

THE QUARTERDECK



Naval District Washington (NDW) Monthly Newsletter

VOL. 16 MAY 2023



The Culture of Excellence and You

We, the Naval District Washington (NDW) community, are on the journey together to foster a Culture of Excellence (COE) throughout our region. We hope that this monthly newsletter will be a useful resource for cultivating an NDW COE.

Check out the Mind, Body, and Spirit section for articles on self-compassion, greater happiness through exercise, and spiritual readiness.

In May, NDW celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, and Jewish American Heritage Month.

Check out this month's edition for the following:



Month of the Military Child Event Wrap-ups



NDW's Katie Stratchko wins Exceptional SARC of the Year Award.



Volunteer opportunities with Everybody Wins DC.



Upcoming programs at the new Museum of the United States Navy.



LEADERSHIP AND YOU

A message from the Chief of Staff on staying safe throughout the 101 Critical Days of Summer.

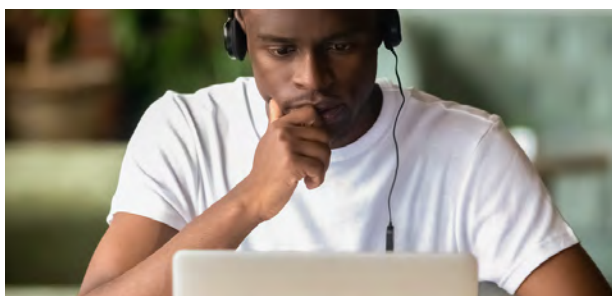
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MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT

Thoughts on self-compassion, how exercise boosts your mood, and an Arlington National Cemetery chaplain's reflections on spiritual readiness.

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COE RESOURCES

Additional information, recommendations, and links to TED talks, books, etc., that support our well-being.

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DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY

NDW honors Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month and Jewish American Heritage Month. Also, volunteer opportunities with Everybody Wins DC, and new programs and volunteer opportunities at the Museum of the United States Navy.

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VOICE OF THE EMPLOYEE

How Ms. Andrea Smallcombe brings some Easter cheer every year to kids and their families in her community.

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Katie Stratchko wins Exceptional SARC of the Year Award. And see a wrap-up of Month of the Military Child events and activities.

[Read More](#)



SERVICES FOR YOU

Information on HURREX texts. Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month and the work ahead. And a grateful Military Appreciation Month message to all our Service members.

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THINGS TO DO AROUND YOU

Each month, we're bringing you family-friendly and budget-friendly recreational activities throughout the Region.

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FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS

NDW bids farewell to all recently retired or departed Service members and civilians.

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CONNECT WITH US

Got a suggestion, or a comment you'd like to share? We welcome your ideas and feedback. Feel free to contact us.

[Read More](#)



Leadership and You



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF STAFF:

Team NDW, welcome to summer...well almost. While summer does not “officially” begin until well into next month, we all tend to mark the beginning of this season with the celebration of Memorial Day weekend. This should be a fantastic time for all of us to enjoy the outside with friends and family and explore all that the local area can offer, but this is also statistically one of the most dangerous times of the year for our personnel. The 101 Critical Days of Summer are upon us, and I just wanted to take a moment to stress how important each and every one of you is to our mission and our NDW family. As you venture out during this always memorable part of the year, please make sure to think through your fun and prepare appropriately for whatever activity you plan to engage in. This should be a time to make amazing memories, so I simply ask that you take a moment to plan, prepare, and enjoy it responsibly. As you have heard me say before, be smart while you are being stupid. Have fun, make memories, and be safe!

---**CAPT Grahame Dicks, COS**



Leadership and You



THE NDW COMMANDING OFFICER'S SUGGESTION PROGRAM IS LIVE!

Here is your chance to share your ideas on how we can make our Region function better and/or address any identified concerns you may have.

Although the form requests contact information, it is not required, and anonymous suggestions/concerns may be submitted. All input will be reviewed and addressed as appropriate. Please note, providing contact information allows for follow-up questions and discussion regarding the input that has been submitted.

The Commander's Suggestion Box can be accessed from clicking the icon above or from any of the following locations:

- [NDW G2 Landing Page](#)
- [NDW G2 Team Site](#)
- [Commander's Suggestion Box](#)

Please share your ideas and concerns. We want to hear from you!





Mind, Body, and Spirit



IT STARTS WITH SELF-COMPASSION

By Rick Docksai
Editor

If your best friend, partner, or spouse was going through a tough time, would you show them some kindness and compassion? Of course you would. Even if you don't know how to fix their problems, you'd surely be there for them and let them know that you care. It's what we do for those we love. Now for the next question: When you're having a bad day, do you show this same kindness and compassion to yourself?



Mind, Body, and Spirit

IT STARTS WITH SELF-COMPASSION (CONT...)

“Self-compassion” is a valuable part of being mentally healthy, in the opinion of psychologist Dr. Kristin Neff. She calls herself a “self-compassion evangelist” and has spent the last 20 years researching, teaching, and publicly speaking about practicing self-compassion ([URL: https://self-compassion.org](https://self-compassion.org)).

She defines self-compassion as “treating yourself with the same care and concern with which you would treat a good friend.” And she says it has three components ([URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11UOhODPu7k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11UOhODPu7k)):

A Sense of Kindness

Accept yourself, and don't judge and criticize yourself too harshly.

A Sense of Common Humanity

Know that everyone screws up and feels disappointed in themselves from time to time. Don't think you're alone, uniquely bad, or abnormal, or that your life is uniquely unfair.

Mindfulness

Acknowledge to yourself when you are hurting, and take time to sit with the hurt and address it in healthy ways.

All of this is easier said than done when we're in the thick of things not going our way. We miss a deadline at work, get rejected by a crush, or have an argument with a friend, and then we feel like we're falling short of what we want ourselves to be. We may almost instinctively go into self-recrimination mode, or wonder “Why me? Why is my life so frustrating all the time?” Or we may immediately try to fix the situation or fix ourselves.

“Often when things go wrong in our own lives, we go straight into problem solving mode, and we don't stop to turn toward the suffering and say, ‘I need to give myself some caring and compassion to help get me through this,’” she says. “Before going straight into fixing problems, just acknowledge and validate how difficult the situation is.”

And then, make an effort to be kind to yourself:

“When you're kind to yourself, you want to comfort yourself when you're suffering. You want to soothe yourself. It's an active stance of ‘I want to do whatever I can to help myself feel as good as possible in this moment,’” she says.

