NPS Remembers Pearl Harbor

by MC2 Shawn J. Stewart

Defense Innovation Unit Experimental Military Deputy Rear Adm. Daniel “Brian” Hendrickson delivered the keynote speech during the 2015 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Dinner in the Barbara McNitt Ballroom, Dec. 4. Hendrickson paid tribute to the fallen heroes of Pearl Harbor and spoke about the Navy’s need for innovation in the midst of an ever changing technological warfare climate.

“It’s truly an honor and a privilege to recognize and pay tribute to our fallen heroes from the attack on Pearl Harbor 74 years ago,” said Hendrickson. The results of that attack stunned our nation leaving 2,400 Americans dead and another 1,200 injured, he stressed.

Hendrickson also shared a little known story about an innovation adopted by the Navy and used the morning of the infamous attack.

“That morning, at 6:45 a.m., Army Pvt. Joseph L. Lockard and George E. Elliot were conducting training on a new technology called ‘radar,’” said Hendrickson. “During that training, the cathode grey screen lit up. What they were seeing was the first wave of 183 aircraft, 130 miles at sea. They were sure that what they were seeing was the system gone haywire.”

“‘It is truly an honor and a privilege to recognize and pay tribute to our fallen heroes from the attack on Pearl Harbor 74 years ago.’ — Rear Adm. Daniel Hendrickson

The confused privates reported the contacts to Lt. Kermit Tyler who assumed that they were returning U.S. bombers. He instructed Lockard and Elliot to ignore the signals and continue training. They complied, but followed the contacts all the way to Oahu.

“In the wake of the attack, the military realized that although we possessed the technology that would have provided the early warning required to scramble aircraft and to man the anti-aircraft guns … We did not develop a plan for the proper integration of that technology,” said Hendrickson.

Hendrickson also noted that educational institutions like NPS are critical to both fostering and developing innovative technologies like the early radar system used by Elliot and Lockard, as well as integrating them into existing national defense strategy.

“Institutions like NPS are key and essential enablers of our Navy, our joint force and our coalition partners as we seek collectively to avoid the type of strategic surprise that we endured on Dec. 7, 1941,” said Hendrickson.
NPS Student Turns Tragedy Into Triumph in Service to His Fellow Wounded Warriors

By Kenneth A. Stewart

NPS student U.S. Army Maj. Dennis “DJ” Skelton, of Elk Point, South Dakota, has been given a rather unfortunate moniker, one he likely would prefer not to have. In 2011, following devastating injuries suffered in combat and a fervent drive to rehabilitate and return to his Soldiers on the front lines years later, he was coined the “Most Wounded Commander in U.S. Military History.”

But Skelton’s story, throughout his recovery and since that return to combat, has earned him an additional title … that of an American hero.

Skelton is near complete on his degree in Asia Pacific Studies in NPS’ Department of National Security Affairs. And in a reflection of life coming full circle, Skelton’s story has its beginnings in Monterey.

“I joined the Army as an enlisted man, which brought me here to Monterey where I studied Chinese to become an interrogator at the Defense Language Institute (DLI),” said Skelton.

While at DLI, a couple of officers took an interest in Skelton’s career, and encouraged him to apply for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He did, was accepted, and became an infantry officer. After graduation, he was stationed at Fort Lewis, now Joint Base Lewis-McChord, where he became the leader of a Stryker platoon.

He wasn’t at Fort Lewis long, however. In September of 2004, just a year after graduating from West Point, he deployed to Iraq where he took part in the Second Battle of Fallujah. There, Skelton and his platoon were tasked with defending an important intersection outside the city.

Two months later, on Nov. 6, 2004, Skelton and his platoon were dug in at the intersection, and unbeknownst to his platoon, the enemy had dug in as well, on the other side of the freeway. Upon observing the insurgent activity, Skelton and his Soldiers engaged.

“I was hit in that firefight … I happened to be standing beside a cement pylon and the next thing I knew, it was pitch dark. I couldn’t see anything. I couldn’t feel anything. I felt like I was floating through space,” Skelton recalled. “One of the last things I remember was hearing one of my Soldiers say, ‘I think the lieutenant’s dead.’ At that time, a switch flipped and I began to feel the most intense pain of my life.”

