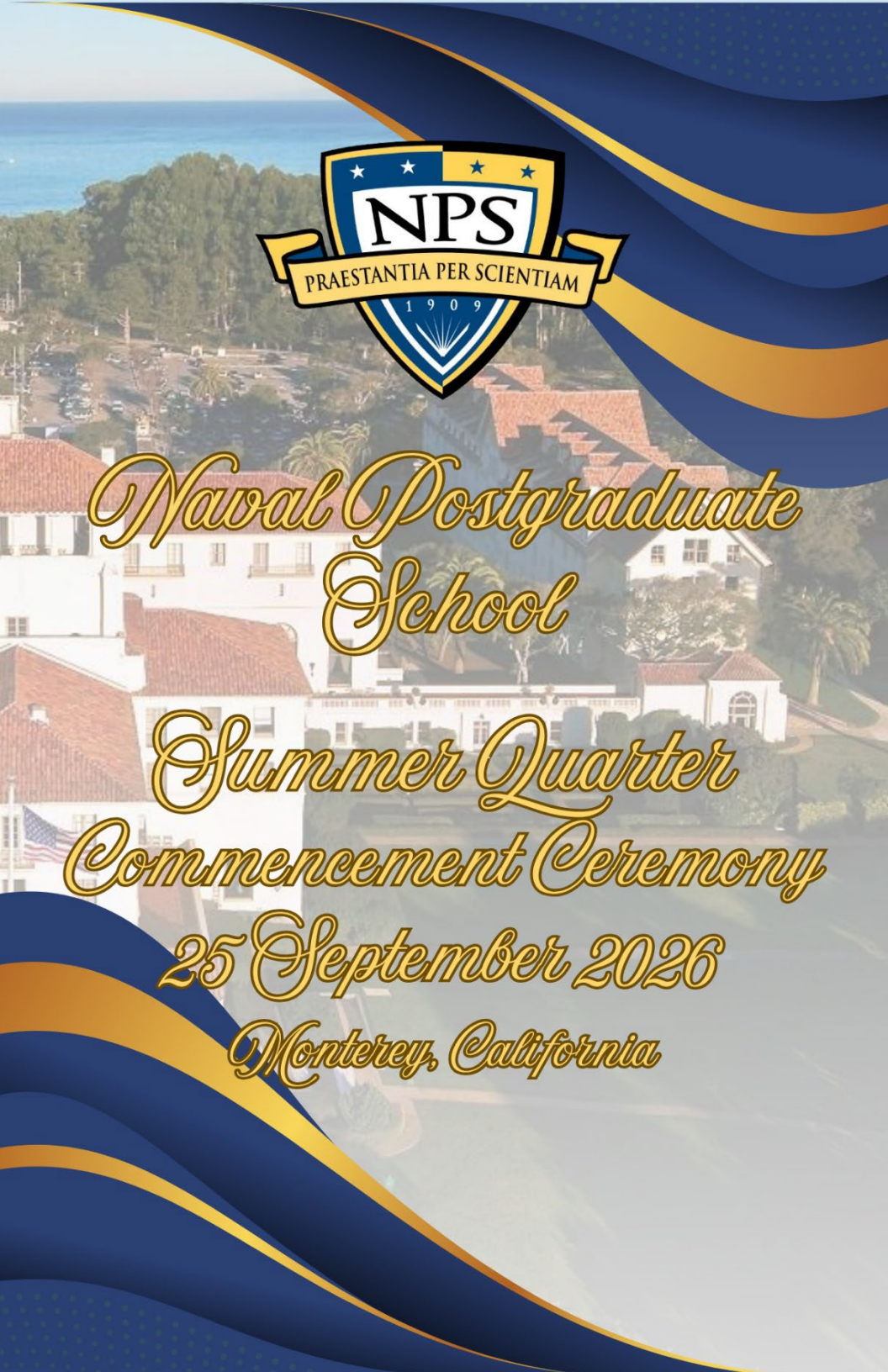


Naval Postgraduate School

Summer Quarter Commencement Ceremony

25 September 2026

Monterey, California

Summer Quarter Commencement Ceremony

King Hall Auditorium
25 September 2026

President
VADM Ann E. Rondeau, USN (Ret.)

Provost
Dr. W. Matthew Carlyle (Acting)

Vice Provost for Academic Leadership
Dr. Michael Freeman (Acting)

Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Dr. James Bret Michael

Vice Provost for Research
Dr. Michael Hesse

Vice Provost for Warfare Studies
CAPT Michael Owen, USN

Dean of Students
CAPT Shane Stoughton, USN

Command Chaplain
LCDR Aaron Chicoine, USN

AMERICA 250™

Vice Admiral Ann E. Rondeau, Ed.D., USN (Ret.)

