



AVIATION MENTORING INITIATIVE (AMI)

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From the Flight Deck of the Senior Reserve Aviation Flag:

Being More Than a Capable Mariner

RADM Mark "Beave" Leavitt

Thoughts on being a Capable Mariner...so what does Beave mean by this? After all, you are not a Mariner, you are a naval aviator, naval flight officer, maintenance professional, or aviation support person. Well, when you remove the warfare pin, professional breast device, or enlisted aviation warfare pin (think enlistment or commissioning oath) then we are ALL just sailors...and therefore Mariners.

Capable, as defined by Webster's is as follows: "having attributes (to include items such as physical or mental power) required for performance or accomplishment." This is a great place to start...to be capable one does not have to be a rock star, wunderkind, or genius. To be capable, one only has to apply themselves to the job at hand, understand the expectations of their boss, and know the mission assigned. Whether that understanding is of the CNO's Campaign Design or your unit's N-code directives, it really does not matter. Your ability to directly affect things is significantly greater at the lower echelon; however, taking ownership of strategic direction is just as important.

From my perspective, being a Capable Mariner means understanding yourself, understanding both your strengths and weakness, and then using them to your advantage. We all have talents and blind spots. Being cognizant of your strengths and weaknesses allows you to successfully leverage both.

When I left the Replacement Air Group (RAG) for my first squadron, I had no idea what to expect. My first fleet CO had a fantastic way of indoctrinating

nuggets into the squadron. When you walked in the door, you were immediately handed both an open and closed book NATOPS exam, then followed by a NATOPS evaluation flight. "Wait," I said to myself, "I just graduated from the RAG, I know this stuff cold...so why am I taking ANOTHER battery of these tests?" Well, when I went in to see the CO for my welcome aboard office call, he explained the why. He wanted to be sure I understood the jet and its systems, that I was capable of handling an emergency in the airplane when there might not be an instructor around, and most importantly, that I was there to fly his airplanes tactically. He went on to tell me that I would not be getting a ground job for 3 months so I could concentrate on the Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) not covered at the RAG. I was assigned an experienced BN who had already completed a deployment and his job was to not only teach me, but to evaluate me and report back to the Skipper on my progress towards becoming a capable combat aviator.

Wow...a great sea story, but what does that have to do with becoming a Capable Mariner? That 90-day window became a benchmark for the rest of my career. Whether it was a new job, squadron, staff position, or command, I have always challenged myself to become capable, qualified, fluent, studied etc. to be able to support my boss, my subordinates, and my peers in the missions and tasks assigned during the first 90 days. Once I understood the mission, certainly not mastered it, but developed the requisite skills to be effective in my new position, I set about really getting to know the people I was there to support. The more senior I became, the more pressure there was/is on "pleasing" the boss; however, that doesn't mean becoming a politician, equivocator, or sycophant. I learned that the best way to please your boss is not by sucking up but rather by being capable in your job.

We can achieve great things and our bosses expect us to be the best we can be, just as our subordinates and our peers do. There are lots of distractions out there whether you are an E4 to O9. Finding the balance for managing distractions is key to your success. Learn the skills that make you effective in your job and focus on them for the first 90 days. That will make you a Capable Mariner.

All the Best...and BE SAFE!!

/Beave



*VFA-204...bringing it home!!
(Sep 2017)*

The AMI Team wants to hear from YOU! Help us serve those who serve by completing a simple, anonymous, four question survey on mentoring and professional development in the Navy Reserve. Please see the link below or at the end of the newsletter and share your opinions with our team!!

[AMI SURVEY LINK](#)



AET2 Travis Murphy assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 3, Southern California Offshore Range (SCORE) detachment, directs an MH-60S helicopter after range flight operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Chad M. Butler/Released)

Flag Perspectives:

Who Are You?

RDML Matthew O'Keefe

The question seemed simple enough; however, as I sat in the interview contemplating my answer, the seconds seemingly turned into hours. The interviewer asked to describe myself with one word. One . . . single . . . word. In a desperate attempt to come up with the perfect answer, my mind began to race assessing potential consequences for the myriad of potential responses. There was just too much data to analyze. Of one thing I was certain, whatever answer I gave would instantly become my personal brand. It would go to the core of who I was as a person, as a professional, and even as a military Officer. My answer would shape my future behavior both publicly and privately, through my attempts to either live up to or modify my actions to justify it. The interviewer reassured me that there was no right answer; I quietly reminded myself that there were certainly a lot of wrong ones.

