Navy Diversity Directorate. The theme of the comic book is to encourage pre-teens to become interested in the academic areas of math and science.

"The feedback from this group of students was phenomenal," said Bowman. "Not only

did they provide thoughtful comments on the content of the comic book, they also provided useful comments on marketing the book to their peers.

You'd expect the types of responses we heard from these students from adults 20, 25, or 30 years older than these students."

One of the goals of the school visits was to bridge the information gap that exists within certain communities concerning the viability of the Navy as a potential career option. Working to

build that bridge is necessary as the Navy seeks to attract high performing diverse students into its officer corps through various accession sources.

To achieve its goal of increasing the presence of minority officers, the Navy has developed this pilot program dedicated to engaging and to encouraging students of various backgrounds and perspectives to apply for admission to the Naval Academy and for NROTC scholar-

ships. The Navy's ability to successfully increase the pool of diverse candidates is critical to mission readiness and national security.

For the Navy, operational excellence and mission readiness are the hallmarks of its success. Bringing together people with differing points of view, individual frames of reference, a broad range of life experiences, and a common commitment to serve their country creates the Navy's strength.

Make your plans now to attend the 36th NNOA National Conference July 23-25, 2008 at the Portsmouth Renaissance Hotel in Portsmouth, Va. This year's theme: "Developing America's Future Leaders to Enhance Mission Readiness and Cultural Awareness"



TAKING NOTE

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: I recently attended the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Prayer Luncheon. It's a shame if you weren't able to attend. At a luncheon so packed there was standing room only, Reverend Fauntroy proved he is an OUTSTANDING speaker. He is a native Washington, D.C. alumnus of Virginia Union University and Yale Divinity School.

Currently, pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church in Washington, DC for 49 years. Rev Fauntroy embodies the nucleus of "Remember, Celebrate, Act A Day On ... Not A Day Off Theme."

He is someone who served as a major player of the U. S. turbulent historic times of civil rights; he was a close friend of Dr. M. L. King and his family; lawmaker for the District of Columbia and the U.S. Congress.

I really enjoyed the luncheon, it was an opportunity for camaraderie, a chance to see old friends and also an opportunity to reflect and think about what am I doing to make a difference in this world.

Am I dreaming an "impossible" dream or have I let others or situations make me cringe from my dreams? Am I creating a legacy by helping those around that will live long after I am gone as Martin Luther King Jr did during his lifetime?

He talked about Dr. Kings keen awareness and vision for mankind -the five quality of life issues, Healthcare, Housing, Income, Education and Justice, that must be attain in order to live peaceably on this earth. These five things are what Thomas Jefferson and the writers of the constitution were referring to when that said in the constitution "promote the gener-

al welfare." Rev Fauntroy's words stirred my soul and definitely gave me things to think and to evaluate in my life and the life of those around me. I plan to Remember, Celebrate and Act!!!! I will work hard to give back and mentor those around me.

Cmdr. Cynthia R. Eythell
Strategic Requirements Analyst

NNOA
Founder
Capt.
Ken Johnson

Services will be held for Capt. Johnson on February 21, 2008. at the Mount Olive Baptist Church
1601 S 13th Road
Arlington, VA 22204; 1100-1200 Viewing; 1200-1330 Funeral service. Chaplain JC Williams to officiate. 1330-1400 transit to Arlington National Cemetery; 1400- 1500 gather at Arlington for burial service; 1500- burial service commence; 1530 - reception at the Women's Memorial, Hall of Honors.

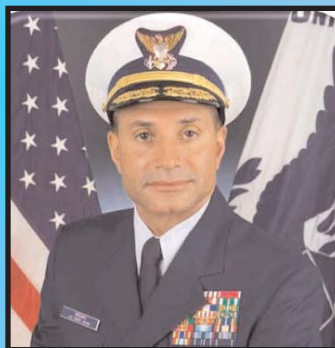


Brig. Gen. Anthony L. Jackson earns **second star:** Brig Gen Jackson is currently serving as the Director of Operations and

Logistics, U.S. Africa Command, Germany

Silent Auction to be held at Conference:

Would you like to raise scholarship funds for your Chapter? This year at the National Conference, Chapters will have an opportunity to raise money for their respective scholarship fund. Chapter members are asked to solicit local businesses, anyone you know with a home base business for an item to be included in our 2008 silent auction. Items will be displayed during the conference and open for silent bid. Chapters will receive 75% of the bid amount. More details to come from your Regional Vice President.



Rear Adm. Manson Brown to get **second star:**

In 2006, Rear Adm. Manson K. Brown assumed leadership of Maintenance & Logistics Command Pacific. Rear Adm. Brown is a U.S. Coast Guard Academy graduate who has served as Military Assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation (DOT), including duty as Acting Deputy Chief of Staff after the terrorist attacks of 9-11. He has orders to be Commander, 14th Coast Guard District.



Rear Adm. Derwood C. Curtis was nominated for appointment to the grade of Vice Admiral and assignment as Commander, Naval Surface Forces/ Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, San Diego, Calif. Curtis is currently serving as Deputy Commander, Naval Surface Forces/ Commander, Naval Surface Force, United States Atlantic Fleet, Norfolk, Va.

Note from the National PAO: Thank you all for your diligent efforts to contribute to Meridian. As with every issue, I enjoyed pulling everything together and being one of the first to note so many success stories!

Your submissions (**the next deadline is April 15**) help keep the Meridian fresh, exciting and, most important, relevant.

Quick re-minder: Please submit your NNOA chapter group photo to me for the Official NNOA Calendar by **March 15**. Don't be the chapter that is not included. Uniform selection depends on the chapter but please reference the photo sent by email. Also, please include a short summary of accomplishments over the past 12 months. I look forward to hearing from you all.

Very Respectfully,
Lt. Karen E. Eifert