President

Retired U.S. Navy Vice Adm. Ann E. Rondeau was appointed as President, Naval Postgraduate School on January 29, 2019. She brings to the assignment an unparalleled record of leadership and achievement within the military and academia in the areas of education, training, research, executive development, change management, and strategic planning.

Her most recent military position was President of the National Defense University, a consortium of five colleges and nine research centers in Washington, DC. Rondeau has extensive leadership experience in significant military and educational roles. Prior to her appointment as NPS President, Adm. Rondeau served as the sixth president of the College of DuPage.

In 1985, she was selected as a White House Fellow in the Reagan Administration, served at the Department of Justice and was appointed National Security Advisor to the Attorney General. She went on to serve as the Deputy Commander of the U.S. Transportation Command in Illinois, Pentagon Director and Chief of Staff for the U.S. Navy Staff, Commander of the Navy Personnel Development Command in Virginia, Commander of the Naval Service Training Command at Great Lakes, Ill., Chief of Staff, Pacific Fleet Staff, in Hawaii, Commanding Officer of Naval Support Activity Mid-South in Tennessee, and other staff and commanding responsibilities with policy, support, and student service. Rondeau retired from the U.S. Navy as a three-star admiral in 2012 and was the second woman to have achieved that rank in the Navy. She then served as a partner and later an independent consultant with the IBM Watson group.

Rondeau holds a B.A. from Eisenhower College (NY), an M.A. from Georgetown University (DC), and an Ed.D. from the College of Education at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. She also holds an honorary doctorate in Public Service from Carthage College (Kenosha, WI) and an honorary doctorate in Humane Letters from Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science (Chicago, IL).

Dr. W. Matthew Carlyle

Acting Provost

W. Matthew Carlyle, Ph.D., is the Vice President, Provost, and Chief Academic Officer (Acting) of the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), where he also serves as Professor of Operations Research (OR). After working for five years as a tenure-track faculty member in the Department of Industrial Engineering at Arizona State University, he joined the OR Department at NPS in 2002 as an Associate Professor.

He was promoted to Professor in 2012 and served as Chair of the OR Department from 2018-2025. His research and teaching have included network optimization, large-scale optimization, linear and integer programming, and network interdiction and defense. He has received funding in support of research and student thesis work in military applications of optimization, including attack and defense of critical infrastructure, delaying adversaries' large industrial projects and weapons programs, theater ballistic missile defense, sensor mix and deployment, naval logistics, and Navy mission planning.

With colleagues in the OR department, he received the Navy Superior Civilian Service Award in 2006 for work in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. He held the post of Distinguished Visiting Professor at the National Security Agency in the summer of 2006. Dr. Carlyle received his B.S. in Information and Computer Science from Georgia Tech in 1992 and his Ph.D. in Operations Research from Stanford University in 1997.

Mr. Hank Plain

Chair, NPS Foundation and Founding Partner, Lightstone Ventures

Mr. Hank Plain is a Founding Partner of Lightstone Ventures, where he focuses on medical device investments. He also serves as a Partner at Morgenthaler Ventures, which he joined in 2007 following more than 25 years in the life sciences industry.

Mr. Plain has served as Chair and Trustee of the Naval Postgraduate School Foundation since 2017. Under his leadership, the Foundation has significantly expanded its support of NPS students, faculty, research and innovation. Initiatives have included increased support for student clubs and activities, research programs, faculty awards, and a capital campaign focused on advancing naval innovation, and the recent gift of an NVIDIA DGX GB300 supercomputer to NPS. The Foundation also reestablished the NPS Alumni Association, which has grown to more than 17,500 members, and developed an Advisory Council composed of distinguished NPS graduates and senior military, government and industry leaders.

Mr. Plain earned a Bachelor of Science in Finance from the University of Missouri and began his career with Eli Lilly in 1980, serving in a variety of management positions over 12 years. He was the seventh employee and CEO of Perclose, where he led the company through a successful initial public offering and its subsequent acquisition by Abbott Laboratories. Prior to becoming a venture capitalist, he co-founded eight medical device companies with the team at The Foundry, a medical device incubator.

Mr. Plain currently serves on the boards of Imperative Care, SetPoint Medical and ZeaKal. He previously served on the boards of nine companies that were subsequently acquired and provide improved care for millions of patients around the world.