Don't think that this is about going easy on yourself, however. Being kind to yourself doesn't mean you get complacent with yourself, or that you don't try to work on those areas of yourself that need some work. You be 100% committed to self-improvement, and still practice self-compassion. The two can go hand in hand.



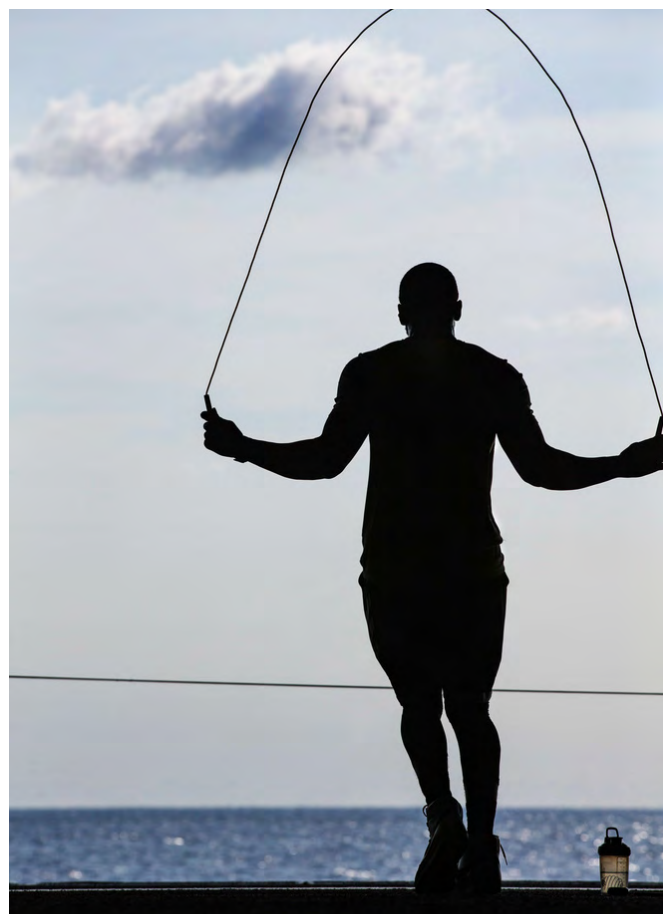
Mind, Body, and Spirit

IT STARTS WITH SELF-COMPASSION (CONT...)

In fact, they have to, because you need some self-compassion in order for self-improvement to start—and stick. You need to believe that you can make yourself better, and that you're worth the time and effort it take to get better. If you only judge yourself and put yourself down, you're not going to be very motivated to make a better you, are you?

Self-care, personal growth, and personal resilience are COE themes that we explore in this month's Quarterdeck. Check out this month's COE Resources, and you'll find a Huberman Lab podcast on managing stress and eating healthy when you're stressed. We also have a talk by ex-Navy SEAL Jocko Willink on how exercise improves both the mind and the body. And a talk by counselor Julia Kristina on setting healthy boundaries with others.

All of these things are good for you. All of them take work. And all of them, if you're going to do the work and stick with it, start with giving yourself compassion.



EXERCISE AND HAPPINESS

By CAPT Pickett
NDW SAPRO and COE Champion

Would you be surprised to learn exercise/movement has been scientifically linked to increasing one's happiness? In this month's COE resource section, the TED Talk "The Exercise Happiness Paradox," Chris Wharton explains how exercise at its most basic "can immediately and acutely make us feel better." The problem Chris has seen, in his over 15 years of experience, is exercise is rarely thought of in terms of how it makes us feel. Rather the focus is always on how we look, and how we look is influenced by self-sabotage and comparison.



Mind, Body, and Spirit

IMPORTANCE OF MOVEMENT (CONT...)

To stop the self-sabotage and comparison, Chris asks us to try four things:

Stop Being So Hard On Ourselves

Social comparison leads to toxic self-talk. Chris encourages us to practice gratitude for the things we have, rather than put ourselves down over the things we think we lack.

Find Something You Enjoy, and Do More of It

Find an exercise you enjoy...dance, weight lifting, etc. There is no right or wrong exercise, as long as you enjoy it.

Measure Performance and NOT Your Weight

Chris explains using weight as a measure of performance can ruin your mood and mindset in an instant. Instead set small performance goals, because when achieved they will help us to keep moving forward.

Make Time for Movement Non-Negotiable

Take 20-30 minutes of time a day to focus on your well-being. Whether exercising, taking a walk, or relaxing and stretching, this time is for you.

In the podcast **“How Exercise Helps us Find Happiness, Hope, Connection, and Courage,”** with Dr. Kelly McGonigal, we learn exercise is the best reset for our brain; the science behind why we get an “exercise high” and “feel ‘strong” after lifting weights; and even how exercise changes the structure and function of the brain in people who are regularly active. These changes occur in ways that teach the brain how to be resilient to stress and more sensitive to joy.

Dr. McGonigal explains the research which shows how exercise affects stress resiliency and our mental health. She describes how muscles manufacture proteins and peptides, called myokines, whenever we move our bodies in exercise or any type of movement. Some of these myokines have the strongest effects on our brains. They act as an antidepressant and make us more resilient to stress. Dr. McGonigal further explains all of our muscles, with any type of movement, will release these myokines, which in turn support our health and brain resilience. Additionally, there appears to be a dose response relationship. In other words, the more you move and the harder you do the movement, the more myokines will be released. Think of it as “increasing your dose” of movement.





Mind, Body, and Spirit

IMPORTANCE OF MOVEMENT (CONT...)

The great news is any type of movement is good movement. If you cannot move your legs, then focus on moving your arms or core. If you are sitting in the office or on the couch, keep a small set of dumbbells next to you. During a break or commercial, bang out a couple of reps of dumbbell curls. Or do a set of squats during your movement break. Any and all movement helps in maintaining a healthy body and a healthy mind.

I would like to close this month with a reminder and challenge for everyone. Remember we are entering into the 101 Critical Days of Summer, and the Navy Safety Center's 101 Critical Days of Summer has been released and can be found here:

<https://navalsafetycommand.navy.mil/2023-101-Critical-Days-of-Summer>.

Enjoy finding new ways to move your body!

I challenge everyone to continue moving your body and make self-care a priority.

Exercise can and should be fun! Chris Wharton says it best: "Exercise is the single greatest happiness hack that has ever existed. To reap the benefits, we have to give ourselves permission to fall in love with how it makes us feel and NOT how it makes us look."