Skelton’s Soldiers jumped into action and dragged him out of the fight. One resourceful Soldier used a spent .50 caliber round as an airway and preformed a field tracheotomy. Amazingly, less than 10 minutes later, Skelton was in a nearby Combat Support Hospital where doctors began to assess the severity of his injuries.

And Skelton’s wounds, by any measure, were horrific. A small scar on his left cheek remains where he was shot, but it is what happened after the round pierced Skelton’s face that changed his life forever. Once through his cheek, the bullet began to tumble, destroying his mouth and soft pallet before exiting out of his right eye socket.

Sadly, the round to Skelton’s face was not the only injury his body would endure. He was further injured when a rocket propelled grenade (RPG) struck the pylon beside him.

“My left arm was destroyed. My hand was intact, but everything from the wrist to the elbow was destroyed. The head of the RPG broke and went through my right leg. My ammunition belt got hot and began cooking off. Those rounds, along with various enemy AK-47 rounds, went through my right arm and left shoulder,” Skelton described.

“[My survival] is a testament to our body armor and to our teamwork. In that environment, where Soldiers were still being shot at, they were calm, collected, and making decisions. And those decisions, though unorthodox, contributed to me being able to live,” said Skelton.

Once off the battlefield, Skelton began the long road to recovery. He has endured 70 surgeries and he will undergo more in the future.

“I was an inpatient for over half a year. I was an outpatient for 36 hours. When I became an outpatient, I went over to the Fischer House, looked around, and was like ‘heck no, I don’t want to be a part of this,’ and hopped on a plane. I went back to my unit and joined the rear detachment.”

Once back at his unit, Skelton went to work seeking answers. The exercise was an effort to both provide needed information to the families of other wounded service members, and an opportunity to learn how to write again. The result of that exercise was the creation of the “Our Hero Handbook,” published by the Naval War College and offered free of charge to the families of wounded service members.

Skelton eventually became part of a small team serving under then Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz. That team, amongst other things, created the first wounded warrior battalions.

Skelton also spent his free time looking for ways to improve the lives of disabled service members. An avid outdoorsmen, Skelton founded Paradox Sports. The Boulder, Colorado-based program conducts about 40 events throughout the year for both veterans and non-veterans alike. Paradox provides equipment, and a supportive
atmosphere, where severely disabled individuals can participate in some of the same athletic endeavors they valued so highly prior to their injuries.

"[The military health care system] was good at getting you to where you could walk, and getting you out the door, but our military population consists of young, physically-fit people; go-getters who enjoy pushing themselves to the limit," Skelton said. "To take high-energy, self-motivated people, and say to them, 'You're good to go, you can walk' … that bothered me.

“Other [adaptive sports groups] were great, but what about someone with goals like climbing Mt. Rainier and skiing down it. I asked myself questions like, 'How do we help a guy with no arms go ice climbing?’" Skelton said.

And while Skelton found his work with wounded warriors both in and out of uniform rewarding, what he really wanted was to go back to the infantry.

“Through all of it, I realized I was still 'DJ the Wounded Warrior’” said Skelton. "I didn’t join the military to do that.”

He was told to go to speak to the Chief of Staff of the Army. Luckily, things had changed a great deal since Skelton was initially wounded, and he was offered the chance to come back into the infantry on the condition that he successfully completed the infantry’s Captains Career Course at Fort Benning, Georgia.

He did it, and was assigned to an infantry unit in Germany. Coincidentally, that unit was the same unit that he had served with in Iraq and they had just deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan. Once again, Skelton was in a combat zone.

“Through all of it, I realized I was still ‘DJ the Wounded Warrior.' I didn’t join the military to do that.” — Maj. Dennis “DJ” Skelton

“When I showed up [in Afghanistan] there was a dire need for commanders and I was given the opportunity to serve in the same company that I was in when I was injured,” said Skelton. “There were about a half-dozen Soldiers who had been privates with me in Iraq who where now [non-commissioned officers]. We had an amazing reunion.”

Skelton was thrilled to be back with his Soldiers doing what he loved. But, there were limitations to what he was able to accomplish and he knew it. “There were a couple of events where I couldn’t physically perform. My Soldiers helped out and we had no casualties, but it really bothered me. When I got home, I called the infantry and said 'It was a great experience, but this is not smart.'

“I was able to bring my Soldiers back, something that I did not have an opportunity to do when I was in Iraq. It was great for my recovery, but not so great for the organization,” he continued.

