SURFACE SITREP

THE OFFICIAL SURFACE NAVY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOL. XXXIX #2 SUMMER 2023

Guam is an Important Base to Project Power in the Pacific, but it Must Also be Defended

An Interview with RDML Benjamin Nicholson, USN, Senior Military Official for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, representing Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and Republic of Palau; Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Marianas; Commander, Task Force West and Commander, Joint Region Marianas.

BY CAPT EDWARD LUNDQUIST, USN (RET)

"I feel the dragon's breath on my neck. We have to defend this island and these people because this is the United States. This is our homeland."

From a military presence standpoint, Guam has had some ups and downs.

At the height of the Cold War, and during the Vietnam era, the DoD presence on Guam was significant. There were over 26,000 uniformed service members here on Guam at its peak.

We used to have a squadron of ballistic-missile submarines, an EP-3 fleet air reconnaissance squadron and a detachment of P-3 maritime patrol aircraft, as well as an Air Force wing of B-52 long-range bombers.

But after Vietnam, and then the end of the Cold War, the U.S. military footprint was scaled back around the world.

We saw a significant downslope of the personnel here. The ship repair facility (SRF) was transferred over to a private company. That had a huge impact on the island. In its heyday, SRF was the largest industrial activity and source of skilled labor on the island. A lot of proud people here in Guam worked at the SRF facility for decades. It went away, and we still feel the loss.

BRAC resulted in the closure of Naval Air Station Agana and the Fleet Industrial Supply Center. More than 8,000 acres of land that had been DoD property were transferred to the government of Guam.

In the early 2000s timeframe we got down to about only 2,500 uniformed service members here on the island, less than a tenth of what it was as its peak.

There was even talk of closing the naval base itself, and Andersen Air Force Base.

Guam Flag

FEATURED NEWS

Mariner Skills Training Center Atlantic Facility Up and Running	6
Training Investments in the U.S. Navy Surface Warfare Community	7
The Future of Combat Systems Enlisted Training: Virtual Maintenance Trainers	10
Back to Basics in the Age of AI	13
Recreating in the Aggregate; CTF-59's Prototype for the Future of Warfighting	14
Eyes On	15
U.S.S. EDSON (DD-946) – "The Grey Ghost" Attacked off the DMZ in Vietnam	16
Innovation Driven, Naval Postgraduate School Develops Warfighters and Warfighting Solutions	18
Why Should I Join SNA?	22
Surface Navy Museum: Experience Design, LA Fleet Week, and Impact	23
National News	25
Recommended Reading	34
Corporate Members	36
Chapter News	40

Innovation Driven, Naval Postgraduate School Develops Warfighters and Warfighting Solutions

An Interview with VADM Ann E. Rondeau, Ed.D., USN (Ret), President, Naval Postgraduate School

BY CAPT EDWARD LUNDQUIST, USN (RET)

The Secretary of the Navy just released the new Naval Education Strategy. Advanced education enables more effective leadership, better problem-solving and innovation at all levels and cultivates a bias for intelligent action that is essential to succeed in distributed maritime operations. Naval Postgraduate School President, VADM Ann Rondeau (ret), USN describes the opportunities and benefits of earning a relevant master's or Ph.D. from NPS in this interview with CAPT Ned Lundquist (ret), USN.

Tell me about the NPS student body and your course offerings.

Ned, thanks for coming to NPS and giving me the chance to say more to the Surface Navy Association members about NPS. There is a lot going on here. We are transforming to increase our impact on, and relevancy to, the Navy and Marine Corps as the Department of the Navy's home for graduate education. This is a serious place doing serious work at a graduate level for maritime dominance, and our students are the mission. They are mid-career, operationally experienced warrior-scholar students.

We are known for our solid in-residence programs, and we have about 1,500 students enrolled at any given time. We have a growing distance learning (DL) component in our "NPS Online" campus to make NPS more accessible to the Surface Warfare community and Unrestricted Line Officers given the tight career path many must follow. COVID accelerated that process, and in 2022, for example, we graduated 715 from master's programs through DL. Our course offerings also include more professional certificates, and we granted more than 550 last year, which are stackable to add up to a master's degree.

What are some of the advantages to enrolling in NPS?