SPIRITUAL READINESS: ANOTHER APPROACH

By Chaplain Regina Johnson
Arlington National Cemetery Chaplain

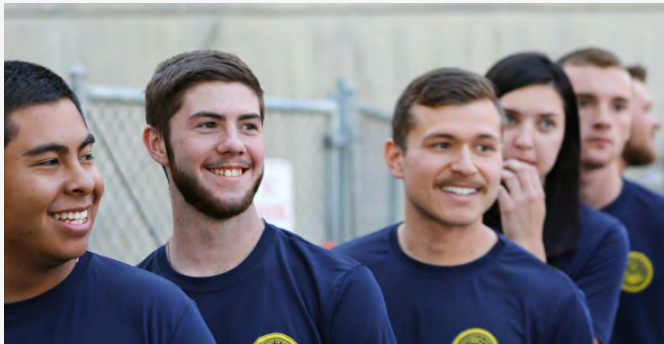
In my role as chaplain, I have noticed that often commanders can easily tell how well their equipment is ready to deploy. Yet I believe that the real challenge for commanders in the military is to measure the spiritual readiness of their Sailors.

Despite our best efforts, Sailors may find themselves facing stressful situations, either as the result of their own making or from the actions of others. These stressors can impel Sailors to engage in any number of risky behaviors harmful not only to themselves, but to their units and/or their loved ones, as well. For many of today's 18- to 25-year-olds, their spiritual life is not well formed. Many times, they don't make good decisions because they don't know how.



Mind, Body, and Spirit

SPIRITUAL READINESS: CONT..)



The data is clear. Spiritual readiness maintains realistic optimism and a belief in the ability to survive and function as a good Sailor. Most of us have thought about how to prepare for storms. But in a nation where economic issues, isolation, and extremism are testing the resilience of Sailors and their families, spiritual readiness is as important as ever.

In my chaplain's office, I often hear a question: "How can I be prepared?" This is a time of great change for us in terms of how impactful we can be in the development of strong and resilient Sailors. Research shows that humans are born spiritual—even though we may not be religious—and that spiritual wellness is as important as physical, mental, and emotional wellness in building resilience and empowering our Sailors to live healthier, purpose-driven lives. Fitness of mind, body, and spirit is inherently connected with military service and it cannot be ignored or postponed.

Today, I want to challenge you all to consider the importance of the science of spirituality to our Sailors. More than ever, it's important to be caring for Sailors with a strategic mission. It is imperative to integrate spiritual fitness into our plans of action. This young generation deserves a new approach in order for them to be engaged in leadership practices that positively encourage and motivate them to build personal resilience and enhance readiness.

I believe leaders have the ability to establish connections and instill values that can be impactful for Sailors and for the Navy. I am committed to helping educate Service members and their families to understand the real meaning and impact of spiritual readiness. My focus is to optimize the military communities' ability to better understand, assess, and maintain mind, body, and spirit as part of their wellness resources. Together, we can reach out to our Sailors, particularly those in transition, to assist them in managing family and professional responsibilities and coping with life stressors.

We can also offer to our personnel what Sailors need. And it can't be bought. It can't be borrowed. It doesn't store well. And it has to have been used regularly and recently.

This is my invitation. Come and join me.

Chaplain Johnson is stationed at Arlington National Cemetery and is ordained in the Baptist tradition.





COE Resources

This section is geared towards providing additional information, recommendations, and links to more COE resources (TED talks, books, etc.) that support our psychological, physical, and spiritual well-being and growth.

TALKS

Talk: Why Fitness is Essential for a Disciplined Life.

Physical fitness will help you in every facet of life, says Navy SEAL and motivational speaker Jocko Willink. He explains that a workout routine doesn't just condition your body: It empowers your mind and will, and strengthens your self-discipline. And the stronger your discipline, the more able you will be to create the life you want. As Willink says, "discipline equals freedom."

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTV1jCPoEkM>



NAVY CULTURE AND FORCE RESILIENCE

N17's newest monthly newsletter has arrived! Check out May's Edition of the Navy Culture and Force Resilience Office (OPNAV N17).

https://media.defense.gov/2023/May/23/2003228634/-1/-1/0/N17%20NEWSLETTER_MAY23_V6_FINAL.PDF



CEO Resources

TALKS (CONT...)

Talk: How to Stop Being a People Pleaser and Set Good Boundaries.

Healthy boundaries are not only essential for relationships; they are also central to our mental health, notes counselor Julia Kristina. In this talk, she describes the problem of “people pleasing” and how it stops us from setting good boundaries. Then she outlines ways to stick to your boundaries so that you can improve your relationships, stop feeling taken for granted, stop feeling resentful, start being able to say no, and take back your true freedom. URL:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Do-axZwjhCE&t=6s>



TEDx Talk: The Exercise Happiness Paradox.

How can you manipulate your brain to achieve greater levels of happiness? Can you be so inspired that your daily exercises bring you joy and increase your self-esteem? Chris Wharton, fitness entrepreneur and creator of the Exercise Happiness Paradox, shares four key strategies to practice for greater levels of energy, mood, and overall health, along with positive long-term changes in our physiques. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8so1WZ4j1oQ>



How to Grow From Your Pain.

We can't avoid feeling pain, frustration, or loss at times in life, but we can change how we think about these negativities—and make them less negative for us—according to bestselling author Mark Manson. He explains how we can “engage with our pain,” and treat painful or difficult experiences as opportunities to grow, change, and become more resilient. URL:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSmMX8JbOFs>





CEO Resources

PODCASTS

Huberman Lab: Dr. Elissa Epel: Control Stress for Healthy Eating, Metabolism & Aging.

Dr. Andrew Huberman is a neuroscientist who shares cutting-edge tools and techniques for optimal self-care, physical health, and personal resilience. In this episode, he speaks with University of California-San Francisco psychiatrist Elissa Epel, who discusses stress's impacts on our moods, bodies, eating behaviors, and aging, and shares a variety of tools for reducing stress, improving health, and curbing "stress eating." URL:

https://open.spotify.com/episode/7oA4uYqm4FMqcReKQ7oQSP?si=LHugSWhBS5WAJqL8_8DBaA



Feel Better, Live More with Dr. Rangan Chatterjee: #352 How Exercise Helps Us Find Happiness, Hope, Connection and Courage with Dr. Kelly McGonigal (Re-Release). April 11, 2023.

