

Paul E. Sullivan, VADM, USN (Ret.)

Director, Applied Research Laboratory Penn State

Paul Sullivan is the Director of the Applied Research Laboratory, The Pennsylvania State University (ARL Penn State). Director Sullivan assumed his position as Director, Defense Related Research Units, and Director, ARL in 2014. He holds the University rank of Senior Scientist.



ARL Penn State is an integral part of one of the leading research universities in the nation and serves as a University Center of Excellence in Defense science, systems, and technologies with a focus in naval missions and related areas. As a DoD-designated, U.S. Navy UARC (University Affiliated Research Center), ARL Penn State maintains a long-term strategic relationship with the U.S. Navy and provides support for the other services. ARL provides science, systems, and technology for national security, economic competitiveness and quality of life through education, scientific discovery, technology demonstration, and transition to application.

Director Sullivan brings to ARL Penn State a long career with the U.S. Navy, having retired in the rank of Vice Admiral. His Navy career was followed by almost 6 years in the commercial nuclear power industry with USEC (now Centrus Energy Corporation).

Sullivan's naval career began with graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1974. He served his initial sea duty in USS DETECTOR, an ocean minesweeper. After sea duty, he transitioned to the Engineering Duty Officer (EDO) community via the Naval Construction and Engineering Program at MIT, graduating in 1980 with dual degrees of Ocean Engineer and Master of Science in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering. He subsequently served in various ship overhauls of aircraft carriers, submarines, and surface ships at Norfolk Naval Shipyard. While at Norfolk, he developed a passionate interest in submarines, and earned his "EDO Dolphins" after an extensive qualification program that included a deterrent patrol in USS JAMES MADISON, a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine.

After his initial waterfront assignment, Sullivan next served at the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) as Deputy Ship Design Manager for the SEAWOLF attack submarine. Capitalizing on this design experience, he was reassigned back to MIT to teach the Naval Construction and Engineering Program as Associate Professor of Naval Architecture.

Returning to the waterfront, Sullivan served as OHIO class submarine Project Officer, and LOS ANGELES class submarine project officer at Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion, and Repair, Groton, CT. He delivered the submarines USS PENNSYLVANIA, USS WEST VIRGINIA, and USS ALEXANDRIA.

Returning to Washington, Sullivan served in a variety of assignments, including the VIRGINIA Class program office, the staff of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition), and as Program Manager, SEAWOLF Attack Submarine Program, delivering the first-of-class SEAWOLF nuclear attack Submarine. Following USS SEAWOLF's delivery, he was assigned as the Program Manager, VIRGINIA Attack Submarine Program. He supervised the completion of VIRGINIA's design, and oversaw the construction of the first-of-class USS VIRGINIA.

Selected to the rank of Rear Admiral, he became NAVSEA's Deputy Commander for Ship Design, Integration, and Engineering (Chief Engineer). After serving as NAVSEA's technical authority for three years, he was nominated for promotion to Vice Admiral, and became the 41st Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command in July 2005. VADM Sullivan led NAVSEA, the Navy's largest Echelon II Command, until transition from the Navy in August 2008. During his tenure as Commander, he directed all contracting, design, construction, testing, certification, delivery, and life-cycle maintenance of the Navy's ships and their integrated combat/weapon systems.

After leaving the Navy, Sullivan joined USEC Inc.(now Centrus Energy), a global energy corporation. He was Vice President, American Centrifuge Project, and Chief Engineer at USEC, building the only American-based centrifuge uranium enrichment technology. During his tenure at USEC, he successfully led a Joint DOE/USEC project to build and operate a test demonstration cascade of 120 centrifuge machines.

Sullivan was appointed Director of Research Related Units and Director of the Applied Research Laboratory on September 1, 2014.