He also serves on the board of the First Tee Monterey County. Previously, he was Co-Chair of the American Heart Association Research Roundtable and served on the Board of Trustees of Woodside Priory School in Portola Valley, California.
Born in Springfield, Illinois, Mr. Plain and his wife, Lisa, have been married for 45 years and live in Pebble Beach, California. Their two children and their spouses also live and work on the Monterey Peninsula, where the family enjoys spending time with their four grandchildren. An avid golfer, Mr. Plain enjoys playing in Pebble Beach and at courses around the world.

Platform Party

First Row (Left to Right)

Lt Col Tiffany Swope, USAF
Senior U.S. Air Force Representative

Col Dana Demer, USMC
Senior U.S. Marine Corps Representative

COL James Jablonski, USA
Senior U.S. Army Representative

CAPT Michael Owen, USN
Vice Provost for Warfare Studies

Mr. Hank Plain
Chair, NPS Foundation
Founding Partner, Lightstone Ventures

VADM Ann Rondeau, USN (Ret.)
President

Dr. W. Matthew Carlyle
Acting Provost

COL Danial Pick, USA (Ret.)
Director, International Graduate Programs

Dr. Ralucca Gera
Chair, Applied Mathematics

Dr. Christopher Brophy
Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

Dr. David Alderson
Chair, Operations Research

CAPT Shane Stoughton, USN
Commanding Officer and Dean of Students

Second Row (Left to Right)

Dr. Wenschel Lan
Chair, Space Systems Academic Group

Dr. Maria Rasmussen
Chair, Institute for Regional and International Security

Dr. Kevin Smith
Chair, Physics

Dr. James MacMahan
Oceanography

Dr. Wendell Nuss
Chair, Meteorology

Dr. Alex Bordetsky
Chair, Information Sciences

Dr. Oleg Yakimenko
Chair, Systems Engineering

Dr. Simona Tick
Chair, Acquisition, Finance, and Manpower

Dr. Gurminder Singh
Chair, Computer Science

Dr. Bradley Strawser
Chair, Defense Analysis

Dr. Douglas Fouts
Chair, Electrical and Computer Engineering

LTC Keith Carter, USA (Ret.)
Chair, Naval War College

Order of Ceremonies

Processional..... *Del Monte Brass*

Grand Marshal..... *Dr. Robert Mortlock*

Faculty Marshals..... *Dr. Erik Dahl and Dr. Carolyn Halladay*

Platform Marshal ..... *Dr. Christiana Matei*

Military Marshal.....*LtCol James Connolly, USMC*

Master of Ceremonies ..... *CAPT Shane Stoughton, USN*

Command Chaplain .....*LCDR Aaron Chicoine, USN*

National Anthem..... *Del Monte Brass*

Introductory Remarks..... *VADM Ann Rondeau, USN (Ret.)*

Address to Graduates ..... *Mr. Hank Plain*

Presentation of Candidates..... *Dr. W. Matthew Carlyle*

Announcement of Degrees..... *CAPT Shane Stoughton, USN*

Recessional..... *Del Monte Brass*

Important Information

Processional and Recessional
Please remain seated and keep rows clear while the students, faculty, and Platform Party enter and exit the auditorium.

Livestream & Photography
A livestream and all photographs of the ceremony can be accessed by scanning the QR code below with your mobile devices or through https://nps.edu/graduation

Please feel free to take photographs or videos during the ceremony from your seats or outside aisles only. Do not go into the inside aisles.

Cell Phones and Mobile Devices
Please silence all cell phones and other mobile devices before the ceremony begins to honor the accomplishments of our graduates and their families.

Restroom Locations
Restrooms are in the upper corners of King Hall Auditorium as well as in the basement.

Family Friendly Room
A Family Friendly Room in the basement of King Hall is available for families with small children who would like a comfortable place to watch the livestream of the ceremony.

For General Assistance
Please contact one of our Ushers at the back of the auditorium.

Reception
Please join us after the ceremony for a reception in the Barbara McNitt Ballroom thanks to the NPS Foundation and Alumni Association.

Commencement Programs
Digital versions of the commencement program are available through the QR code below. Please feel free to recycle any unwanted programs as you exit the auditorium.

In the Event of An Emergency
Please pay close attention to the Master of Ceremonies and your ushers for instructions.

