Chief of Naval Education and Training News Service (CNS) is an official information product of the Chief of Naval Education and Training Public Affairs Staff. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call the CNS managing editor, JO2 Eileen M. N. Kelly at (850) 452.9110, or DSN 922.9110. To subscribe to CNET News Service, please send e-mail to JO2-Eileen.Kelly@cnet.navy.mil, with "SUBSCRIBE CNS" in the subject line, "CANCEL CNS" to cancel service.

Get the word out about your command's education and training efforts. E-mail story submissions by the 20th of each month, to JO2-Eileen.Kelly@cnet.navy.mil.

Print

CNET Central

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

Table of contents for CNET News Service 09/01 (01SEP01)

CNS0901 CNET Labor Day Holiday Message from Vice Adm. Alfred G. Harms Jr.

CNS0902 Challenging Old Assumptions, Implementing New Processes: Task Force EXCEL Opening for Business, story by Lt. Cmdr. Gary Kirchner, Task Force EXCEL Public Affairs

CNS0903 Great Lakes: a Great Place to Make Chief, story by Navy Chief Journalist Rhonda Burke, NTC Public Affairs

CNS0904 Two-Years Old, Growing: NATTC's Aviation Apprenticeship Training Prepares Sailors for the Fleet, story by Air Traffic Controller 1st Class Adrienne Park, NATTC Public Affairs Staff Writer and ATC Instructor

CNS0905 NTTC Corry Station Change of Command, story by Sandy E. Bansemer, NTTC, Corry Station Public Affairs

CNS0906 SSC Students Share Navy Experiences in Webcast, Initiative Allows Viewers to Ask New Sailors Questions About Training, story by Navy Chief Journalist Rhonda Burke, NTC Public Affairs

CNS0907 HSL-41 Launches Seahawk University, story by Navy Journalist 3rd Class (Surface Warfare-qualified) Christopher C. Fowler, CNAP Staff Journalist

CNS0908 NTTC Names Gardner Top Instructor, story by Sandy Bansemer, NTTC Corry Field Public Affairs

CNS0909 CNO, Fleet leaders address Mine Warfare Conference

CNS0910 Bearings Leads Troubled Sailors in Positive Direction, by Lt. j.g. Erik Reynolds, COMNAVSURFPAC Public Affairs

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNET Central

CNS0901 CNET Labor Day Holiday Message from Vice Adm. Alfred G. Harms Jr.

PENSACOLA, Fla. (CNS) -- I am pleased to report that all your efforts over the Fourth of July weekend paid off handsomely. Within NAVEDTRACOM [Naval Education and Training Command], we did not experience a single off-duty fatality. This significant achievement is attributed to your continued commitment to safety and reflects the value of operational risk management (ORM) as a simple, yet effective, tool to aid in your, your crew's and your family's safety. Everyone's renewed attention to safety must continue as yet another holiday weekend fast approaches.

Recently, the National Safety Council revealed its projection that almost as many Americans will die from falls, drownings, and other incidents in their homes and communities as will be killed in highway accidents this busy Labor Day weekend. We can again beat the odds by remaining focused on the safety and health of shipmates, family and friends through our continued application of ORM to both on and off-duty endeavors.

CNET Central

The travel and leisure activities each of us will engage in this Labor Day weekend will present a myriad of threats to our health and welfare. As this weekend approaches, remember to pay close attention to the broad spectrum of hazards that could be encountered: from burns at the backyard barbecue to injuries on the playing field, from motor vehicle accidents on the highways to watercraft incidents near the shore.

As you make your plans to celebrate this Labor Day weekend, be sure to continue to include the five-step process of ORM in whatever you do: always identify the hazards, assess the risks, make responsible risk decisions, implement necessary

controls, and closely monitor the outcome. It is a simple process that has proven its value in saving lives and can again result in another fatality free holiday weekend.

Have a safe and fun Labor Day weekend! Al Harms, VADM/USN, CNET.