This conversation is all about movement; why it is essential for our brains, our bodies, and our relationships. Dr. Kelly McGonigal, a Stanford psychologist and award-winning science writer, shares insights and science about movement. The conversation talks about music for movement, how moving with others can improve social connections and foster a sense of support and community, and that movement does not have to be hard. URL:

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/5CprGILaA9J20KUYiPi1NE>



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Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

By Desmond Boykin
EEO Specialist

Congress approved a joint Congressional Resolution (Public Law 95-419, 95th Congress) on Oct. 5, 1978, authorizing and requesting the President to proclaim the 7-day period beginning on May 4, 1979, as **“Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week.”** The week coincides with two dates: May 7, 1869, the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States, and May 10, 1869, the **“Golden Spike Day,”** the day that the Transcontinental Railroad was completed. Congress extended the week to a month with their joint Congressional Resolution (Public Law 102-42, 102nd Congress) on May 14, 1991. Public Law 102-450, which Congress passed on Oct. 23, 1992, permanently designated May of each year as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month and authorized and requested that the President issue annually a proclamation asking Americans to observe the month.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders of various nationalities and ancestry—Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Southeast Asian, Asian Indian, and Polynesian—have a rich legacy of service and sacrifice in the United States Navy dating back to the 19th century. The U.S. Navy had maintained a presence in East Asia since the 1830s to safeguard American interests during the Chinese civil unrest. Ships whose crews counted men of Asian descent on the Asiatic Station protected U.S. commerce, missionaries, and diplomats in the region. During the American Civil War, Chinese men served on dozens of Union vessels. The U.S. gunboat *Ashuelot*, part of the Asiatic Fleet, operated along the coast of China, up the Yangtze River, and among the Japanese treaty ports and carried a crew in 1883 that was four-fifths Asian-born from Thailand, Japan, or China.



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH (CONT..)

Notable Sailors of Asian and Pacific Islander Descent

Fireman 2nd Class Telesforo Trinidad, a Sailor from the Philippines, received the Medal of Honor for rescuing two shipmates after a boiler exploded aboard USS San Diego (Armored Cruiser No. 6) on Jan. 21, 1915.

Lieutenant Susan Ahn Cuddy, a Korean American who served in the Navy as a member of the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) and became the first woman gunnery officer.

Rear Admiral Ming E. Chang became the first naturalized Asian Pacific American naval officer to reach flag rank when he was promoted to rear admiral in 1980.

Senior leaders, including Rear Admiral Peter A. Gumataotao and Rear Admiral Ron J. MacLaren, have continued the tradition of leadership and service.

Command Master Chief Josephine Tauoa became the first Samoan command master chief on Feb. 26, 2020. Her first command master chief assignment was aboard USS *Chung-Hoon* (DDG-93), named in honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Rear Admiral Gordon Pai'ea Chung-Hoon.



Ships Named for Asian American and Pacific Islander Service Members

Chung-Hoon (DDG-93) is named in honor of Rear Admiral Gordon Pai'ea Chung-Hoon, commander of USS Sigsbee (DD-502) during World War II. He received the Navy Cross for his actions during an April 14, 1945, kamikaze attack.

Daniel Inouye (DDG-118) is named in honor of Senator Daniel Inouye. Senator Inouye served in the U.S. Army during World War II and received the Medal of Honor for his actions on April 21, 1945, in a battle near San Terenzo, Italy.

Pililaau (T-AKR-304) is named in honor of U.S. Army Private First Class Herbert Kailieha Pililaau, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor during the Korean War.

Yano (T-AKR-297) is named in honor of Sergeant First Class Rodney James Takahashi Yano, U.S. Army. Sergeant Yano was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions near Bien Hoa, Vietnam, on Jan. 1, 1969.



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility



JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

By Desmond Boykin
EEO Specialist

Jewish American Heritage Month is an annual recognition and celebration of American Jews' achievements and contributions to the United States of America during the month of May.

President George W. Bush first proclaimed the month on April 20, 2006, as a result of cooperation with Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA), as well as the Jewish Museum of Florida and the South Florida Jewish Community. Since then, annual proclamations have been made by Presidents Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden.

In 2020, the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia repositioned Jewish American Heritage Month to empower communities across the country to celebrate the inspiring history of Jewish people in America; educate diverse public audiences about Jewish culture; and spark crucial conversations about the American Jewish present and future.

According to the Library of Congress hosted website [JewishHeritageMonth.gov](https://www.loc.gov/jewishheritagemonth), May was chosen as the month of Jewish American Heritage Month because of the successful 350th Anniversary Celebration of Jews in America, marking the Jewish arrival in New Amsterdam.

EVERYBODY WINS DC

By Desmond Boykin
EEO Specialist

Everybody Wins DC (EWDC) uses reading to engage children's minds, encourage their growth, and inspire their futures. Key to this effort is making sure children have home libraries filled with exciting stories that foster a love of reading and learning. That's why EWDC's Book Project gives away 10,000+ free books each year. But more important is that 70% of those titles are considered diverse, giving all young readers a chance to see themselves— and their dreams— represented on the pages. Diversity in children's books also creates windows for kids to see into communities and cultures beyond their own, promoting empathy, inclusion, and understanding.

Power Readers Program

Power Readers is a one-on-one mentoring program that connects volunteers with elementary school students to read together one hour a week during the academic year. Through these supportive relationships, children strengthen their reading skills, build social and emotional competencies, and learn about new opportunities and experiences.

Power Readers sessions are offered both at school (in-person) and after school (virtual). For the in-school program, students are recommended to EWDC by teachers and other school professionals. Once matched, students and mentors can stay together for the duration of the program. All elementary school Power Readers mentors come via EWDC corporate and civic partnerships and general outreach. EWDC trains and supports all mentors to ensure they are best meeting their students' needs.



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

EVERYBODY WINS DC (CONT..)

EWS hosts Power Readers at Van Ness Elementary School (ES) (1150 5th St. SE, DC). It plans to host Power Readers in at least six other locations next year, along with more virtual after-school sessions. The other school locations include:

- Thomson ES (1200 L St. NW, DC)
- Savoy ES (2400 Shannon Pl. SE, DC)
- Tyler ES (1001 G St. SE, DC)
- J.O. Wilson ES (660 K St. NE, DC)
- Innovation ES (2300 Key Blvd., Arlington, VA)
- JoAnn Leleck ES (710 Beacon Rd., Silver Spring, MD)

Storytime Program

StoryTime hosts small group reading events that use the power of books and reading to help children develop their own skills and interests. Volunteers share books or selected texts with students and participate in guided discussions. For younger students, StoryTime events model positive literacy behaviors while exploring topics like perseverance, empathy, and cultural exploration. For older students, StoryTime uses books to explore key themes, including career awareness, social emotional growth, and social justice.