First and foremost, everything you do influences your personal brand. In fact, your daily actions form the foundation for your reputation. Though there are many subcomponents to this foundation, I'll focus on three core metrics you can employ in your self-analysis – and I highly encourage you to do so.

The first core metric is what you do when no one is watching? The Navy invests substantial time and resources fostering ethical behavior, so ask yourself, is it just lip service or do we truly mean it? The second metric is how you treat those who work for you. It is easy – and wise – to treat those you work for with the utmost respect and professionalism. Do you do the same for your direct reports? To check, I offer the following litmus test: Ask someone who used to work for or with you for advice, assistance, something, anything. Their response will speak volumes about how you treated them in a prior life. The third core metric focuses on how you behave in a crisis. Anyone can be a great person, a great leader, or a great team player when things are going well. However, when a crisis arises, do you dramatically change your behavior? Do you treat your teammates differently? Do you fundamentally alter your decision calculus under stress? Bottom line, our actions and decisions in crisis reveal our true nature and speak volumes from a brand perspective.

As a Junior Officer, I gave absolutely zero thought to my personal brand, but I did recognize what was professionally important to me. As a helicopter pilot by trade and an SH-60B Seahawk helicopter pilot by the Grace of God, my sole focus was being the best pilot and best Airborne Tactical Officer in my squadron, my Wing, and the Fleet. It is up for debate whether I achieved these goals (Ok . . . no), but my dedication to the SH-60B NATOPS and OPNAV 3710 was resolute. These were my bibles and helped me become the NATOPS Officer in my Fleet squadron, the FRS, and as the first NATOPS Officer at HSL-60. If you flew with me, you had better know your procedures. That was my brand and I was proud of it. However, my singular focus severely limited my professional diversity. That critical diversity came later and only from necessity after I was banished from the RESFORON with APPLY orders to join the “real” Navy Reserve.



*TRAWING FIVE over Whiting Field
(Aug 2016)*

I had the pleasure of serving in units supporting 4th Fleet, 5th Fleet, and 6th Fleet with a short detour through Navy Warfare Development Command (NWDC) before landing smoothly in the NEPLO “mafia.” At each command, I gained different perspectives through supporting our Navy’s mission in broad and unique ways. My first disaster relief experience came during the Haitian recovery of 2010. Additionally, I gained enormous respect for our Joint and international partners during combat operations in Libya and witnessed unparalleled dedication to duty and country from our civilian and State Department teammates in Djibouti. At each stop I met amazing leaders, both civilian and military, who were subject matter experts in critical missions supporting Our Navy and Our Nation’s objectives. Inadvertently, I built a network of amazing COs, XO’s, CMCs, Junior Officers, Senior Enlisted, and civilian leaders to whom I could reach out to for guidance, support,

and the occasional course correction we all need from time to time. Each of these leaders has one thing in common: I trust them implicitly and admire the way they conduct themselves. Without naming names, they know who they are and for that I am eternally grateful. Simply put, there is life outside the RESFORON and it is tremendously rewarding. And even if you are on track for the brass ring and cool parking spot by the squadron's front door, I strongly recommend you execute some ADT funds supporting a Fleet exercise, assisting with a special project at an Echelon 1 or 2, or as a member of a COCOM planning team. If you dare, I promise you will meet some incredible folks along the way.

Your personal brand will be built over time whether through conscious endeavor or allowing fate to guide your destiny. While both COAs hold some appeal, I humbly recommend leveraging lessons from corporate America on the value of brand and using a roadmap to create one. That being said, we all have certain products or companies that have earned our loyalty. They project a distinct identity and value proposition that resonates within us. What do people value when comparing Target versus Walmart? What about burgers at McDonald's versus Five Guys? Does Starbucks even have a peer comparison? Each is a tremendously successful corporation with specific core values and distinctive attributes. Like these iconic organizations, you need to "Build Your Brand." And building your unique value proposition comes through professional excellence, warfare proficiency, career diversity, operating efficiently outside your comfort zone, performing brilliantly in crisis, and taking care of your people. My advice...get started today.