But it was also not time for Skelton to hang up his combat boots. Continuing his desire to serve, he was selected for the Foreign Area Officer program and was given the opportunity to spend a year in China before coming to NPS for his graduate degree.

"It was great to be able to come and apprentice under some of the professors here. It’s been a great opportunity,” said Skelton. “This is where Wounded Warriors came after WWII, a lot of people have forgotten that.”

Skelton is not sure what will happen next, but he has married and he and his wife recently welcomed a baby boy to their family. What is certain, however, is that he will remain a powerful voice for wounded service members, and any cause and effort he sets his mind to.

"Update NPS" is a monthly publication for students, faculty and staff of the Naval Postgraduate School produced by the Public Affairs Office. For additional copies, comments, or to suggest story ideas, contact the editorial staff at pao@nps.edu.
Distinguished Professor Named AAAS Fellow

By Kenneth A. Stewart

NPS Department of Operations Research Distinguished Professor Patricia Jacobs has been named a fellow by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) for her career accomplishments in applied probability and statistical methods supporting national security, as well as her accomplishments as a dedicated educator of future strategic leaders.

Jacobs will be recognized early next year during the 2016 AAAS Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. AAAS has honored 347 members with the designation of fellow this year.

“These individuals have been elevated to this rank because of their efforts toward advancing the science applications that are deemed scientifically or socially distinguished,” said a statement released by the AAAS.

Jacobs was quick to thank her colleagues at NPS for providing her with a venue where she could pursue the academic interests that led to her recognition by the AAAS.

“I am grateful to NPS for providing the environment where I could achieve this honor. I would like to particularly thank my colleague Distinguished Professor Emeritus Donald Gaver.

“NPS is a very unique place. It’s a place where students can come with problems of importance to the nation that can be addressed by students and faculty. That particular focus has been very important to my career here,” said Jacobs.

Distinguished Professor Patricia Jacobs has been named a fellow by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) for her career accomplishments in applied probability and statistical methods supporting national security. (U.S. Navy photo by Javier Chagoya)

TIO Short Course Integrates Innovation Continuum

By MC2 Shawn J. Stewart

Held nearly every year since 1996 by the Center for Joint Services Electronic Warfare, the Technologies for Information Operations (TIO) course details current research and development in information operations technologies, and the fundamentals of information operations.

This year, NPS’ Consortium for Robotics and Unmanned Systems Education and Research (CRUSER) partnered with TIO organizers to integrate the concept of their current Warfare Innovation Continuum into the program.

“The TIO course is handling a particularly difficult element of this scenario, one in which the adversaries use hybrid war elements, state and non-state resources, cyber and social media to create confusion and uncertainty,” said NPS Professor of Practice retired Navy Capt. Jeff Kline. “The students’ task is to apply the information technologies they learn in their three weeks here in a final two-day workshop that might help in this scenario.”

Attendees for this year’s three-week TIO course include a core group of 19 students from the Swedish Defense University (SEDU) as well as a Pakistani officer, and four officers from the Indonesian Navy.

“The TIO course is a real opportunity to engage allies and create informal professional alliances that may aid future cooperative operations,” Kline added.
Google Executive Talks Analytics

By MC2 Shawn J. Stewart

Joe DeMike, Head of Google’s Customer Experience Lab recently shared insight on effective data visualization during a presentation to NPS students. In his position at the technology giant, DeMike serves as a key figure in Google’s efforts to improve advertising and marketing products.

“It’s been nine years since I got out of the Army and coming back to an active military environment was a bit intimidating,” DeMike said of his brief time at NPS. “But everyone was very friendly and they were interested in what I had to say.”

DeMike’s presentation served as a crash course into the psychology behind the presentation of information. Visual content elements like charts, colors, word choice, page layout, and even font usage, seem simple, but can be quite strategic when utilized effectively.

“I know students will be creating data that will be useful to decision makers, but they have to take that information and turn it into really strategic, pointed insights,” said DeMike. “These insights have to be focused in a way that helps the decision makers. But be careful not to put in too much data, as it can overcomplicate.”

Lt. Cmdr. Marina Witwer, an operations analysis student in attendance, had high praise for the presentation.

“It was very exciting to see the psychology behind data visualization,” said Witwer. “Joe was very engaging with us, and really helped to shed light on the thought processes behind getting data in front of people.