The Book Project

The Book Project is a free distribution program that gives away thousands of books each year to children and community partners with a focus on stories that elevate voices and experiences often under-represented in children's literature.

The Book Project gives away books directly to students participating in Power Readers and StoryTime as well as through distribution events at schools and community locations. EWDC also maintains 21 Little Free Libraries in high need areas across the Washington Metropolitan Area and continually fills them with books that highlight characters, perspectives, and communities of diverse backgrounds.

Calling for NDW Volunteers

There are two events happening in June, which NDW is invited to participate in:

Career Day at J.O. Wilson ES

June 2 (9:30am-11:30am): One of the schools has asked EWDC to support their upcoming career day by including EWDC volunteers and partner organizations. They are planning to set up stations around the school and have kids visit each and talk with volunteers about their career paths. At this point, there is no formal reading event tied to this, but they are trying to have books available for kids based on the different careers that the volunteers represent.

StoryTime Reading Events at Tyler ES

June 7 (morning – time TBD): EWDC will be at Tyler ES in support of their Literacy Day. They will be hosting small group reading activities with students in the younger grades and would love to have volunteers from the Navy Yard read to kids.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Desmond Boykin at desmond.l.boykin.civ@us.navy.mil



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

EVERYBODY WINS DC (CONT..)

DEIA SHAREPOINT SITE

By Desmond Boykin
EEO Specialist

You can now find the DEIA Resource Library here:
[Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Resource Library - Home \(sharepoint-mil.us\)](#)

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

By Desmond Boykin
EEO Specialist

If you have a few hours to spare during the week or on Saturdays, the new National Museum of the U.S. Navy needs your help. Volunteers are needed as front desk greeters, tour guides, and to help with public programs and special events.

Museum Education Department
paul.h.perry4.civ@us.navy.mil
202.433.4995



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY - UPCOMING PUBLIC PROGRAMS

By Desmond Boykin
EEO Specialist

June 10, 2023 | 1030 to Noon | Museum Bldg. 76 Walking Tour of the Washington Navy Yard

Museum Educator Mike Galloway takes visitors on a historical tour on the grounds of the Washington Navy Yard, and reveals more history of the grounds and its buildings than meets the eye.

June 21, 2023 | Noon to 1300 | Virtual Pride Month Program, Tribute to Harvey Milk

Stuart Milk, the nephew of slain gay activist and former Navy officer Harvey Milk, talks about his famous uncle, the work his foundation does to educate the public on LGBTQ+ issues, and his thoughts on the DoD naming a research ship (USNS *Harvey Milk*) in his uncle's name. *Note: This is a virtual program and will be aired on the museum's Facebook page on the date and time indicated.*

June 24, 2023 | 1030 to Noon | Museum Bldg. 76 Walking Tour of the Washington Navy Yard

Museum Educator Mike Galloway takes visitors on a historical tour on the grounds of the Washington Navy Yard, and reveals more history of the grounds and its buildings than meets the eye.



Voice of the Employee

What does COE mean to you personally? Know a coworker, team, or group that fosters a COE? Every edition, we invite readers to share their thoughts and stories.



NDW'S ANDREA SMALLACOMBE VOLUNTEERS AS THE EASTER BUNNY

By Rick Docksai
Editor

When 2020's pandemic isolation weighed heavy on children and families in her central Pennsylvania community, NDW Labor and Employee Relations specialist Andrea Smallacombe found a way to brighten their day: She became the Easter Bunny. Donning a bunny costume, she visited and brought some Easter cheer to members of the Red Shoe Crew, their children, and the children of friends in her community.

And a new Easter tradition was born: Every year since, Ms. Smallacombe has donned her bunny attire and visited families with children in the area, wishing them a Happy Easter.



Voice of the Employee

NDW'S ANDREA SMALLACOMBE VOLUNTEERS (CONT...)

"I did it just to be silly and kind of lighten the mood of what we were going through, and it's just kind of taken off from there," she said. "People have reached out in the years since and said, 'Hey, is the bunny making an appearance this year?' And so I've done it every year since."

Ms. Smallacombe has volunteered for nearly seven years with the Ronald McDonald House, which supports families of sick children and gives them a place to stay near the hospitals where their children are receiving life-saving treatments. She's also a co-chair of the Red Shoe Crew, a young professionals organization that provides activities at the Ronald McDonald House for the families in residence and helps the House with its annual fundraising events.

But being the Easter Bunny wasn't something new to Ms. Smallacombe. It all started with her late uncle, who got the bunny costume to dress up every Easter for her and the other children in her family. Later, when his health started to fail, she took over for him.

Then came 2020, when the Ronald McDonald House cancelled a planned Easter Egg Hunt due to COVID. Ms. Smallacombe got an idea: "I asked a friend to drag me around to the houses of some of the Crew members and surprise them dressed up as an Easter Bunny. I also reached out to a few families who have children who would like a visit for the Easter bunny to lighten the mood."

This resulted in one neighborhood hosting small Easter egg hunts in their individual front yards for their kids while Ms. Smallacombe walked the street and took pictures with neighborhood kids, and did the same for kids of some of her coworkers.

The Easter Bunny has returned year after year. And she's gained more and more young fans. This year, she finally got the opportunity to support the Ronald McDonald House while in costume. Cubby's Ice Cream, a local ice cream shop not far from the Ronald McDonald House in Hershey, PA, hosted a community photo op so that parents could bring their kids for photos with the Easter Bunny. The shop donated a portion of the proceeds of that day's ice cream sales to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Pennsylvania. And the Bunny got to spend time with families from the community as well as families from the Ronald McDonald House.

"It's been a really neat experience to be able to offer that to people who may not want to take their kids and stand in line at the mall and pay for photos," she said, adding: "It's morphed into something that I think my uncle would be really proud of, to know that his legacy lives on. And every year, it brings my aunt such joy to see me dress up and go out and carry on his tradition."