I would be negligent in my dissertation if I did not mention a key risk that can both enhance and instantaneously sabotage a promising career. Stating the obvious, we live in an age where presence on social networks is now part of your core being. While technology enables global connectivity, your actions on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or LinkedIn must never over-shadow your personal or professional reputation. These sites are valuable tools to enhancing your network, but must never be the sole source for developing your brand.

Some day you may be asked to describe yourself in one word. Hopefully, this thesis will have prepared you for this question. But if not, you can always do what I did. Ask someone you emulate to describe

themselves in one word and then steal that answer. For me, that person was my father. And yes, I got the job...and I've spent every day since living up to that one . . . single . . . word.

So...who are YOU?

RDML O'Keefe sends!



CAREER COMPASS HOMEPAGE LINK

EDITOR'S NOTE: RDML Matt O'Keefe has been named the Flag Lead for the Navy Reserve Mentoring Network. A passionate advocate of mentoring, future *On Wing* issues will highlight his messages on the initiative's deployment. In the interim, RDML O'Keefe highly encourages all to visit the Career Compass Site via the Navy Reserve Homeport for program updates, resources, and mentoring requests.

FLIGHT LEADS

CNAFR RESFOR SQUADRONS

Can a Reservist Be a Blue Angel?

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"The Blue Angels represent the finest from the Navy and Marine Corps. Each member, whether Officer or Enlisted, is hand-picked from the fleet to be part of the Blue Angels team."

from **BLUE ANGELS**

In 2003, I joined the Blue Angels as a new Demonstration Pilot. An F-14D guy by trade and now flying the F/A-18, I wondered if Navy P-3 pilots were eligible to fly the Team's transport aircraft. The Blue Angel C-130T, better known as "Fat Albert," has "US MARINES" painted on it. But, all of the F/A-18s have "US NAVY" painted them and Marine Corps F/A-18 demo pilots have been flying those for decades.



Blue Angels in formation practicing for an upcoming air show

Eight years later, I learned that the Marine Corps neither owns nor provides the Blue Angels with their Fat Albert C-130T. In fact, it is provided by the Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA).

As background, there are five Navy Reserve squadrons of C-130Ts comprised of FTS and SELRES pilots, loadmasters, and maintainers. All are fully qualified in the C-130T and provide outstanding support to the fleet. Can they apply to the team and compete for selection?

Imagine for a moment, a Navy Reserve Component Sailor standing tall as a Fat Albert crew member. Envision the value this would drive for recruiting, retention, and pride in the Navy Reserve. An additional benefit of Reserve Component augmentation to the Team frees up high demand, low density Marine Corps resources to fill critical fleet billets. This is true for support staff, maintainers and aircrew as well.

What about the F/A-18 Hornets? The Navy Reserve Tactical Support Wing has FTS and SELRES F/A-18 pilots and maintenance personnel who are fully qualified to fly and maintain F/A-18 Hornets. Can they compete for spots on the Blue Angels? With pilot shortages across the board, does it make sense to open competition for Blue Angel selection to the Reserve Component Force? We seamlessly integrate with our Active Component counterparts both at sea and ashore...why not at this level? Just think how many of our Reserve Component Aviation brothers and sisters grew up dreaming of representing the Navy on this elite team?

But wait, there's more! The Blue Angels also need support Officers and Enlisted to do their mission...dedicated experts in Public Affairs,

Supply, Medical, Administration, and Events Coordination. Additionally, roles are not limited to pilots or maintainers...for example, Blue Angel #8 is an NFO and the Team Executive Officer can either be a pilot or an NFO. All of these skill sets are resident within the Navy's Reserve wheel house.

Though highly competitive, the application process is really straightforward, with multiple face-to-face interviews required. Applicants must exhibit unwavering character, an infectious personality, and be a good fit for the team. The application message is typically released each January and details application procedures for the upcoming season.

For screened Enlisted applicants, the process includes a weekend with the team, usually at an airshow near the Sailor's duty station. The applicant shadows a team member, getting firsthand exposure to life with the Blue Angels. Team members are also able to gauge the character, personality, skill set, and fit for the elite Enlisted Corps.

Officer applicants attend several shows to meet the wardroom, observe the flight briefs, and experience the demanding requirements of a tour representing the US Navy 24/7. As you can imagine, just making it to this point means you are truly the best of the best in the US Navy and Marine Corps.

