

New education opportunities to come online soon

by JO1 Brigette Barnes, CNO Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- In a recently released message to commanding officers about the Navy Education Vision, Adm. Jay L. Johnson, Chief of Naval Operations, said he wants to place immediate emphasis on incorporation of educational accomplishment into each Sailor's career - both officer and enlisted - to provide Sailors today with the opportunity to make lifelong learning a reality.

CNO has approved the implementation of a program for the enlisted force called the Navy College Program, which would simplify and enhance the opportunity of every Sailor to earn a college degree.

"In the past, young people joined the Navy to get money to go to college after their service," said Adm. Johnson. "Now, young people will join the Navy to go to college while serving their country. This is a powerful notion, and one which will benefit the Sailor, the Navy and the nation."

The Navy plans to form partnerships with accredited universities and colleges that will grant credit to Sailors for training and experience gained in their career field, in addition to those credits earned through traditional education.

"Targeted to come on-line in October, I believe this program will have a direct impact on career satisfaction, individual readiness, recruiting viability and force retention," said Adm. Johnson. "The Navy College Program will be geared toward the realities of life at sea, and we will use the Internet to provide Sailors with on-line access to their college transcript."

For the officer corps, a series of programs will be implemented to provide every unrestricted line (URL), restricted line (RL) and staff corps officer the opportunity for advanced education as a normal part of their career. According to CNO, every career officer will be afforded the opportunity to attain both a relevant graduate degree and appropriate professional military education (PME). New opportunities for officers, such as "tuition assurance," a program offering full tuition payment for selected career officers, and "the Washington D.C. Intern" program, will be offered as early as this Fall.

Two new programs will be offered by the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) to meet the needs of URL officers - the Systems Engineering and Integration curriculum and the Information Strategy and Operations curriculum. Additionally the Naval War College will continue to expand its seminar and correspondence programs to reach broader portions of the Fleet. According to CNO, this expansion will include partnering with NPS to offer PME to all Navy students at Monterey.

Adm. Johnson also said that new emphasis and funding priority will be placed on the development of distributive learning courses for both PME and graduate education. "The bottom line is that educational milestones will continue to rise in importance in an officer's career path, irrespective of designator," said the CNO.

"Our goal is a better-educated force from seaman to admiral, a force fully prepared for the uncertainties which lie ahead," said Adm. Johnson.

Details on the implementation of these new programs will be explained in upcoming weeks through a series of Navy-wide messages and information channels.