Our continuous availability gives us the ability to accommodate career schedules. We operate year-round to align with operational schedules and career path dynamics.

NPS is 100% defense focused. We are the only graduate school in DOD that offers a complete spectrum of programs from homeland security to substantial science and engineering programs directly applicable to Navy, joint and U.S. government educational requirements.

The overwhelming majority of Surface Warfare Officers in STEM curricula are at NPS. We have Naval Warfare Center civilian engineer students attending both virtually and in residence as well, which is a fantastic advantage. What could be better than educating our naval engineers alongside our experienced naval officers they are working to support?

We are also developing a Naval Innovation Center at NPS that will focus, enhance and accelerate research from idea to impact, empowering officers to work here on capabilities that fleet problems. From concept to capability, innovation begins with our Warfare Innovation Continuum (WIC), which is a year-long look at force design challenges. Ideas emerge from the WIC and migrate to Naval Innovation Exchange teams. These teams develop and prototype concepts with industry partners, conduct experimentation and further the capability through Innovation Capstone Projects where officers develop and present acquisition and transition plans to potential Program Executive Offices.

All of this is to say that for our Surface Warfare community, there is a lot more to NPS than just a graduate degree. No other graduate school in America provides more professionally relevant curricula and the opportunity to develop real-world innovative solutions for the Fleet and force.

Say more about why mid-career Surface Warfare Officers should come to NPS over other, numerous shore duty options available to them following sea duty with the fleet?

A graduate with an NPS degree in, say, Operations Research (OR), which is applied data analytics – in massively high demand right now – becomes a highly sought-after officer. OR grads are on Fleet staffs and the OPNAV staff, and increasingly, in operational and strategic HQs. We offer advanced education in Combat Systems and Undersea Warfare, which affords not only the master's degree necessary for continued promotion and command opportunity, but a fundamental understanding of science and technology directly applicable to warfighting capabilities impacting the future of warfare at sea.

In addition, NPS also offers the unique opportunity to complete a master's degree in other key areas like cyber, space, IW, or computer science applied to naval warfighting. NPS is different from civilian universities in that it can provide officers without undergraduate degrees in a certain field with all they need to know to transition to a new field of expertise. Many NPS officers also simultaneously complete JPME Phase I, which satisfies a requirement for command, efficiently enabling greater career flexibility after their department head tours.

Most Surface Warfare Officers who come to NPS have also selected the Department Head Retention Bonus (DHRB), which

Retired Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau, President of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Lenny Weston)

obligates them to complete two department head tours following shore duty. This commitment is completed concurrently with the service obligation that comes with Navy graduate education – so they effectively kill two birds with one stone. In return, the Surface community gets a post-department head officer with a very strong professional resume (i.e., SWO, EOOW, TAO, Grad Ed, JPME Phase I, and Command Qual complete) ready to screen for command.

Additionally, thanks to the Warfare Tactics Instructor (WTI) Scholar program and new flexible detailing options, it is now entirely possible to attend both NPS and become a WTI prior to becoming a department head, which can enable officers to acquire even more professional expertise to make them well-rounded officers ready to execute their primary professional duties with competence and confidence. That highly qualified officer leaves his or her second department head tour with a tremendous array of opportunities for post-department head assignments.

And yes, Monterey is an awesome place to live. Career enhancing, professionally rewarding AND great quality of life... in my opinion, there is absolutely no better place to come for a shore tour as a mid-career Surface Warfare Officer.

What about preparing for NPS or maybe for people not quite ready to come to NPS? What do you offer?

It is important for your readers to know that NPS is a unique environment where professionals can acquire relevant intellectual skills critical for meeting CNO's NAVPLAN for junior officers. No matter the degree, officers can come to NPS and be confident that we will help them reach their professional objectives. Many of our students do a three- to six-month refresher program that gets them back in the academic saddle if they've been away for a while, or gets them up to speed in courses they may not have had before NPS.

NPS courses are designed to cover both general principles and naval applications. If you take a course in cyber or AI, you can be more literate in these fields where knowledge and usage are changing rapidly. It may be that by virtue of taking one of these applied technical courses an officer becomes the subject matter expert in the Wardroom, Ready Room or conference room.