CNET Central

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNS0902 Challenging Old Assumptions, Implementing New Processes: Task Force EXCEL Opening for Business, story by Lt. Cmdr. Gary Kirchner, Task Force EXCEL Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- “We’ve started the revolution in Navy training,” said Chief of Naval Education and Training (CNET) Vice Adm. Alfred G. Harms Jr.

The revolution, Task Force for Excellence through Commitment to Education and Learning (Task Force EXCEL), is about to open for business.

Task Force EXCEL is the Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Vern Clark’s top action item for the next twelve months. Task Force EXCEL’s goal is to revolutionize and revitalize Navy training and education. It is going to provide Sailors the opportunity to succeed and prosper in their professional and personal lives. Task Force EXCEL will challenge old assumptions, implement new processes, and create new tools that will make a real difference in the lives of Sailors and our Navy’s war fighting capabilities.

CNET Central

“We have put together a great team," said Harms, "experienced people from the fleet, CNET, private industry, academia, and government. They understand what the Navy and our Sailors need and how to create long lasting performance solutions.”

“We are in the process of finalizing locations, manning and determining specific taskings for the five cells comprising our Implementation Team," said Harms. Task Force EXCEL will be opening Implementation Cells in San Diego, Calif., Norfolk, Va., Washington, D.C., Orlando, Fla., and Pensacola, Fla. All cells should be in place and operational by mid-September. Each cell will vary in size according to area need.

Rear Adm. Harry Ulrich, presently serving as the USS ENTERPRISE Battle Group Commander, will assume command of Task Force EXCEL in mid-September. He will head the coordination efforts for the entire implementation team, as well as work policy and resource issues with the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations staff.

"Rear Adm. Ulrich is perfectly suited for this job," said Harms. "He brings with him many years of fleet experience, and a passion to empower our Sailors and improve our Navy. He will provide Task Force EXCEL innovative leadership as we move ahead."

The Implementation Cells in Norfolk and San Diego will work directly with the fleet, spearheading pilot projects and initiating long-term training and education improvements.

The Human Performance Cell will be established in Orlando at the Naval Air Warfare Center-Training Systems Division. Working closely with the entire Implementation Team, the Human Performance Cell will be responsible for researching and developing performance requirement solutions that will accurately address fleet needs. The Implementation Cell in Pensacola will coordinate CNET support for the entire team.

"This is part of covenant leadership, and absolutely necessary if we are to capture the hearts, minds, and loyalty of the young men and women who choose to join the Navy team," said Harms.

For more CNET information go to http://www.cnet.navy.mil/.

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNS0903 Great Lakes: a Great Place To Make Chief, By Navy Chief Journalist Rhonda Burke, Naval Training Center Public Affairs

NAVAL TRAINING CENTER GREAT LAKES, Ill. (CNS) -- For the second year in a row, Sailors serving here have been selected at a higher rate for promotion to chief petty officer than their Navy counterparts.

While Navy wide 28.8 percent of eligible candidates were selected for promotion, 38 percent of eligible candidates serving as Recruit Division Commanders (RDC) and Service School Command (SSC) instructors at Great Lakes were advanced.

"We are getting talented people to come to Great Lakes and the Navy realizes that it is an important duty station. Our division commanders and instructors reap the benefits of the critical jobs they do in increased advancement opportunities," said Chief of Naval Operations-Directed Command Master Chief (Surface and Air Warfare-qualified) Jon Thompson, command master chief for the Naval Training Center.

CNET Central

The training center is scheduled to pin 140 Sailors with anchors Sept. 14. Of those, 135 are serving in billets at Recruit Training Command (RTC) or SSC. Two are instructors at the Navy's only Hospital Corps School and the remaining three serve in support positions.

The advancement rate for eligible candidates at the recruit training command was 43 percent. The command is scheduled to pin 73 chiefs this year. At SSC where the advancement rate was 33 percent, 62 new chiefs will be pinned there.