The Navy's Sailor 2025 initiative improves and modernizes existing personnel management and training systems to more effectively recruit, develop, manage, reward, and retain the force of tomorrow. Key tenets of the initiative include the following:

- Enable ease of movement back and forth between the Active and Reserve Components.
- Build inclusive teams that leverage our Sailor's diverse backgrounds, experiences, and skillsets to improve our warfighting capacity and readiness.

Our Navy is proudly diverse and embodies a "total force" mantra tightly integrating both Active and Reserve Component Sailors. The Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron represents us all: Active and Reserve, Navy and Marine Corps. The team provides a public facing connection to both our civilian supporters and to the future cadre of Sailors

that will volunteer to serve in our Navy. I firmly believe the first Reserve Component Blue Angel is currently in our ranks, and I challenge all of Navy Reserve Aviation to realize that dream and make it reality.

Instead of asking “Can a Reservist become a Blue Angel?” ask yourselves the better question: “Will I be a Reserve Component Blue Angel?”

Please contact me if you have questions or need guidance on successfully navigating the selection process: john.saccomando@navy.mil

References:

[SAILOR 2025](#) [CNATRA 1301.4](#)

[CNATRA 1331.1](#) [NAVADMIN 16020](#)



Fat Albert flies in support of the 2017 Team

CNAFR FRS SAU AND TSU SQUADRONS

Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Opportunities (VUP SAU)

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Responding to requirements for persistent, long range, Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Targeting (ISRT) systems, Broad Area Maritime Surveillance-Demonstrator (BAMS-D) testing began almost 9 years ago in Patuxent River, Maryland. The Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) proved so successful that it soon became an integral part of the Navy’s long-term aviation acquisition plan.

Fast forward...the follow-on MQ-4C Triton debuted in September 2017, as Operational Testing commenced for the first two aircraft. With a

wingspan longer than a P-8 Poseidon, the Navy’s UAS can soar nearly 11 miles above the ground, stay airborne for more than 30 hours, and do all this while flying above most weather conditions. It represents a critical node for delivering combat information to operational and tactical users such as the Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG), Carrier Strike Group (CSG) and the Joint Forces Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC).



MQ-4C on the taxiway at NAVAIR (Jun 2017)

The first Triton squadron and the associated Squadron Augmentation Unit (SAU), VUP-19, stood up in 2016, located at NAS Jacksonville, Florida with forward operating bases at NAS Point Mugu, California, and Andersen AFB, Guam. The SAU has 108 billets (12 FTS / 96 SELRES) comprised of 43 Aircraft Vehicle Operators (AVO), 20 Tactical Coordinators (TACCO), and 45 Mission Payload Operators (MPO). Sourcing requirements for each role are as follows:

- AVO: Pilots from any community, VP/VQ preferred
- TACCO: Naval Flight Officers from any community, VP/VQ preferred
- MPO: Any AWO/AWR with the following NEC’s: 7861,7862,7873, 7875, or 8284

Active Reserve Integration was built into this program from the beginning, with the SAU tasked with providing qualified aircrew that seamlessly support the VUP flight schedule. The Reserve Component is ramping up to provide 20% of the production by the 2023 Full Operating Capacity (FOC) milestone. This is a significant new opportunity for Navy Reserve Aviation to support the warfighter with cutting edge capability.

VUP-19 SAU is a Flex Drill Unit. Selected SAU personnel can anticipate beginning the Fleet

Introduction Training (FIT) in late 2018. Once qualified, aircrew will be expected to provide four operational days per month.

Pilot and NFO SELRES positions are filled via CNAFR affiliation boards held twice per year, in the Spring and Fall. AW SELRES openings are advertised via CMS-ID, or affiliation boards for those who don't meet the CMS-ID requirements. Information on unmanned aircrew requirements (Survival Training waivers, medical waivers, flight time limits, etc.) can be found in CNAF M-3710.7 (Chapter 14, UAS Policies and Operations).

With about half of the billets currently filled this is a great opportunity for aviators from various backgrounds to get in on the ground floor. Job satisfaction will be high while performing real-world missions from CONUS using state of the art technology. For more information please see the Triton Brief under Focused Resources on our [COMMUNITY PAGE](#) or contact me at the following: joseph.moorhouse@navy.mil



*The Men and Women of VUP-19
(Nov 2016)*

CNATRA

Career Management vs Careerism

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If you have read this far into Volume 6 of *On Wing*, odds are you are interested in managing and advancing your Navy Reserve career. Based on feedback I have received, the Aviation Mentoring Initiative (AMI) and *On Wing* newsletter are filling knowledge gaps across the force on how to manage one's NR career. Learning how to write better FITREPs, finding a mentor, applying for new billets, targeting the next career qualification, schools to attend, and building your record are topics we are championing.