MONTEREY, Calif. (Nov. 11, 2021) Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) President retired U.S. Navy Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau, center, and Director, International Graduate Programs, retired Army Col. Danial "Dino" Pick, left, greet a delegation of senior officers from the Indian Navy, including Vice Adm. Dinesh Tripathi, Chief of Personnel, during a visit to the university to discuss educational opportunities for the Indian Navy. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Lenny Weston)

MONTEREY, Calif. (Aug. 17, 2022) — Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro is given a tour of the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) grounds by retired Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau, President of NPS, in Monterey Aug. 17, 2022. Del Toro visited San Diego and Monterey to visit with Sailors and Marines at installation commands, engage with leadership at SWFOTS, and to discuss strategic initiatives at NPS. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class T. Logan Keown)

You mentioned distance learning. Say more about these courses and who attends NPS as a DL student?

We've been offering many programs by DL for U.S. and international students for years. Today, we are working to centralize management of DL through our NPS Online campus.

We offer virtually many of our in-residence courses and programs in some way, shape or form. Through NPS Online, these are offered through nine core academic program areas that our 13 academic departments and interdisciplinary academic groups work to deliver together.

Lundquist: There are critics that say that the Navy can send their graduate students to civilian universities. How do you respond to that?

Rondeau: There is no comparison. We teach cutting-edge STEM curricula in physics, oceanography, engineering, cyber, oceanography and others. It is all done in the context of naval warfighting, including classified studies and research not covered by civilian schools.

You can study operations research at a lot of schools, but not as an aspect of mine warfare, military manpower, special ops, defense acquisition, budgeting and programming, or space operations. You can study supply chain management, but not logistics in a contested maritime environment or sustainment of distributed maritime operations. These functional areas are distinctly military or defense-related.

Let's be frank, if you are going to be a professional naval officer, you need to learn all you can about your naval profession. If you intend to leave the Navy and go into industry that is even remotely connected with the Navy or DOD, your best bet for graduate education is to come to NPS. Realistically speaking, there are tens if not hundreds of thousands of grads from civilian schools each year, none of whom learn anything about the Navy. It's no secret who the Defense contractors prefer to hire - NPS grads.

The same goes for your students. They're not your average grad student, right?

That's absolutely true. They are the center of gravity of NPS! Our students are operationally experienced and come here with a level of sophistication and maturity.

I know in the case of Surface Warfare Officers, virtually all have come from afloat division officer tours, and most will be returning to sea as future department heads. There is a wide-spread appreciation for their being able to deliver their knowledge, either immediately or over time. They are standouts in the Wardroom.

Is there a metric for that to show that you are delivering?

Yes. Demand is increasing for NPS education, research and innovation outcomes. The real metric is how NPS graduates are able to perform in their primary professional duties, and they do very well. That translates into warfighting advantage.

Whether they are Mechanical Engineers who are assigned to a shipyard or Strategists standing watch as Tactical Action Officers, the measures of the value of their education are their ability to evaluate and manage risk, their ability to think critically about a problem of any kind and how well they develop innovative solutions. I don't want to knock training – it has a very important place – but what happens when the problem arises that they've not been trained for? That's when relevant graduate education proves its value.

We all intuitively understand the value of education. As a commander, who would you rather have solving your toughest naval problems: someone who has spent a year or two focused on how to do that, or someone who hasn't?

So, the motivation of the sponsoring warfare community and their purpose for sending an officer to the school varies?

Yes and no. As I mentioned above, I believe there is virtually universal understanding among flag and general officers that a quality, relevant education produces better officers. How to provide officers with that education, when to provide that education, and for how many, varies. The intellectual benefits I mentioned above accrue to all graduates immediately. The specific benefits depend on the curriculum. The commanding officer of a destroyer looking to protect the carrier from a submarine threat will see immediate benefit from a Surface Warfare Officer who graduated from the Undersea Warfare Curriculum – or similarly, from an officer in System Engineering Analysis or Applied Physics of Combat Systems who understands how and why weapons systems operate and should be best employed.

U.S. Navy Lt. James Dubyoski and NPS assistant professor Tony Pollman conduct testing on the Disposable Reusable Expeditionary Warfare Underwater Vehicle (DREW UV) in collaboration with Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City, Fla. Alongside expert faculty, NPS student's operational insight informs applied research, and in partnership with other naval research labs and industry, can accelerate the innovation cycle to move research concepts from idea to impact.