Countries Representing the Naval Postgraduate School Summer Quarter Graduating Class

(in alphabetical order)

Brazil

Cameroon

Colombia

Greece

Hungary

Indonesia

Israel

Kazakhstan

Mexico

Oman

Singapore

Sweden

Türkiye

Ukraine

USA

Student Awards

Tyler National Security Research Award
Maj William McCabe, USMC

Marine Corps Association Superior Service Award for Outstanding U.S. Marine Student
Maj William McCabe, USMC

Rear Admiral Merrill W. Ruck Leadership Award
COL Valerii Hordiichuk, Armed Forces of Ukraine

NPS Outstanding Academic Achievement Award for International Student
COL Valerii Hordiichuk, Armed Forces of Ukraine

International Student Award for Excellence in Regional Security Studies
COL Valerii Hordiichuk, Armed Forces of Ukraine

Surface Navy Association's Award for Excellence in Surface Warfare Research
LT Jonathan Huang, USN

Chief of Naval Operations Award for Excellence in Operations Research
LT Jonathan Huang, USN

Association of the United States Army, General Joseph W. Stilwell Chapter, Award for Outstanding Army Student
MAJ Grant Cook, USA

Air Force Association (Monterey/Chapter 112) Award for Advancement of Aerospace Studies
Capt Luisa Amaral de Almeida, Brazilian Air Force

Department of Defense Management Outstanding International Student Award
Capt Luisa Amaral de Almeida, Brazilian Air Force

Department of Defense Management Award for Excellence in Distance Learning
Ms. Maria Airyn O'Brien, Department of the Navy

Gary Kildall Award for Computing Innovation
LT Kristina Bodeman, USN

Rear Admiral Grace Murray Hopper Computer Science Award
LT Kristina Bodeman, USN
LTC Sven Bengt Mattias Gaalnander, Swedish Army

Kiwanis Club of Monterey Outstanding International Student Award
LT Francisco Maldonado Mundo, Mexican Navy

Rear Admiral Grace Murray Hopper Information Technology Management Award
LCDR Juan Pablo Gutierrez Bucheli, Colombian National Navy

Louis D. Liskin Award for Excellence in Regional Security Studies
LT Mason Fridge, USN

Foreign Area Officer Association Award for Excellence in International Affairs
LT Aaron Jorgensen, USN

Outstanding USAF Graduate Award, Department of National Security Affairs
Maj Daniel Monroe, USAF

Naval Undersea Warfare Division Newport Center Award for Excellence in Undersea Warfare Technology
LCDR David R. Gomez, Jr., USN

Chief of Naval Operations Undersea Warfare Award
LT Gavin W. Moore, USN

Submarine Force Award for Excellence in Undersea Warfare
ENS Joseph L. Morgan, USN

Deputy Commandant for Information's LtCol Earl "Pete" Ellis Award
Maj William Rose, USMC

ROOT HALL

Commencement Participants

Doctoral and Engineer Graduates

Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Mathematics
CDR Timothy Philip James, USN

Doctor of Philosophy in Mechanical Engineering
CDR Daniel Kuratko, USN

Doctor of Philosophy in Operations Research
LtCol John J. Sabol III, USMC

Doctor of Philosophy in Systems Engineering
Mr. Ryan Alexander Bell, Department of the Navy

Mechanical Engineer
LCDR Lindsey Riddick, USN

Department of Acquisition, Finance, and Manpower

Chair: Dr. Simona Tick

Master of Science in Defense Contract Management
LCDR Kwabena Antwi-Nimarko, USN

Master of Science in Financial Management
Ms. Maria Airyn O'Brien, Department of the Navy ★

Master of Science in Management, Manpower Systems Analysis
MAJ Kyle Forrest Collins, USAR
LT Bintang Pratama, Indonesian Navy
LTC Vitalii Tsyktor, Ukrainian Ground Forces

Master of Science in Program Management
LT Jameila K. Grant, USNR

Department of Applied Mathematics

Chair: Dr. Ralucca Gera

Master of Science in Applied Mathematics
ENS Joseph Lopaka Morgan, USN ★

Department of Computer Science

Chair: Dr. Gurminder Singh

Master of Applied Computing

*LTJG Dustin Adam Ledbetter, USN
Ms. Stefanie N. Barron, Department of the Navy
*Mr. Andrew Woolley, Department of the Navy