So now, I'll offer some counterintuitive advice: Don't worry about any of it!! Go to your next drill day and focus with gusto on flying the hop, getting the X, executing your Unit's mission, engaging your Sailors, and having fun.

Why do I say this?? Career management concerns should enter our scan after we have mastered the fundamental blocking and tackling associated with mission and people success. The recent (and much needed in my opinion) focus on career management is great and becomes powerful when equally balanced by developing networks and investing in relationships. I view career management as getting credit for the work you have done (making sure your record is up to date) and building knowledge on how your skills best serve the Navy (Warfare community awareness, understanding the APPLY process).

The Navy Leader Development Framework highlights the importance of two factors: Character and Competence. If you have not read this document, I HIGHLY encourage you to do so ASAP. The following highlights the program's goals in the pursuit of developing world class leaders:

"Top leaders inspire their teams to perform at or near their theoretical limits. By making their teams stronger, they relentlessly chase "best ever" performance. They study every text, try every method, seize every moment, and expend every effort to outfox their competition. They ceaselessly communicate, train, test, and challenge their teams. They are toughest on themselves; they routinely seek out feedback, and are ready to be shown their errors in the interest of learning and getting better. When they win, they are grateful, humble, and spent from their effort. By doing all these things, great leaders bring their teams to a deeply shared commitment to each other in the pursuit of victory."

We can all remember serving with a squadron mate or CO who put advancing their career ahead of everything else. The one whose every action was designed to maximize their chances for promotion. I challenge each of you to humbly be better than this...to focus your brand on achieving Character and Competence in all you do. Use the knowledge and networking afforded by the AMI to build awareness on the many opportunities for Sailors (Officers and Enlisted) across the Navy Reserve.

When you build a strong foundation of service to your command and to your people, career management becomes a natural extension of your conscious endeavors.

See below link to the Navy Leader Development Framework
NAVY LEADER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

ENLISTED PERSPECTIVES

You Asked...We Listened

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The expectations of young men and women joining the Navy today far exceeds that of when I joined the Navy 30 years ago. Equally, the expectations on them have increased dramatically as well. Our newest Sailors prepare for a Navy that must address emerging and traditional threats in an ever-changing geo-political environment. They require our Sailors to work in dynamic environments leveraging increasingly complex systems. Soon, policy implementations will change how Sailors are trained, evaluated, and advanced, resulting in a Force better prepared to maintain global maritime superiority.

Information Technology is changing at a rate so fast current training methods cannot keep pace. Thus, without significant re-engineering, we cannot expect our Sailors to be the very best trained warfighters possible. Our sister services have adopted incremental career training which focuses on professionalism, leadership, and technical rate training at designated career milestones. Through the Navy's Sailor 2025 program, we are already implementing a new paradigm called Ready Relevant Learning (RRL). The transition is a multi-step process with modernizing courses taught across the Navy's 70 Enlisted ratings.

Career development includes more than just training. Our current evaluation system is almost 20 years old and also needs modernization. This month, selected commands will pilot a new evaluation process. Imagine a system where a Sailor joins their new command and receives a first evaluation on the check in anniversary rather than pre-determined annual schedules...envision a

system based on individual performance and qualifications rather than group assessments and rankings. How many reading this article have been asked to provide eval inputs shortly after arriving simply because it was "that time of the year?" Then, you were ranked against your peers, and because you were "new," you received a "P" with encouragement to keep doing what you're doing to receive higher marks. The main reason for the change is three-fold: First, to implement a system providing meaningful, frequent, and useful feedback to Sailors; Second, to objectively measure Sailors' performance; and Third, to remove artificialities in our current system and truly manage to performance standards rather than the calendar.

Imagine again, an ATAN at their first unit Career Development Board (CDB). During the discussion, they are provided a concise roadmap of requirements for advancement to 3rd class. In this scenario, there would be no need for E-4 advancement exam, rather Sailors would be promoted based on performance and qualifications attained. I share with you that this type of performance based advancement system is being evaluated. Roughly 25% of all advancements this year will be through the Meritorious Advancement Program (MAP). This initiative authorizes Commanding Officers (COs) to advance eligible personnel in paygrades E3, E4, and E5 to the next higher paygrade, thus equipping command triads with the tools necessary to recognize their best and promote Sailors when they prove they are ready for responsibility at the next level.