Do you work with a coworker, team, or unit that fosters a culture of excellence? We would love to highlight their efforts/story. Please contact the NDW COE Newsletter team to share their story. NDW_COE_Newsletter@us.navy.mil



In the Spotlight



KATIE STRATCHKO WINS “EXCEPTIONAL SARC OF THE YEAR AWARD” FOR SERVICE AS NDW SARC

By Rick Docksai
Editor

As a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), Katie Stratchko has managed programs assisting victims of sexual assault in the Naval District Washington (NDW) region for over four years. The Department of Defense (DoD) recognized her work by awarding her 2023 Liz Blanc Exceptional Sexual Assault Response Coordinator of the Year in a ceremony at the Pentagon on May 11.



In the Spotlight

**KATIE STRATCHKO WINS
“EXCEPTIONAL SARC OF THE YEAR
AWARD” (CONT...)**

“Ms. Stratchko demonstrated unrivaled devotion to ensuring victim services and operation of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program were at their peak performance,” reads the award citation. “She has remained a stalwart in the program, unflinchingly assisting stakeholders to overcome and adapt to obstacles as changes occur.”

The DoD issues the award each year to six SARCs—one for each branch of the Armed Forces and the National Guard—for noteworthy achievements managing or coordinating SAPR programs. Stratchko’s nomination came from Natalie Wade, NDW regional SARC.

“Katie is excellent at meeting whoever she’s working with where they are at. And that could include anyone from the highest-ranking person in the Navy to a victim or victim advocate,” Wade said.

Stratchko began working in the NDW region in 2018 as a lead SARC for Naval Support Activity (NSA) Washington, and was promoted in 2022 to one of two Regional Support SARCs for the whole NDW region.

She had previously worked as a shift supervisor for the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network, as a counselor and victims advocate for the city of Alexandria, and in a call center for the DOD SAFE helpline, an anonymous resource for anyone experiencing sexual assault. Stratchko said that talking one-on-one with victim callers and connecting them with their local SARCs inspired her to become a SARC.

“I realized I’d be good at this,” she said. “One day, I was chosen to be the lead SARC for NSA Washington. And when I got the offer, I didn’t hesitate, I didn’t negotiate. I just said yes.”

At NSA Washington, Stratchko worked one-on-one with victims and managed the program and the team of victims advocates. Wade provided guidance from the region level, and Stratchko filled in for Wade on occasions when Wade was out of the office.

Stratchko accepted a new position last month as a Supervisory SAPR Program Analyst for Commander Navy Installations Command Headquarters, a position in which she will be interpreting and assisting with the execution of SAPR policies and evaluating SAPR program effectiveness Navy-wide.

Stratchko’s new position differs from her past SARC work. But she said that some parts of her job remain the same: above all, her dedication to improving SAPR programs and making sure they best serve those who need them.

“Helping people, and making the process better to help people better, these will always be a part of my job,” she said. “SAPR programs are changing, and the processes are evolving. And they should evolve, because we have to be able to meet Sailors where they are.”



In the Spotlight

NDW MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD EVENT WRAP-UPS

By Lori Riccio-Walker
NDW Regional Marketing Manager

NSA ANNAPOLIS

Month of the Military Child (MOMC) Proclamation Signing

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Child Development Center (CDC) 1

Captain Homer Denius' last proclamation signing before retiring. He was presented with drawings and thank-you cards from the children at the CDC.

Purple-Up Pinwheel Parade

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

CDC 1 & 2

Purple-Up Poster/Art Contest

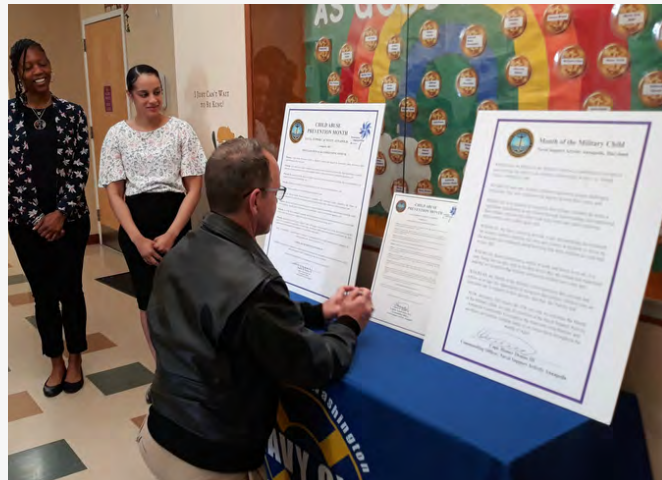
Friday, April 28, 2023

The contest was open to schools with the Airmen for Life (A4L) Program and all children living on base. Captain Denius judged the poster entries for the art contest.

Month of the Military Child Military Ball

Friday, April 28, 2023

Pershing Hill Elementary School



Continue to the next page for more NDW MOMC Event Wrap-Ups.





In the Spotlight

NDW MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD EVENT WRAP-UPS (CONT...)

NSA BETHESDA

MOMC Trike-a-thon

Friday, April 14, 2023

Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) Trike-a-thon. Children brought in their bicycles, helmets, and knee pads from home to participate in a trike-a-thon to bring awareness of military children for the MOMC. Parents were in attendance to cheer and support their children.



Noyes Children's Library Visit for MOMC

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Preschool children from NSAB enjoyed a visit to the Noyes Children's Library. The children enjoyed a story and an interactive activity to help celebrate the MOMC.



MOMC Family Luncheon

Thursday, April 20, 2023

A family luncheon was held for the MOMC.

MOMC Celebration

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

During the MOMC Celebration at NSAB, we had a visit from Peter Rabbit and Lily as well as a photo booth for families, staff, and kids to take pictures! Other fun activities included miniature bowling games, a bubble station, and arts and crafts. The children also received a temporary tattoo and some delicious cotton candy!





In the Spotlight

NDW MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD EVENT WRAP-UPS (CONT...)

NSF DAHLGREN

Month of the Military Child Celebration

April 13, 2023, at 4:30 p.m.

The school liaison partnered with Dahlgren Library and the Chaplaincy Program to plan and execute an event at Dahlgren Library and Joy Park with inflatables, purple arts, face painting, a relay race, and a food truck. Military One Source and Fleet and Family Support Center’s Exceptional Family Member Program set up info tables. Bagged snacks were provided by the Lincoln Military Housing, and attendees received \$10 meal tickets for the food truck. Active Duty military personnel, Military and Family Life Counseling Services staff, and students volunteered to assist at the event.