"This shows that the board recognizes the strong leadership skills of a recruit division commander," said Recruit Training Command Command Master Chief (Surface Warfare-

qualified) Bernie Quibilan. "The job of an RDC builds strong leaders because they must take up to 94 civilians, lead, train, and mentor them while developing them into Sailors. You have to be goal-oriented and have strong leadership skills to do the job."

Engineman 1st Class Richard O'Rawe believes it was his tour as an RDC that the selection board recognized in selecting him.

"Being an RDC forces you to be a leader and the board knows the importance of training the future of the Navy," said the 30-year-old New Port Richie, Fla. native. "Tomorrow's master chief is today recruit. We are training our future. "This was the first year O'Rawe was eligible for selection to chief petty officer. He is also the Recruit Division Commander of the Year 2000.

CNET Central

Last year, 112 Sailors assigned as instructors and RDCs advanced to chief petty officer while serving at Great Lakes. That was a 31 percent advancement rate compared to a 26 percent advancement rate Navy-wide.

"Nowhere in the training accession pipeline, or in the fleet is the challenge for a first class petty officer as arduous as at Service School Command," said SSC Command Master Chief (Surface Warfare-qualified) Alan McCue. "When the new Sailor reports to Service School Command they have a knowledge of the core values, but this is their first opportunity to apply the core values in their daily routine. The E-6s assigned as instructors are not only teaching technical skills but dealing with the decisions these new Sailors make regarding liberty, smoking, alcohol use, wearing civilian clothes and entering relationships."

McCue says SSC, is the largest training command under the Chief of Naval Education and Training. "Our instructors

are dealing with up to 400 Sailors a day," McCue said. "Their outstanding performance is evident by the continued high promotion rate to chief petty officer by those assigned to Service School Command."

Electrician's Mate 1st Class James Ritch says he honed his leadership skills while serving as an "A" School instructor. "Nowhere else can you have this many fresh minds who look up to you and rely on you for leadership," the Barstow, Calif. native said. "This is where I have learned to work with people." Ritch, the SSC Sailor of the Year 2000, also made chief on his first time at the board.

CNET Central

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNS0904 Two-Years Old, Growing: NATTC's Aviation Apprenticeship Training Prepares Sailors for the Fleet, story by Air Traffic Controller 1st Class Adrienne Park, Naval Air Technical Training Center Public Affairs Staff Writer and Air Traffic Controller School Instructor

PENSACOLA, Fla. (CNS) -- Naval education and training can, and does take place in locations around the world, though as far as naval aviation training, Pensacola reigns supreme.

In 1999, when the Chief of Naval Education and Training (CNET) decided to move the Navy's Airmen Apprenticeship Training Division (ATD) to Naval Air Technical Training Center (NATTC), Pensacola, from Naval Training Center Great Lakes, Ill., the reason was clear -- immediate exposure to the world of naval aviation would better prepare Sailors for the fleet.

Most new Sailors graduate from recruit training and report to a designated school immediately beginning their first stint of training as electrician's mates, personnelmen or aviation electronics technicians. What about Sailor's who have an interest in aviation, but do not have a specific job in mind? How do they receive proper training for life aboard aircraft carrier or in a squadron? The answer is 12 days of rigorous instruction in classrooms, and hours of flight deck familiarization on the full-scale flight deck training sites at NATTC's Air Department.

Cmdr. Anthony E. McFarlane, a 1969 graduate of Apprenticeship Training and current Officer-in-Charge of the Air Training Department, believes the move and new training environment better prepares Sailors for the fleet. "The biggest plus is the aviation influence here," McFarlane said, "When Sailors look around and see the aircraft and all the schools they feel a part of this

[aviation] community." That community has gotten stronger and larger since the ATD school arrived.

In two years, more than 12,500 Sailors have graduated Airmen Apprenticeship Training and reported to ships and squadrons throughout the fleet. "Every person who works in aviation without a rate or job specialty has been through this school," explained Aviation Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Darby O'Connor, a technician and an instructor at the ATD School. "Their days are jam-packed with instruction, but the Sailors are like sponges and absorb everything. By the time they leave here, they know what to expect in the fleet."