Prior to joining Google in 2010, DeMike founded and led a successful content marketing agency. He also served as a U.S. Army officer for eight years, leading an Armored Cavalry Division in Baghdad, Iraq.

Enlisted Staff Rally Behind Their Own

By MC2 Shawn J. Stewart

Information Systems Technician 1st Class (IT1) Anthony Bowie was promoted after discovering an error in the system that prevented him from advancing during a previous cycle, Nov. 19.

“These last few months have been a struggle for me. I’ve been in the Navy for a little bit over 14 years and I was staring down the possibility of being forced out,” said Bowie.

“Then one-day Aviation Electronics Technician 2nd Class Scott Froom was looking over the results of his own test, decided to look at mine and he saw some errors in the results.”

After presenting the errors to Bowie the two decided to see if the errors resulted in a miscalculation of Bowie’s test scores; a problem that if proven true would mean Bowie would have earned promotion to 1st Class and also set the trajectory for the rest of his life; as Bowie has always thought of himself as a “Navy Lifer.”

“It was a scary time for me. I couldn’t think about anything else except where will myself and my family go, and that’s scary when you have people who depend on you,” said Bowie.

“After my first year in the Navy, I knew I was going to retire Navy … maybe as a chief and serve my family as much as I served my country. That’s why I studied so hard and was so down on myself when I saw that I didn’t make rank.”

For the next three months the NPS’ enlisted staff united in the goal of getting Bowie promoted. Froom and Operations Specialist 2nd Class Alex McCrea took the lead on the project and were ultimately successful in getting Bowie the promotion he had been denied for so long.

“I can’t say it enough, without either of them I wouldn’t be smiling right now. They both saved my Navy career … I just wish there was an award for that, or something we can give them,” added Bowie.

NPS President retired Vice Adm. Ronald A. Route presented a hard working group of long-time NPS employees with length of federal service awards during President’s Council, Nov. 10.

Recognized during the meeting for their many years of service were: Mary G. Cabanilla (35 years), Regina V. Panis (35 years), Alan E. Pires (35 years), Tamar Neta (30 years), V. Panis (35 years), Alan E. Pires (35 years), Tamar Neta (30 years), Josephine Pasadilla (25 years) and Sean P. Harrigan (25 years).

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First-Ever NPS Student from the Bahamas Excels Among Peers

By Javier Chagoya

Last year NPS welcomed its first student from the Bahamas, Lt. Cmdr. Darren Henfield. And he wasted no time making his mark here at NPS. During a recent award ceremony, he was honored with the Kiwanis Club’s Outstanding International Student Award.

Henfield, along with all of this quarter’s awardees, will be formally presented with the honor during NPS’ Fall Quarter Graduation Awards Ceremony, Dec. 8 at 3:00 p.m. on the Herrmann Hall Quarterdeck.

“I am honored to be a recipient of the award. I think it speaks to the regard in which faculty, staff, colleagues and others hold one at NPS. Being the first Bahamian officer to attend this august institution, I have had an obligation to my country, my service, and the school to do my best,” said Henfield.

The award citation notes that Henfield has distinguished himself academically; is involved with the community and his church; is a highly-motivated individual with impeccable military bearing; and, is respected among his fellow students.

“Darren is an all around great guy with a big heart, a befriending nature, and is willing to help anyone. He comes across as being on top of things and is constantly working hard to excel here at NPS,” said fellow student and friend U.S. Air Force Capt. Joshua Frizzell.

“Darren is a great encourager of other students. I have seen him around campus with many different individuals whom he has reached out to in order to encourage, support, or help them in any way that he can,” added Naval Support Activity Monterey Deputy Command Chaplain Lt. Cmdr. John Van Dyke.

Henfield said that one of his most rewarding experiences was as a participant in the United Nations Mission to Haiti in 1994 in support of Operation Restore Democracy.

“I found the mission quite rewarding because we were, in part, enabling free and fair democratic elections in that country,” he said. “As a member of the Caribbean Community Battalion, it gave me a sense of accomplishment that we could participate with efficacy within the Caribbean region.”

Henfield arrived at NPS October 2014, and will graduate from the School of International Graduate Studies this quarter with a Master of Arts in Combating Terrorism, Policy and Strategy. Soon after graduation, Henfield will return to Nassau where in addition to his military duties he is a practicing Counsel and Attorney-at-Law of the Supreme Court of The Bahamas.