*VP-62 completing engine maintenance
(Feb 2017)*

The three initiatives highlighted here are revolutionary and very exciting. There is a saying that "what got us here won't get us there." There is another saying that "the only thing constant is change." By investing in the next generation of

Sailors, we preserve our proud traditions as the greatest Navy in the world. We seek to ensure our Navy continues to maintain maritime superiority and our 2025 Sailors are ready, capable, and equipped to meet the challenges of tomorrow. NAVY STRONG!!!



A Sailor uses the Multipurpose Reconfigurable Training System 3D® to train on the Mobile Electric Power Plants (MEPP) system for ground support equipment. MEPP is the first of many aviation operations and maintenance training applications coming to the fleet. (Jun 2017)

FULL TIME SUPPORT (FTS)

Networking 101...The Importance of “Physically” Reaching Out

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Technology and social media changed the tools of networking dramatically. Websites such as LinkedIn, Indeed, Instagram, and Facebook rapidly expand our rolodex, but let me ask a rhetorical question: How well do you REALLY know everyone in your virtual network? I firmly believe that a good old-fashioned handshake makes a much more lasting impression than the rapid, impersonal clicks of a virtual introduction.

Back in the day, FTS Department Heads attended Change of Command ceremonies at sister squadrons and this practice was highly encouraged. In tight knit communities, sharing stories and a cold beverage built foundations for lifelong friendships that spanned careers. It also provided invaluable networking opportunities. Bottom line, there is nothing like putting a face to a name, and these events did just that. Junior Officers met those legendary Senior Officers, who generally were decision makers and influencers within their

communities. This investment in relationships paid huge dividends, and still does so today.

So, the point of this *On Wing* article is to say that within both small and large communities, it is important to engage seniors, subordinates, and peers across both face to face AND virtual networks. Strong records definitely keep you competitive and increase your chances of making it to the final round; however, sometimes who you know is that extra differentiator getting you across the finish line. Remember, first impressions are lasting. I highly recommend getting up from behind the computer and engage people in your unit, your community, and across the Navy Reserve in actual conversations...just like we did before social media.

Though strapping into a P-3 for a Change of Command ceremony may be in the past, I venture there are still opportunities to deepen your network if you are only willing to invest in a simple, good old-fashioned handshake. Over the course of my career, I found that our Navy keeps getting smaller and smaller; therefore, building strong and diverse relationships is a valuable endeavor.

Please feel free to drop a line if you have any questions scott.k.fuller@navy.mil, and if you see me in the fleet, please come up, look me in the eye, and extend your hand. I promise, just like back in the day, to return that good old-fashioned handshake!

OPERATIONAL PLANNING, EXECUTION, AND ASSESSMENT (OPEA)

Networking and Communities of Practice

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As the fall leaves turn, kids are back in school, football season is in full swing, and the new APPLY assignments take effect 01 Dec. For approximately 1/3 of the Senior Officers (O-5 and above) as well as Junior Officers and Enlisted, during this time of year units experience significant organizational change. Perhaps you just picked up a new role in an OPEA unit, or maybe you currently serve within OPEA and your thoughts have turned to professional development and network expansion. First, why do you want to expand your network,

particularly as an OPEA person? With 2300+ Officer billets alone, the OPEA community is a diverse and major force among traditional augment units (or what we like to call “the real Navy Reserve”). Having a well-developed OPEA peer and mentor network is invaluable, especially for skill set development and career advice. As the articles in this issue emphasize, managing these two critical elements accelerates your career. Be willing to expand your aperture...take risks by doing something new that opens doors down the road.

As ‘Duck!’ shared in the last *On Wing* issue, available exercise support roles are sometimes outside your comfort zone. When you are a strike/fighter guy or gal and slated to work ATO production, you are likely in somewhat familiar territory. However, when asked to lead the Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) academic phases for a combined exercise, you might find it helpful to have a few SWO SMEs in your network. Leveraging peer experience provides insights and best practices that shallow the learning curve as you progress through the JELC (if you did not know the acronym for Joint Exercise Life Cycle, reach out to me, join my network, and I’ll help you out!).