The 1999 move from Illinois was not without complications. The Forster Building, originally part of Naval Air Station Pensacola's supply offices, was not designed as a schoolhouse. Many spaces were in need of renovation before Sailors attended classes, so ATD shared classrooms with the Aviation Boatswain's Mate (AB) School. The AB's trained during the day, and ATD used the classrooms at night. "When we first arrived, some of our designated areas needed carpeting, tile and other work," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Richard Miller, an instructor at ATD. "We did a self-move and made this building into a big self-help project. We worked for weeks with the help of a few Seabees and got the school in order. It was hard, but we're proud of our work."

CNET Central

Not only did the instructors rebuild the classrooms, they rebuilt the course curriculum. During the first year in Pensacola, the 13 instructors who made the original move from Great Lakes taught classes from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., and then worked on course rewrites until 2 a.m. "Our instructors really put themselves whole-heartedly into the project," said Valerie Love, a retired Sailor and

instructor who loved the ATD School enough to move with it and become the Testing Officer. “Moving an entire school is never easy and they did a great job preparing this place for the Sailors. The course rewrite took particular dedication.”

The course has been condensed from three weeks to 12 days and many topics have been streamlined. Instead of teaching Sailors about specific equipment they may or may not see at their next duty station, the emphasis is placed on flight deck safety: including painted boundary markings and people in charge of various jobs. Instructors believe the students are focused on safe, orderly and expeditious procedures, all important facets of working on an aircraft carrier.

Despite the furious training pace, a student's stay at ATD is not without amenities. “We realize a Sailor’s time at our school is short, but we still do our best to keep morale up,” said ATD Division Officer, Lt. Daryl Walls. The school provides some enviable perks including a full-time tailor and dry cleaning service, and even a Navy Exchange snack bar break area. “We know the students need a place of their own,” Walls said.

CNET Central

The training command also knows hours of classroom instruction create the need for physical activity. “Our exercise program is top notch,” said O’Connor. “The Sailors have mandatory exercise periods three times per week and the instructors get out there to set the example."

One high-profile Navy command has a keen interest in the ATD Sailors – the Blue Angels. The Navy’s Flight Demonstration Squadron recruits right from the ATD student body. “We have asked the ATD school to provide us with a group of their top students based on performance and military bearing,” said Blue Angels' Administration Leading

Petty Officer, Yeoman 1st Class Mark Purnell, "We set up an interview board and select the top two or three of the bunch."

One of those chosen was Airman Catrina Cardenaz, 20, from Cache, Okla. who graduated top of her class. "I was happy to be selected for the Flight Demonstration Team," explained Cardenaz. "I know that I have some great opportunities here and I've already been able to apply for training as a Navy Journalist months earlier than I would have been able to at another command." The ATD school staff is proud of the selectees.

"We've all been out in the fleet and we know that being selected for the Blue Angels is great for these kids," said Chief Aviation Structural Mechanic Reine Parsons, a technician and ATD course supervisor. "It's great when they come back to the school and speak to the current Sailors. It shows them [students] that there are plenty of opportunities for non-rated Sailors."

CNET Central

"Being a graduate of Airman Apprentice School myself," McFarlane said, "I know exactly what it is like to arrive out in the fleet without a career designation. When I speak with these young people, I let them know my background and they are always surprised. I think it makes them feel great about themselves and gives them something to reach for in their careers."

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNS0905 NTTC Corry Station Change of Command, story by Sandy E. Bansemer, Naval Technical Training Center, Corry Station Public Affairs

PENSACOLA, Fla. (CNS) -- Capt. Edward H. Deets III relieved Captain Ronald J. Wojdyla as commanding officer of Naval Technical Training Center, Corry Station in a recent change of command ceremony.

Deets comes to Corry from a joint assignment as the Executive Assistant to the National Security Agency Chief of Staff. A native of Charlottesville, Va., he graduated from Duke University in 1979, where he was commissioned an ensign via the Navy ROTC program.