NSF INDIAN HEAD

Month of the Military Child Celebration

April 19, 2023, at 4:30 p.m.

The CDC, Youth Activities Center, and School Liaison Program teamed up for a fun afternoon MOMC celebration at the Indian Head CDC Parking Lot. The afternoon’s festivities included inflatables, arts and crafts, face painting, an outdoor relay, FREE Disney books, and food truck vouchers.



NAS PATUXENT RIVER

Month of the Military Child Proclamation Signing & Poster Contest Awards

April 17, 2023

Our original event (Spring-a-palooza) was canceled due to the threat of inclement weather, so we held a small ceremony in the Commanding Officers’ conference room on Monday evening, April 17. Poster contest winners received a certificate and a prize and had an opportunity to share their poster with the Commanding Officer.



In the Spotlight

BRAVO ZULU!

The **Bravo Zulu (BZ)** Section is dedicated to “**shout outs,**” “**atta boys,**” and “**well-dones**” for staff, from staff, from across the entire NDW Region. To submit a Bravo Zulu, please email us at: NDW_COE_Newsletter@us.navy.mil

From April's Town Hall:

- **BZ to the Labor-Employee Relations (LER) team** for the training of more than 175 personnel on DPMAP. Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ to Mr. Steve Acevedo with N6** for work on the SharePoint. Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ to LT Therese Desquitado, ITCM Quincy Mayes, and ETC Christopher Smith** for completion of the Brig Chasers Course. Bravo Zulu!

From May's Town Hall:

BZ to the following individuals who were awarded personal awards:

- **CAPT Jeffrey Snyder** received the Legion of Merit in recognition of his dedication, leadership, and hard work during his tour. Bravo Zulu!
- **EMCS Andamo McCullough and MAC Timothy Barrera** received the Navy Commendation Medal for their dedication, leadership, and hard work during their tours at NDW. Bravo Zulu!
- **Mr. Bernardo Salazar** received a Length of Service Award for 15 years of Government service. Bravo Zulu!

From N1:

- **BZ to Ms. Martha Karandy** who completed more than three trainings in the month of May, training over 200 employees. Bravo Zulu!

From N3:

- **BZ to the Region Training Team** for completion of two installation Region Assessment events as well as preps for NSA Bethesda's Final Evaluation Problem (FEP). Bravo Zulu!
- **Congratulations to NSA Bethesda** for scoring 90 on their FEP! Bravo Zulu!

From N5:

- **BZ to Ms. Pauline Dickey** for her work on the Mid Year and IPR. And for receiving a Length of Service Award for 20 years of Government service. Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ to Ms. Dee Mickens** for her Command Resilience Team work and volunteering to be the civilian chair for our NDW Women's Focus Groups. Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ to Ms. Alyssa Lewis**, who received a Length of Service Award for 25 years of Government service. Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ to Ms. Katie Stratchko**, who received the Liz Blankman Exceptional Sexual Assault Response Coordinator of the Year Award for the Navy. Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ for the N5 team** for successfully managing the ESC this past Monday.



In the Spotlight

BRAVO ZULU! (CONT...)



From N6:

- **BZ to the N641 Team** for managing the deployment of tokens for the Region Dispatch Center. Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ to N61 members Mike Knutson and Joe Udell** for their support during the HURREX Continuity of Operations (COOP) exercise with the NDW command vehicle. Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ to the N63/N65 members** for all their effort in helping to clean up and deploy new NMCI assets for the NDW Regional Operations Center. Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ to NDW N62, Mr. Marvin Barnes**, who launched the NDW Hub within SharePoint Online (SPO) last month. He has worked to build out several SPO sites for our Regional N-Codes and Special Assistants and is actively working to complete the installation SPO sites. Bravo Zulu!

From N8:

- **BZ to Ms. Kenyatta Bailey** for her commitment and dedication to ensure mission-related travel is accomplished without a hitch. Her “Get it done” attitude is something she takes pride in, and we have received several kudos and compliments on Ms. Bailey’s behalf for the service provided over the past month. Ms. Bailey has done an incredible job working hand and hand with each customer she serves. She understands that every mission is important no matter the length or complexity and therefore provides her undivided attention for each travel requirement. Ms. Bailey is a vital member of the NDW team. Thank you for a job well done! Bravo Zulu!
- **BZ to Ms. Shields** from Mr. Kristofer Havens: “Over the past several months, her responsiveness and pro-activeness has been laudable. She is an absolute joy to work with, and the care she shows to the job (especially to this sometimes wayward and needy hiring manager) is a great example of how being good at your job isn’t just about ‘doing you.’ It is also about recognizing, appreciating, and maximizing your part in the team dynamic.” Bravo Zulu!



Any employee can send a Bravo Zulu message to acknowledge a good deed of a coworker, supervisor, employee, group, or team, either in their N-Code or in any other N-Code or installation of the Region.



Services for You

COE HURREX TEXTS

By Desmond Boykin, EEO Specialist
and CAPT Sara Pickett, SAPRO and COE Champion

Being fairly new to working for NDW, I wasn't familiar at first with the HURREX exercises. So imagine my surprise when, during the exercises, I started to receive text messages from the Navy. I learned that when you updated your profile in the Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS), you included your cell number and your family contacts. So not only are you including yourself in these type of exercises, but you are including your family members, as well. The purpose is to account for the Navy personnel and family in conjunction with the different HURREX exercises in the coastal areas of DC, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, in preparation for real-world weather events. I feel as if it's another one of those aspects where we are all interconnected in ensuring the success of the overall mission.





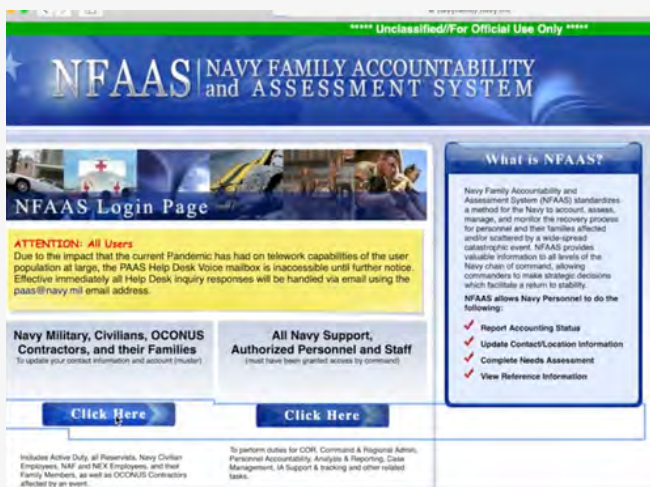
Services for You

COE HURREX TEXTS (CONT...)