Master of Science in Computer Science

LT Kristina Marie Bodeman, USN★
LT Douglas Russell Browne, Jr., USN
LT James David Doocy II, USN
LT Christopher Noah Feener, USN
LT Christopher de Leon Pham, USN
Capt Carlos Arrieta, USMC
Capt Zachary Robert Frank Jacob, USMC
Capt Kevin Duy Nguyen, USMC
Capt Matthew Steven Tatar, USMC
CPT Eldar Aimashev, Kazakhstan Land Forces
Capt Ron Alfi, Israeli Air Force
LTC Sven Bengt Mattias Gaalnander, Swedish Army ★
LT Francisco Daniel Maldonado Mundo, Mexican Navy ★

Department of Defense Analysis

Chair: Dr. Bradley Strawser

Master of Science Applied Design Innovation

CPO Anthony D. Fuschino, USN

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Chair: Dr. Douglas Fouts

Master of Engineering (Electrical Engineering)

*Mr. Caleb A. Switzer, Department of Defense

Master of Science in Electrical Engineering

LT Joseph Andrew Profeta IV, USN
LT John Taylor Rolfe, USN
LTJG Jack Douglass B. Shaw, USN
Capt Dylan D. Bruns, USMC

Capt Phillip Dexter Graham, USMC
Maj Randall James Gregorius, USMC
Capt Matthew James Gregory, USMC
*Capt Alexandra Louise Hough, USMC
Capt Joseph Henry Kronlage, USMC
Ms. Xin Yi Jean Chng, Defence Science and Technology Agency

Master of Science in Engineering Science (Electrical Engineering)
Mr. Zheng Kang Yee, Defence Science and Technology Agency

Department of Information Sciences

Chair: Dr. Alex Bordetsky

Master of Science in Applied Cyber Operations
LCDR Fibriansyah Fatahillah, Indonesian Navy

Master of Science in Information Strategy and Political Warfare
Capt Stephanie Michelle Vandegrift, USMC

Master of Science in Information Technology Management
LCDR Fibriansyah Fatahillah, Indonesian Navy
LCDR Juan Pablo Gutierrez Bucheli, Colombian National Navy ★

Master of Science in Information Warfare Systems Engineering
Maj William Douglas Rose, Jr., USMC ★
Maj Jameson William Taylor, USMC
Capt Stephanie Michelle Vandegrift, USMC

Master of Science in Network Operations and Technology
LT Timothy Richard Seggel, USN

Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

Chair: Dr. Vladimir Dobrokhodov

Master of Engineering in Aerospace Engineering
*Mr. Bryce Corey Gregory, Raytheon

Master of Science in Aerospace Engineering
ENS Hunter Golly, USN
*LCDR Cole VonDerOhe, USN

Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering
ENS Preston Hartline, USN
ENS Aaron Stuber, USN
Master of Science in Nuclear Engineering
*ENS Jessica Genevieve Celuch, USN
*ENS Bradley Neil France, USN
*ENS John Coulter Harden, USN
*LTJG Adeline Ann Hervey, USN
*LTJG James Andrew McDade V, USN
*LTJG Blake S. Spahr, USN
*ENS Emhyr Subramanian, USN
*ENS Judah Elliot Thiem, USN

Department of Operations Research

Chair: Dr. David Alderson

Master of Human Systems Integration
LCDR Victor O. Agunbiade, USNR

Master of Science in Defense Logistics Management
Capt Luisa Amaral de Almeida, Brazilian Air Force ★

Master of Science in Management
LT Bayu Guruh Purnomo, Indonesian Navy

Master of Science in Operations Research
*LT Jenna A. Adame, USN
*LT Mitchell D. Ernsten, USN
LCDR David R. Gomez Jr., USN ★
LT Jonathan J. Huang, USN ★
LT Gavin Moore, USN ★
LCDR Shane J. Phillips, USN
Capt Logan M. Fraser, USMC
Capt Sean T. Panzini, USMC
MAJ Roi Huminer Goldenberg, Israeli Defense Forces
MAJ Chun Seng Joel Tan, Singapore Army

Master of Systems Analysis
*LCDR Amanda S. Abelon, USN
CDR Joshua P. Archer, USN

*LCDR Gabriela Baez, USN
*LT Blake Everett Benjamin, USN
*LT Zane R. Berry, USN
*LCDR Robert R. Cardell, USN
*LT Jonathan G. Hawkins, USN
*LCDR Justin P. Lefere, USN
*LT Matthew T. Nardi, USN
*LCDR Lawrence W. Stoulig III, USN
*CDR Michael R. Theriot, USN
*CDR Jon K. Weissberg, USN
Mr. Jonathan E. Bogan, Department of the Navy
*Ms. Abigail J.B. Orth, Department of the Navy
*Maj Aytan Chaim Kamienny, Israeli Air Force