He began his cryptologic career at Naval Security Group Activity (NSGA) Kunia, Hawaii. There he served as a Direct Support Officer aboard a variety of ships in the Western Pacific, Indian Ocean, North Arabian Sea and the Mediterranean. He also ran the Advanced Signals and Direct Support Divisions.

CNET Central

His next tour was at NSGA Pyongtaek, Republic of Korea, as executive officer. From there he returned to the United States, and was assigned to the staff of the Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet as National Systems and Fleet Support Officer.

In 1991, he was assigned to Commander, Carrier Group Two aboard USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV-67) as staff cryptologist. He deployed to the Mediterranean and also conducted several counter-narcotics operations. In 1993, he became the Cryptologic Junior Officer Detailer at the Bureau of Naval Personnel in Washington, D.C. Next, he spent two years on the staff of the Commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet in Gaeta, Italy, as Command and Control Warfare Officer. He returned to the United States to attend the National War College at

Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., where he graduated with honors in 1998.

His military decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with gold star, the Navy Commendation Medal with two gold stars, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Navy Achievement Medal. He holds a master of science degree in national security strategy with a concentration in information strategies.

Wojdyla, a native of Pittsburgh, Pa., also entered the Navy through the Navy ROTC program.

CNET Central

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNS0906 SSC Students Share Navy Experiences in Webcast, Initiative Allows Viewers to Ask New Sailors Questions About Training, story by Navy Chief Journalist Rhonda Burke, Naval Training Command Public Affairs

NAVAL TRAINING CENTER, GREAT LAKES, Ill. (CNS) -- Two Service School Command (SSC) student Sailors recently shared their Navy experiences with people on a Navy World Wide Webcast where viewers asked questions about their boot camp and technical training experiences.

Seaman David Greninger, 23, of Pittsburg, Pa., and Seaman Apprentice Bonnie Cholette, 21, of Blue Ridge, Ga., participated in the webcast. Both Sailors, recent boot camp honor graduates, are currently assigned to Advanced Electronics Core School at SSC. The webcast aired Aug. 28, and is archived on the Navy's website, www.navy.com for a year.

CNET Central

"This is a new initiative designed to reach out to people and tell the Navy's story," said Robert Skinner, Navy webmaster for Navy Recruiting Command. "We get a lot of questions from people viewing the Navy website about boot camp and training and now they can ask these questions directly to two Sailors who have just completed the experience."

Greninger, who was the Military Excellence Award Winner for his division, joined the Navy to further his education and work skills after completing nearly two years of college.

"I had a good job working in the cable industry, but I knew I needed college education to reach the level I wanted. I felt the Navy was a good way to earn money for college," he said.

Following the completion of his advanced electronic core training, he plans to attend Electronics Technician "A" School and would like to be assigned to the East Coast.

"I really didn't find boot camp too difficult, it is hard but nothing unbearable," he said. "I would tell people the Navy was a great decision for me. I'm really impressed with the technical training so far."

Greninger said he has found "very good leaders and role models in the Navy." He is applying for the Seaman to Admiral-21 Program anticipating a naval officer commission.

Cholette worked as a tattoo artist and fortune teller before joining the Navy late last spring after deciding she wanted more out of life.

"I was doing OK financially, but I wasn't sure what I saw for my future," she said. In boot camp, she earned meritorious advancement to E-2 and said she really surprised herself with how well she had adjusted to military life.

CNET Central

"Before I joined the Navy, I would not have thought of myself as the type of person who would enjoy a military career," she said. "The Navy has really boosted by self-confidence. I'm a totally different person today then I was in May."

Cholette plans to attend Fire Controlman "A" School following completion of the advanced electronic core division. She also wants to be stationed on the East Coast and believes she will make a career of the Navy. "I can see myself as a master chief," she said.

"The Navy really recognizes achievement," she added. "It has surpassed by expectations by far. I think the Navy is

much more focused on people than I expected. People really care about motivating you and helping you to succeed."

Both students are particularly thankful to their Recruit Division Officers for the leadership provided to them.