Focus On … Volunteerism
A Monthly Look at Names and Faces on Campus

NPS Dudley Knox Library Volunteer Styliani Roussou is working to archive 40 years of “The Classmate.” Produced by the NPS Officer Student’s Spouses Club, The Classmate helped chronicle life and culture on the NPS campus for decades, and will now be digitally archived forever thanks to Roussou’s efforts.

“The Classmate was published for 40 years,” said Roussou, who is the spouse of an NPS student in the Royal Hellenic Navy. “In it, you can read about some of the great cultural activities that went on here. It’s also clear to see, by all accounts in this document, that military spouses lent invaluable support to their husbands’ or wives’ academic successes.”

The history and personal stories captured in The Classmate will be digitized and become part of the NPS collection.

Recruited by recently retired Special Collections Manager John Sanders, Roussou came with no special credentials or archivist background, but was armed with an eager enthusiasm to learn and help preserve the fascinating history shared by graduates over the years.

“I’m from Greece and our history goes back to classical antiquity. “I’ve always loved history and that’s why I like working in this particular department at the library,” said Rossou.

To check out “The Classmate” archive, visit the library’s digital Calhoun Collection at http://calhoun.nps.edu/.
Any Day at NPS ...

Herrmann Hall is on “fire” with morning light in this pre-dawn photo, which illustrates the beautiful historic building that epitomizes the Navy’s premier graduate institution. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Shawn J. Stewart)

Santa Cruz Fire Department Capt. Steve Parnley, left, congratulates CTT2 Gregory Medders in front of Herrmann Hall, Nov. 5. Medders was recognized for his quick response during a recent fire in his Santa Cruz neighborhood. (U.S. Navy photo by Javier Chagoya)

Georgia Tech Professor of Electrical Engineering Ayanna Howard discusses the integration of robotic technology with NPS students and faculty in Halligan Hall, Nov. 23. Howard is working to expand robotic engineering opportunities. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Michael Ehrlich)

Santa Cruz Fire Department Capt. Steve Parnley, left, congratulates CTT2 Gregory Medders in front of Herrmann Hall, Nov. 5. Medders was recognized for his quick response during a recent fire in his Santa Cruz neighborhood. (U.S. Navy photo by Javier Chagoya)

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NPS Graduate School of Business and Public Policy (GSBPP) Assistant Professor Max Kidalov, above, has been appointed to the Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development by the Small Business Administration. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Brian H. Abel)

Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. John M. Paxton Jr. offers his thoughts on the “Eternal Spirit of the Corps” during the Marine Corps Birthday Ball in Herrmann Hall’s McNitt Ballroom, Nov. 7. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Michael Ehrlich)

Swedish Royal Navy Chief of Staff Rear Adm. Jan Thörnqvist speaks to attendees of the Technologies for Information Operations short course, Nov. 17. (U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Lewis Hunsaker)

Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. John M. Paxton Jr. offers his thoughts on the “Eternal Spirit of the Corps” during the Marine Corps Birthday Ball in Herrmann Hall’s McNitt Ballroom, Nov. 7. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Michael Ehrlich)

Have a story to share? Public Affairs is constantly seeking interesting news and stories for Update NPS. Send your tips to pao@nps.edu.
On Campus this Month

December 8
Quarterly Awards Ceremony
3:00 p.m. at the Quarterdeck

December 12
Army vs. Navy Tailgate Party
11:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the Trident Room & El Prado Room

December 18
Fall Graduation Ceremony
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. at King Auditorium

December 25
Christmas Day

December 29
New Student Orientation Brief
7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at King Auditorium

December 31
New Year’s Eve

Historical Highlights
By order of the Secretary of the Navy, NPS was re-designated from Annapolis, Maryland to Monterey, Ca., Dec. 5, 1951.

The order to move NPS from Annapolis to Monterey simultaneously dis-established the U.S. Naval General Line School, which had operated in Monterey since February 1948.

Then Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Admiral T.L. Sprague foretold the status that NPS would eventually achieve as the Navy’s premiere source of graduate education.

"Monterey is destined to become as symbolic of Naval leadership as we have come to recognize Annapolis … In establishing the Postgraduate School at Monterey we have reaffirmed our conviction that sea power rests on science,” said Sprague.

Historical Highlights are provided by the Dudley Knox Library.