Department of Physics
Chair: Dr. Kevin Smith

Master of Science in Applied Physics
LCDR Jack W. Randall, USN
MAJ Emily Marie Monk, USA

Master of Science in Engineering Acoustics
LTJG Doğukan Doğan, Turkish Naval Forces
LT Dimitrios Tsigkas, Hellenic Navy

Master of Warfare Operations
CAPT Adam Cohen, USN

Department of Systems Engineering
Chair: Dr. Oleg Yakimenko

Master of Science in Model-Based Systems Engineering
*Ms. Vivian Taylor, Department of the Navy

Master of Science in System Engineering Management
*Mr. Daniel G. Adam, Department of the Navy

Master of Science in Systems and Defense Management
LCDR Melissa Ogden Curry, USN
Mr. Glenn A. Berger, Department of the Navy
Mr. Daher Hattar, Department of the Navy

Ms. Diana L. Kuhn-Fiebiger, Department of the Navy
Mr. Galin Oliver, Department of the Navy
Mr. Michael R. Virbia, Department of the Navy

Master of Science in Systems Engineering
Mr. Andrew T. Brennan, Department of the Army
*Mr. Matthew Paul Chase, Department of the Army
Mr. Garry M. Colbert, Department of the Navy
*Mr. Andrew Vincent Ellis, Department of the Army
Mr. Darryl Joseph Forget, Department of the Army
*Mr. Jakob A. Hopping, Department of the Army
Mr. David L. James, Department of the Army
Mr. James N. Karigan, Department of the Army
Ms. Becca Turner Loudin, Department of the Army
Mr. Logan McCall, Department of the Navy
Mr. Kevin Andrew Merhoff, Department of the Navy
Mr. William Kevin Myers, Department of the Army
*Ms. Ann Marie Powers, Department of the Navy
*Ms. Brittany Nicole Preston-Baker, Department of the Navy
Mr. Jose Rafael Ramirez, Department of the Army
*Mr. Dominic A. Ribaudo, Department of the Army
Mr. Luke David Smith, Department of the Army
*Mr. Justin D. Stephens, Department of the Army
Mr. Matthew Larry Young, Department of the Army
*Capt Tomer Kozlovsky, Israeli Air Force
Maj Yukai Luo, Republic of Singapore Air Force
Mr. Leonard You Jia Teo, ST Engineering
Mr. Wei Jian Yew, ST Engineering

Master of Science in Systems Engineering Analysis
*ENS Bryan Shelby Beekman, USN

Master of Science in Systems Engineering Management
*CDR Ryan J. Kaczorowski, USN
*LCDR Kevin Michael Schwenk, USN
CDR Paul Robert Junghans, USCG
*Capt Ryan Paul Dietzius, USSF
*Mr. Michael David Bailey, Department of the Navy
Mr. William Tanner Bailey, Department of the Navy

*Mr. Dean Austin Bussick, Department of the Navy
*Mr. David M. Chaney, Department of the Navy
Mr. Andrew M. Connors, Department of the Army
Mr. Andre M. Cota-Robles, Department of the Army
Mr. Stephen Anthony Day, Department of the Army
*Mr. Brian James Debiase, Department of the Army
Mr. Myles Kyei Duah, Department of the Navy
Mr. Joseph John Grigus, Department of the Army
Mr. John Hearn, Department of the Navy
Mr. David B. Johnson, Department of the Army
Mr. Christopher T. Jones, Department of the Army
Mr. Andrew Joseph Machemer, Department of the Army
Mr. Jason Curtis McCoy, Department of the Army
*Mr. Damon Karl Nicholson, Department of the Army
Mr. Kirill Pavlov, Department of the Army
*Ms. Carlethia DeShon Smith, Department of the Navy
*Mr. Chandler Rhys Thompson, Department of the Army
*Mr. Benjamin Andrew Watzak, Department of the Army
*Mr. Charles J. Wesley, Department of the Navy
*Capt Eyal Tur, Israeli Air Force

Institute for Regional and International Security

Chairs: Dr. Maria Rasmussen

Master of Arts in Security Studies (East Asia and the Indo-Pacific)

LCDR Andrea K. Cornett, USN
LT Simeon J. Fritz, USN
LT Matthew W. Ross, USN
MAJ Tyra Takieddine, USA
*Capt Charles Akerblom, USMC
*Capt Matthew D. Tussing, USMC
Maj Ongsa Ektanitphong, USAF
*Maj Daniel R. Hughes, USAF