CNET Central

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNS0907 HSL-41 Launches Seahawk University, story by Navy Journalist 3rd Class (Surface Warfare-qualified) Christopher C. Fowler, Chief of Naval Air Forces Pacific Fleet Staff Journalist

NAVAL AIR STATION NORTH ISLAND, SAN DIEGO (CNS) -- During a recent speech to the Naval War College's Current Strategy Forum, Secretary of the Navy Gordon England described his vision for the Navy. He listed his top four priorities as an emphasis on combat capability, people, better business practices and advanced technology. After his speech he told reporters, "We need to have an environment for people to excel."

A local helicopter squadron is taking the initiative to create an environment where its service members may improve their quality of life by pursuing a college education.

North Island-based Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron Light 41 (HSL-41) has begun offering an education program designed to make an education more accessible to its service members. HSL-41's program accomplishes this goal by bringing college to its Sailors.

CNET Central

HSL-41's Command Career Counselor And Education Service Officer, Chief Petty Officer Kenda L. Robison spearheaded the project from the beginning. "For many Sailors, taking the first step toward a college education is the most difficult. I contacted Navy College to help tailor a program that would help more sailors go to school."

Upon HSL-41's command career counselor's request, the Navy College Office accessed all of the squadron's service member's Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) scores, Sailor and Marine Corps American Council on Education Registry Transcripts, and educational histories to help identify service members within sight of completing college degrees. Additionally based on ASVAB scores,

college courses benefiting the largest number of Sailors are scheduled to be the first offered at the newly christened Seahawk University. As the year progresses, the schedule will progress from introductory to more advanced classes.

HSL-41 hosted an education fair to kick off the program for all the HSL squadrons. Service members were offered financial counseling during the fair. More than 10 local colleges and universities set up booths to enroll prospective students. To further streamline the process, HSL-41 helped Sailors understand and complete tuition assistance and registration forms.

Instructors from a local university came to the squadron to teach two or three days a week. HSL-41's Petty Officer 3rd Class Stephanie Casares has been actively pursuing a college degree on her own for over two years. "It has been very difficult juggling my work schedule and class schedule," said Casares. "There have been many times when I was so tired from work that I believe my school work may have suffered." She said the program should be a big help for Sailors wishing to attend college. "The new program will make it easier for Sailors to take advantage of educational opportunities by making it possible for them to incorporate college into their already busy workdays."

CNET Central

Petty Officer 2nd Class Shane Terrel was among the first HSL-41 Sailors to enroll in classes at Seahawk University. "The program is great. The courses are being offered during the afternoon and the evening so I'm able to fit school into my already busy schedule," Terrel said. "In the past it was very difficult to go to school because my work hours are not always fixed. Now I'm well on my way to completing my bachelor's degree. I am going to put in a package for an aviation officer commission."

Terrel also said Seahawk University is having a two-fold affect on HSL-41. "Since the command has demonstrated an interest in its members, I have noticed a real boost to command morale and camaraderie. I'm meeting people at my squadron I never got a chance to talk with before," said Terrel. "I have even received phone calls from other squadrons from people asking if there were positions open in my shop. They want to transfer over to HSL-41 so they might also attend college. The word is out -- HSL-41 is the place to be."

Anyone wishing more information on Navy educational opportunities should contact Navy College at 619.545.9589.

CNET Central

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNS0908 NTTC Names Gardner Top Instructor, story by Sandy E. Bansemer, Naval Technical Training Center Corry Field Public Affairs

PENSACOLA, Fla. (CNS) -- "If you don't have the desire to succeed, then you won't make the sacrifices necessary," says Cryptologic Technician 1st Class Donna J. Gardner, a technician and the Naval Technical Training Center, Corry Station Instructor of the Quarter for the April-June 2001 period. "It's also very helpful to have a support system in place, whether it's family, friends, or co-workers."

Gardner is lead instructor and assistant course manager for the National Operational Electronic Intelligence (OPELINT) Analysis course of instruction at the training center.