Bottom line...a robust network helps you achieve mission success, and it is a force multiplier for your professional development. Drawing from my own experience, after 17 years of working for aviator Commanding Officers, my initial FITREP debrief and career counseling session with my first SWO CO offered significantly different perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of my record. These insights helped me think in different ways about developmental milestones, school opportunities, and what AQDs and NOBCs can say about career potential.

So, how does one build a network? In my view, the key to building a network centers on activities that engage a community of practice. Two examples of such activities are formal schools like Executive Level OLW Course [ELOC](#) or Maritime Staff Officer Course [MSOC](#) and skills development events such as the annual Warrior Training Program. Often sponsored by fleet-level “Federations” these yearly events emphasize operational level of war skills in high demand by respective Commanders. Examples include USFF’s “Warfighter Prep” hosted in Norfolk back in July as well as C3F’s upcoming event in January 2018. If you support one of these fleet federations, I highly encourage attending!! If you’re not in such a unit, try to sign up on a space available basis – there is

almost always room. By participating and contributing, you become integral to the community of practice and network building is a valuable by-product.

Lastly, a plug for the OPEA Pillar’s effort to build a “virtual” community of practice. The ultimate goal is fostering on-going conversations that link aviation, surface, submarine, and staff corps counterparts in sharing best practices, mentorship, insights on professional development, and ultimately further cultivating OPEA skills. To that end, we are looking for a couple aviators, especially those with Fires, Targeting or NALE experience, to assume a leadership role in building our online resources.

If interested, reach out to me directly at scott.ruston@navy.mil and we can discuss the initiative in more detail.



Reserve personnel of USFF MAO NALE Team supporting SAR efforts at Air Ops Center (AOC) Tyndall in response to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria.



[NAVAL WAR COLLEGE PROGRAMS LINK](#)

Looking for a good read...try
“*A Design for Maintaining
Maritime Superiority.*”

[LINK TO "DESIGN"](#)

SYSCOM

ONR, NRP, SPAWAR, OPNAV

Joint Qualification System (JQS)

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Why go Joint? The simple answer may be that Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) is a discriminator at selection boards, as per current board guidance: Digging deeper, one quickly realizes it is much more. The Joint Qualification System (JQS) is one of the best formally structured development programs for mastering leadership skills I have ever experienced. While it took me approximately 12 years from the time I applied for JPME I to become a Joint Qualified Officer (Level III), some of the cornerstones of my success as a CO/OIC have their origins in my journey through the JQS.

When I initially signed up for JPME I, I expected a graduate level tactics course. It greatly exceeded my expectations. The course introduced me to the complexities and challenges of joint campaigns and equally how important leadership becomes when immersed in a Joint environment. To be an effective leader at the Operational Level of War (OLW), you must be familiar with all our respective Services, how they organize, train, equip...you must understand their strategy, culture, communication, logistics and more. This is no easy task! The choreography required to focus the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and other government agencies into a single "unified action" that can effectively counter an evasive and persistent opposing force is the equivalent of advanced level calculus.

Most of my joint points were earned during my mobilization to the Multi-National Corps-Iraq C3 Air Shop, an organization that provided valuable leadership experience. I learned how to develop concise guidance / strategy, clearly communicate intent in a diverse and complex environment, and developed a deep understanding of how organizations behave, function, and communicate - something of which I was blissfully ignorant as a JO burning holes in the sky. Seeing this "big picture" and how to work the current situation while shaping the environment for the "long game" were invaluable skills to master during my OIC/CO tours...none of which were covered in my NATOPS manual.

So, you may be asking...What is JQS? The Joint Qualification System (JQS) was enacted by Congress to ensure the systematic development of Officers in "joint matters" and ensures a Flag Officer has the knowledge and experience in the same. The definition of "joint matters" is lengthy and there is a lot of gouge on the subject. But understanding joint is a little like poker, the fundamentals can be achieved relatively quickly but to actually "speak joint" and become proficient takes a longer amount of time.