Master of Arts in Security Studies (Europe and Eurasia)

LT Aaron B. Jorgensen, USN ★
*Capt Riley E. McFarlin, USMC

Master of Arts in Security Studies (Homeland Security and Defense)
LT David W. Hixon, USN
LT Stephen Replogle, USN

Master of Arts in Security Studies (Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa)
MAJ Grant C. Cook, USA ★
Maj Daniel P. Monroe, USAF ★

Master of Arts in Security Studies (Strategic Studies)
LT Mason C. Fridge, USN ★
COL Valerii Hordiichuk, Armed Forces of Ukraine ★

Master of Arts in Security Studies (Western Hemisphere)
CPT Camila N. Avello, USA
MAJ Samuel Oquendo Marrero, USA
Maj Joshua V. Williams, USAF

Master of Arts in Security Studies (Combating Terrorism: Policy and Strategy)
MAJ Ali S. Al-Kalbani, Royal Army of Oman
*Maj Job Cesaire Dang, Cameroon Air Force
MAJ Balazs Kiss, Hungarian Ground Forces

Organizational Sciences Academic Group
Chair: Mr. Ned Powley

Professional Master of Business Administration
*LCDR Brian Michael Eason, USN
*LT Michael Richard Tato, USN
*CAPT Jay Andrew Yelon, USN
*Mr. Markus Delgado, Department of the Navy

Space Systems Academic Group
Chair: Dr. Wenschel Lan

Master of Science in Space Systems Operations
Maj William McCabe, USMC ★

** – Graduating in Absentia*
★ *– Award Recipient*

Del Monte Brass

"Semper Musica"

Conducted by: Dr. Rob Klevan, Ph.D.

Flutes
Jenna Hillhouse
Dr. Ron Friedman
Gary Stotz

Clarinets
Dr. Steve Lerman
Mary Teer
Susie Kuhlman
Robbie Stange

Bassoon
Georgia Hughes

Saxophones
William Whipple
Neal Battaglia
Chris Kroeze
LT Jordan Trono, USN

Trumpets
Bob Johannsen
Dick Robins

Trombones
Mary Ellen Eglington

Keyboard
Dr. Lori Lerman

Tubas/Euphonium
Otto Neely
Yaniv Lieberman
Amanda Coleman

Percussion
Dr. Doug MacKinnon

French Horns
DL Johnson
Steve Jackson
Seth Harris
LT Jay McFadden, USN

The Del Monte Brass was founded in 2003 by CAPT Carol O'Neal, USN, then Dean of Students at the Naval Postgraduate School. Originally a brass quintet with Carol on trumpet, the group grew to nine players by its first graduation performance that year—marking the first time live music was used instead of recorded tracks. While serving as Dean, Carol even ran between the band and the stage! After retiring from the Navy in 2006, she moved to Oregon, but upon returning to NPS as a researcher in 2009, she revitalized the band. Over the years, Del Monte Brass expanded to include woodwinds, percussion, and string instruments, growing to more than 50 members by 2024. The ensemble now features students and faculty from NPS, the Defense Language Institute, and local universities, along with retired military, spouses, and community members.