"She ensures her students graduate with confidence and a thorough knowledge of OPELINT, and attain analytic skills contributing directly to fleet combat readiness," says Cmdr. Mike Lambert, DIRECTOR of Training. "Her exceptional technical knowledge and ability to motivate students to achieve academic excellence are demonstrated on a daily basis. Staff and students seek out her guidance and instruction on complex training issues."

CNET Central

"Petty Officer Gardner's outstanding performance is routinely recognized by superlative comments on student critiques and instructor evaluations," said Lambert. "She continually seeks out additional opportunities to positively impact her course, the training division, and the young Sailors assigned to NTTC Corry Station."

A native of LaGrange, Ga., Gardner enlisted in the Navy in September 1989. Prior to arriving at Corry Station in December 1999, she served at Naval Security Group Activity Norfolk, Va.; Personnel Support Detachment (PSD) Jacksonville, Fla.; PSD Charleston, S.C.; and PSD Rota,

Spain. During her Navy career, she has earned three Navy Achievement Medals and three Good Conduct Medals.

Gardner is also a Sexual Assault and Victim Intervention Advocate and has participated as a volunteer in such community service programs as Habitat for Humanity, Rape Crisis Center Hotline, and Career Day at Helen Caro Elementary School in Pensacola. She says her favorite off-duty activities include genealogy, reading, biking, and being outdoors with her son, 6-year-old Jordan.

"The things I have achieved have been meaningful to me," said Gardner, who currently holds an associate degree in managerial studies and has set several goals for herself including earning a bachelor's degree, attending graduate school, and promotion to chief petty officer.

"Petty officer Gardner represents the initiative and hard work it takes to succeed in today's Navy," said Marine Corps Master Sgt. Larry A. Hultberg, National OPELINT course manager. "She takes charge in getting the day-to-day things done and then leads the way in better preparing Sailors to do their job in the fleet."

CNET Central

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNS0909 CNO, Fleet leaders address Mine Warfare Conference

PANAMA CITY, Fla. (CNS) -- The Mine Warfare Association held its annual convention recently in Panama City, Fla., with nearly 220 military and civilian attendees representing military commands, research and development professionals and industry representatives.

While the theme of the conference focused on assessing the current status of sea mine warfare, speakers, including the Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Vern Clark, and Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, Adm. Robert Natter, focused on the future.

The three-day conference included a review of lessons learned in previous conflicts, including a discussion from former Vice Chief of Naval Operations, and Naval Component Commander during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm retired Adm. Stanley Arthur. Fleet leaders and industry panels addressed concepts, ranging from naval mining and mine countermeasures strategies, to requirements issues and education and training initiatives.

CNET Central

In the past, these issues were the primary concern of the cadre of Sailors and officers in the Mine Warfare Fleet. Naval mine warfare issues will gain a much wider audience in the very near future, as the mainstreaming initiative develops.

With the recent signing of the mine warfare Concept of Operations (CONOPS) by Natter, a principal mine warfare commander will be assigned to each battle group, making mine warfare a primary area of responsibility. The CONOPS document provides a base from where training and implementation can begin.

“The Concept of Operations will be the single most important document in helping us transition from a purely dedicated force to one in which we have both organic and dedicated forces that complement one another in tactically useful ways,” said Rear Adm. Jose Betancourt, commander, Mine Warfare Command.

That document, along with the doctrine, tactics, and training that goes with it, will become the foundation for getting the mine warfare concept embedded into the fleet.

“Mine Warfare clearly is the kind of core war fighting capability we must have in the future to be successful,” Clark expressed. “I am convinced that the likelihood of a potential adversary stepping in the ring with us to fight toe-to-toe is not too likely. The challenges that we will face will be asymmetric threats. Clearly, sea mines are the (primary asymmetric) tools that tomorrow’s enemy is going to try to deploy against us to deny us access."

CNET Central

Former Mine Warfare Commander, retired Adm. Chuck Horne was encouraged by both the level of participation and depth of discussion at the conference.