So, while it depends on the community, we are working to make NPS more flexible and accessible to the unrestricted line officers in recognition of the career pipeline challenges.

What about the Surface Warfare community?

Right now we have about 75-80 Surface Warfare Officers at any given time, with more quotas becoming available. I can think of many examples where Surface Warfare Officer student theses have had a direct impact on their warfighting community in autonomous systems, defense management, hypersonics, AI-enabled decision-making, additive manufacturing, data analytics, cyber analysis, logistics optimization, human resources, and circadian rhythm watchbills.

NPS also now offers the Meyer Scholar program, which came about in response to capabilities being called for in the CNO NAVPLAN. Meyer Scholars gain in-depth knowledge in advanced naval warfare systems on the how and why – and I'm emphasizing "how" and "why" – of capabilities and technologies such as tactical data links, radar, space operations, unmanned vehicles, fire control, and missile systems to enhance their graduate education. For example, I know of Meyer Scholars who have completed classified research on the use of machine learning in SPY-6 radar discrimination.

Officers who come to NPS are sort of out of their element when they come here. Do the warfare communities keep an eye on their students?

They are away from the waterfront, but not the issues. In fact, they are here to solve those problems.

To support this process, the Surface Warfare community is good about sending the operational staffs and flag officers to talk with the Surface Warfare Officers here, so they stay abreast of needs and exchange ideas to solving problems. All of the warfare communities have senior officers assigned here. Capt. Jeremy Gray is the Surface Warfare Chair. He works directly for Commander, Naval Surface Forces (CNSF). In this role, he has been arranging things like post-deployment briefs from Strike Group Commanders to come interact with students, as well as faculty, who also need to hear about current fleet issues and CNSF research needs.

In addition, NWSI worked to create the Nimitz Research Group at NPS, which supports their priority topics, giving our warrior-scholar students and faculty a chance to directly impact outcomes in the INDOPACOM arena.

You have periodic curricula reviews with your sponsors. That's a form of scrutiny that goes both ways. As an in-house graduate institution, how does NPS work with sponsors to stay current?

Correct. This is a two-way street. OPNAV N7 is now the resource sponsor for NPS, while OPNAV N1 remains our Budget Submitting Office (BSO). That's an important change. N7 is responsible for warfighter and warfighting development, and that is exactly what NPS does. The role of curriculum sponsors is to work with OPNAV N7 in setting their community's graduate education requirements. How many advanced degrees and what kind should the Surface

Warfare community have, for example? The Secretary and OPNAV are working hard to fix this. Warfare sponsors review the curricula every two years to keep the content specifically tailored to the dynamic needs of warfighting, but then they need to send their people to gain the benefit.

Would you say that coming to NPS at an early or mid-point in one's career is a benefit, and that it supports Navy officer retention?

Yes, of course. We develop better warfighters; they naturally gain a step up on their peers through a relevant advanced degree enabling them to apply that knowledge to real-world problems. They are who we are going to retain and promote.

I think of NPS as both a personal and community investment in professional excellence. Let me be frank about this. Many officers coming to NPS have not seen the "big picture" of the Navy while they served in initial assignments. Here they have the opportunity to gain that bigger, better picture of the Navy and Surface Warfare. They have a chance to become better innovation leaders and learn how they fit into the future force we want them to lead.

NPS is where science meets the art of warfare. Our mission is to develop officers who are confident and competent in their primary professional duties. The past education investments made in graduates like Admirals Hyman Rickover, Arleigh Burke, Wayne Meyer, Michael Mullen and Samuel Paparo, General Michael Hagee, and former Undersecretary of Defense Robert O. Work, and even our Secretary of the Navy, Carlos Del Toro, along with tens of thousands like them, was an investment that has continued to pay dividends for many years. How do you put a price on that?

VADM Ann Rondeau, USN (Ret), President of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School (NPS)

Naval Postgraduate School Accreditation

Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) accredits NPS University-wide.

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredits all Department of Defense Management degree programs.

NASPAA or the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration accredits specific NPS public administration, public management degree programs.

ABET (formally known as the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Inc.) accredits specific engineering degree programs.