THANK YOU

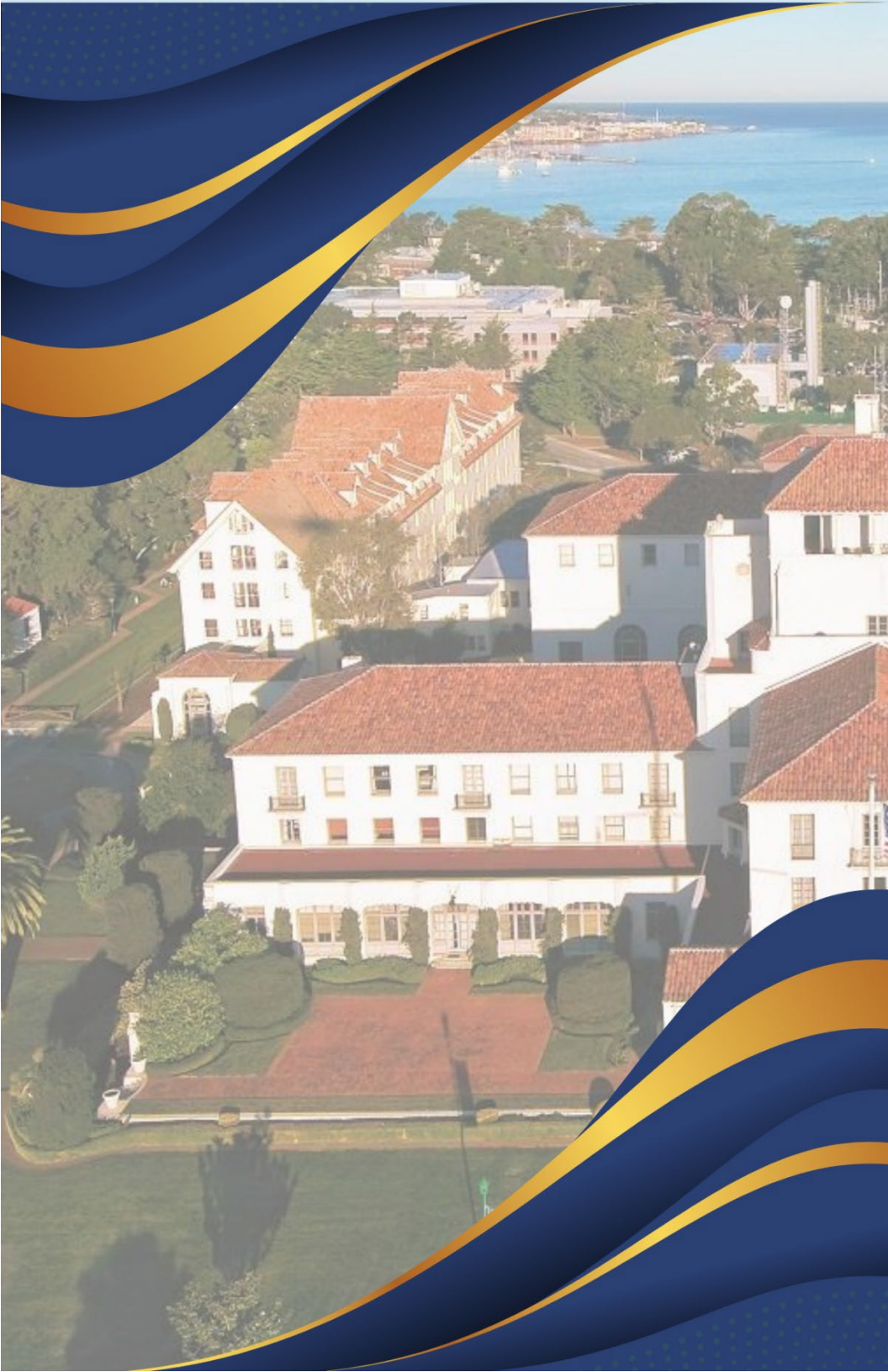
The Naval Postgraduate School extends heartfelt thanks to the many departments, offices, and individuals whose combined efforts make this graduation ceremony possible.

We are grateful to our academic and institutional teams, whose dedication supports every step of the student journey. From Student Services to the Office of Academic Affairs, Registrar's Office, and International Graduate Program Office, your work ensures our students are guided, supported, and set up for success. The Information Technology and Audio/Visual teams keep everything running smoothly behind the scenes. Public Affairs and Protocol help bring this celebration to life with care and professionalism.

A special thank you goes to the President's Board for Student Affairs, our graduation marshals, ushers, and senior service representatives. Your attention to detail and presence help the ceremony flow with grace. We're also grateful to the NPS Photography Team, Color Guard, and Del Monte Brass for capturing and creating memories while honoring tradition. The NPS Foundation and Alumni Association continue to connect us to a broader community. Our faculty, department chairs, program officers, education technicians, command administration, and staff are the heart of everything we do.

We are thankful for the leadership and support of the NPS Command Team, and for the presence and guidance of the Command Chaplain and Religious Services Team, who help mark this moment with meaning. We are honored to welcome Mr. Hank Plain as our guest speaker. Thank you for sharing your time, wisdom, and leadership with us.

To our partners at Naval Support Activity Monterey: thank you. Facilities Management, Public Works, and the Janitorial Staff prepare our spaces with care. NSAM Security ensures a safe environment for all. Morale, Welfare and Recreation continues to support the well-being of our students and their families.

To the family, friends, and guests: your encouragement and presence mean the world. You've stood behind our graduates every step of the way. Today is as much yours as it is theirs.

And to our graduates: congratulations! Your hard work, resilience, and commitment have brought you to this moment. Carry the knowledge and values you've gained here into every challenge and opportunity ahead with confidence, purpose, and pride.