“When you’ve got three-and four-star admirals, including the CNO, fleet commanders and battle group commanders looking at it, then mine warfare becomes a core competency, which it must be in the 21st century for all Naval officers,” Horne said, “not just those associated with the mine warfare fleet.”

--USN--

--USN--

--USN--

CNS0910 Bearings Leads Troubled Sailors in Positive Direction, by Lt. j.g. Erik Reynolds, Commander Naval Surface Force U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

SAN DIEGO (NWS) -- Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman Roberta Newman knows that if it were not for Bearings, she would not still be in the Navy. The pilot Bearings program, operated by the Regional Support Organization (RSO) at Naval Station San Diego, helps at-risk, first-term Sailors develop healthy, positive attitudes that will contribute to their professional and personal success.

"Bearings was my moment of realization," said Newman, who had already begun to out-process from the Navy when she entered the program. She was frustrated with the Navy, and her supervisors were frustrated with her performance. After Bearings training, she asked her supervisors to stop the paperwork from going through.

CNET Central

The students are mostly younger, first-term Sailors who have not been subjected to a non-judicial punishment (NJP), but who are experiencing adjustment problems at their commands. Bearings officials said the rules have been recently amended to include Sailors who have been to NJP for minor offenses, and those who were advanced to petty officer third class under accelerated advancement.

Chief Signalman (Surface Warfare-qualified) Martin Coladonato, an instructor with Bearings, said the high attrition rate among first-term Sailors contributed to the need for such a program.

"When a Sailor drops out of the Navy, the lost training investment can be staggering," Coladonato said. "The estimated cost of sending a Sailor to boot camp and a non-technical 'A' school is approximately $26,000. For a technical rating it can be $58,000. When the Navy loses a

Sailor, they lose the investment made in that Sailor, thus requiring the Navy to expend more money on training a new Sailor."

A recent posting on the Bearings Web page described one applicant as being a candidate for Sailor of the Quarter who has "recently lost her way." The Sailor began to demonstrate problems with training and discipline.

"This is the type of applicant that we can help," said Coladonato.

The Bearings staff believes this new program will provide direction and much-needed attention to these troubled Sailors, before they develop consistent patterns of misconduct, or drift into substance abuse.

"We tell everyone who comes here that it is a non-punitive program," said Lt. Aaron Shelton, the program director. "I tell them that if their commanding officers didn't think they were worth something, they wouldn't be in the class enjoying a two-week break from work."

CNET Central

The program isn't just two weeks away from their job though; it's two weeks of teaching Sailors to develop focused thinking, decision-making practices, and personal accountability.

The course covers communication skills, anger management, alcohol abuse and financial responsibility. It also includes two days with the Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation. Bearings staff members often seek help from Sailors who made bad decisions in their time in the Navy.

Prisoners from a brig in Miramar, Calif., were recently brought in to visit the Bearings students; their ranks attached to their sleeves with Velcro. As the prisoners

tell their stories of the wrong decisions they made, they rip their ranks off and talk about the consequences of their actions.

"I went into Bearings thinking that my problems were huge," said Newman. "I realized that they were not as bad as I thought."

The program, so far, has been judged a success. Twelve classes are scheduled for the year, with six already completed. The program also tracks the personal development of Sailors once they return to their commands.

"When we started, we expected only a 30 to 40 percent turnaround of program participants," said Shelton. "So far, the turnaround has been far better, with more like 90 to 95 percent of program participants staying Navy."

CNET Central

Bearings is expected to continue. Mobile training teams are planned so the course can be offered at commands in Guam, Hawaii and Japan. The addition of a team-building, bonding and trust course is also being considered.

"Our biggest success so far has been the number of Sailors that have turned around," Coladonato said. "Our biggest challenge though, is getting the word out about the program."

Newman is grateful that her command got the word. She now thinks that everyone should attend the course, and the instructors at Bearings agree.

"The Navy is the best thing I ever did, and I don't want to mess that up," said Newman. "The class was effective. I'm not going to quit. I'm going to stay Navy and do my job."

For information on Bearings, go to http://www.rso.navy.mil/Bearings/BearingsHome.html.