Staff Identification Badge for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The basics of JQS include two education milestones (JPME I and JPME II) and career experience. All services offer JPME I via their respective War Colleges (distance, online and residency options) with JPME II offered via the Joint Forces Staff College and senior service college programs. The primary path for experience is a full tour in a Joint Duty Assignment List (JDAL) billet; however, experience and discretionary points can be earned through mobilizations, exercises, training, and/or applicable civilian experience through a self-nomination process. See the NPC website for more details: [JOINT DETAILING](#)

Sun Tzu stated "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles." Joint qualifications are all about knowing yourself, and when I mean "yourself," I mean our country's Armed Forces as an instrument of national power. Becoming a "Purple Suiter" can be a key part of your professional growth, a career-enhancing qualification, and the knowledge, skills and abilities acquired are transferable to any unit or organization you join in the future ... but don't forget ... FLY NAVY!

Reach out (robert.mark@navy.mil) for guidance on navigating the Joint Qualification process!!!

IMPROVING YOUR BRAND

In business, “brand” is everything. It results from a company’s products, marketing and reputation. As discussed in this edition, your efforts in and out of uniform define your personal brand. In this section, we highlight opportunities that improve your brand through professional development, leadership qualifications, courses, and board participation!

WARRIOR TRAINING 2018

The annual Naval Reserve Warrior Training seminar is an intensive, 3-day symposium focused on cross-community Warfighting Readiness. This program is open to all warfare designators and supports the Navy’s “Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority” Warfighting and High Velocity Learning LOEs by increasing relevant, essential warfighting capabilities and knowledge.

The 2017 event was held in San Diego, CA and included 60 participants (not including briefers) across nine different warfare designators. This year’s event will be held in Norfolk, Virginia from 21-24 Jun. Keep an eye out for the GovDelivery announcement for applications.



2017 Warrior Training Participants touring the Littoral Combat Ship, USS FREEDOM (Jun 2017)

BOARD PARTICIPATION

AVIATION COMMAND SCREEN

This link [AVIATION COMMAND SCREEN BOARDS](#) provides information on the most recent screen board results, convening orders, slates, and lessons learned. Check often for updates!

BOARD SUPPORT

Members and recorders are still needed for a number of Promotion Boards [FY-19 BOARD SCHEDULE](#). Contact LCDR Sherman for Board opportunities: kevin.sherman@navy.mil

LEADERSHIP COURSES AND QUALIFICATIONS

RESERVE OFFICER LEADERSHIP COURSE (ROLC)

All Officers are required to attend leadership training at least once every five years. The Senior Officer Leadership Course (SOLC) and the Reserve Intermediate Leadership Course (RILC) courses satisfy requirements and are important components in your career development and ability to effectively lead others. SOLC and RILC schedules can be accessed via this link: [ROLC](#)

NAVY RESERVE AUGMENT UNIT (NRAU) CO / OIC AQD 2N1

For Officers in pursuit of NRAU CO or OIC billets through the APPLY Board there is a PQS program to aid you in preparing for positions of leadership. Successful completion of this program qualifies Officers for assignment of the 2N1 Additional Qualification Designator (AQD) which became a discriminator this year for those applying for leadership positions.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

C3F-Sponsored Joint Warfighter Prep:

San Diego, CA 18-21 Jan 2018

POC: LCDR Jackie Felber

jacquelyn.felber@navy.mil

Executive Level OLW Course (ELOC):

Newport, RI. Class 18-1: 04-08 Dec 2017

Quotas via OSO to CNRFC N7

Joint Air and Space Operations Senior Staff Course (C/JSSC):

Hurlburt, FL. POC: CDR Jason Garrett

Jason.garrett.7@us.af.mil

Joint Targeting School Staff Course:

Dam Neck, VA. POC: YN1 Aaron Buss

aaron.buss@navy.mil

(757) 492-0277

Joint Operational Fires and Effects Course (JOFEC): Ft Sill, OK.

POC: CWO4 Robert Charnel

robert.l.charnell.mil@mail.mil



*San Juan Puerto Rico OCT 3, 2017: The Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS COMFORT (T-AH 20) arrives on station for Hurricane Maria relief operations. Hundreds of Navy Reserve personnel assisted in the planning and execution of relief efforts in the wake of hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria, and Nate.
(Photo by Ben Freeman, United States Naval Institute OCT 2017)*



Your AMI team is here for you!
Please take a moment to answer a quick, four question survey:

[AMI SURVEY LINK](#)

Thank you, this survey will help us better understand you, our reader.

Let us know how we can best serve those that serve.

We are available at the links below.

Email: nr-ami@googlegroups.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CNAFR/>