On a related note, make sure to add and update your contact information in NFAAS. NFAAS is a web-based tool that provides a standardized method for the Navy to account, assess, manage, and monitor the recovery process for personnel and their families affected and/or scattered by a widespread catastrophic event. NFAAS also provides valuable information to all levels of the Navy chain of command, allowing commanders to make strategic decisions that facilitate a return to stability. The system also provides emergency prep resources for all users and provides helpful links, as well.

NFAAS is located at the following URL:

<https://pki.navyfamily.navy.mil>



SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH: THE WORK CONTINUES

By Natalie Wade
Regional SARC (N9)

As another Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month comes to a close, I am amazed by the number of people that came together to raise awareness about sexual assault and the impact that it has on our society. Whether it be through participation in Regional activities, or through the individual installations' outreach events and guest speakers, one can see how important this topic is to NDW.



Services for You

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH: (CONT...)

However, I encourage you to remember that it does not end April 30th. To be successful at preventing sexual assault, we must consistently have the topic at the forefront of our minds and seek opportunities to grow in our knowledge.

In 2021, the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault provided 82 recommendations to change how the military approaches prevention and response. Through the ongoing implementation of these recommendations, we have learned that change is uncomfortable. To reframe this discomfort, let us look at it through the lens of **“Get Real, Get Better.”** In order for us to change the Navy culture to one of preventing sexual assault, we have to have the courage to accept the hard truth that how we addressed prevention in the past was not working. After accepting the need for change, we can move forward with the commitment to improve and correct.

Part of this starts with you. As we move into the rest of this year, I encourage all of you to remember the **“CNIC Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Call to Action: Respect. Protect. Empower.”** Make this something that you engage with throughout the year, and regularly revisit the topics of sexual assault and healthy relationships. It does not have to be a huge lift. Even small efforts, such as listening to a podcast and having a conversation with your kids or peers, can have great impact. We have the opportunity to get better in our efforts to stop sexual assault. It takes all of us to consistently make small changes that result in a permanent cultural shift.





Services for You

APPRECIATING OUR MILITARY IN MAY

By Shoshoni Spence
Regional Social Advocacy Clinical Counselor, NDW

The month of May officially marks Military Appreciation Month, a special month for those in the service and those out of the service. The month holds several military anniversaries and events, such as Military Spouse Appreciation Day, Armed Forces Day, and also Memorial Day. We pause on Memorial Day to remember the sacrifices and service of those who gave their all.

To the Military Service Members and their Spouses: We say thank you, and we appreciate you.

The Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) is here to support you and your family in the many different challenges that can affect family life. Throughout NDW, we have many FFSCs to provide additional support:

- NSA Annapolis FFSC:** (410) 293-2641
- NSA Bethesda FFSC:** (301) 319-4087
- NAS Patuxent River FFSC:** (301) 342-4911
- NSA South Potomac FFSC:** (540) 653-1839
- NSA Washington FFSC:** (202) 685-0229
- Fort Meade FFSC:** (301) 677-9014

"Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

--Winston Churchill, 1940

ADDITIONAL SERVICES FOR YOU

Fleet and Family Support Program: In the FFSC Family Connection Newsletter, you will find information on the Exceptional Family Member Program, Domestic Abuse, upcoming virtual webinar classes, and much more. Visit: <https://ffr.cnic.navy.mil/Family-Readiness/Fleet-And-Family-Support-Program/Family-Connection-Newsletter>

DONCEAP: Find new articles, resources, and other information on the Magellan Ascend on the Magellan Ascend website: <https://magellanascend.com/?ccid=hpZiwITni%2FVKnrZqvUQNB6fBJJGSp2%BZYWZSUbKC71w%3D>

CNIC ACI: For articles, resources, and other information, please visit the ACI website: <http://myassistanceprogram.com/cnic>





Things to Do Around You

Each month, we're bringing you family-friendly and budget-friendly recreational activities throughout the Region. You can boost your health, learn things, have fun with your family, and make new friends, all without spending a fortune.



Immersive Butterfly Art Experience (Washington, DC). The beauty of butterflies and flower blossoms will zoom into view and burst all around you in vivid, all-surrounding virtual form at "PIXELBLOOM: Timeless Butterflies," a new art installation at Artehouse. Enter the exhibit, and you'll journey through a moving universe of butterflies in flight and flowers in bloom. The exhibition is open March 11 through June 11. For more information and to purchase your ticket, go to: <https://www.artehouse.com/program/pixelbloom-timeless-butterflies/>



Things to Do Around You



Marine Corps' Friday Evening Parade (Washington, DC)

A one-of-a-kind display of Marine Corps musical talent, ceremony, and pride in the uniform and the flag. Every Friday evening (gates open at 7 p.m.) throughout June and all summer long, you'll see a procession featuring the U.S. Marine Band, the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, and the Marine Corps Silent Drill on the grounds of the Marine Corps barracks at 8th and I streets SE—the oldest Marine post in the country. For more information and to reserve your seat, visit:

<https://www.barracks.marines.mil/Parades/Friday-Evening-Parade-Schedule-Reservation>



Greek Festival (Fredericksburg). A celebration of Greek food, dance, song, and art is coming to the Nativity of the Theotokos Greek Orthodox Church. The festivities take place Saturday, June 3, and Sunday, June 4, and promise fun for the whole family. For more details, visit:

<https://fb.me/e/3J3CNzE5I>



Things to Do Around You



Concerts on the Avenue (Washington, DC).

Tuesday evening, June 6, kicks off the Concerts on the Avenue, a concert series featuring the U.S. Navy Band and the U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard performing at Navy Memorial Plaza on Pennsylvania Avenue NW. The performance starts at 7:30 p.m. More concerts will be upcoming on select Tuesday nights all summer long. All concerts are free and are open to the Navy community and the public. For more event details, go to:

<https://www.navymemorial.org/new-events/2023/1/17/cota-627>



Annual Donuts with Dad 5K (Annapolis).

All are welcome to celebrate Father's Day with a 5K run/walk and post-run donuts on Sunday, June 18, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Registration is free, but required. For more information and to get your ticket, go to: <https://fb.me/e/2I9y5KXr1>



Stand-Up Showcase at DC Improv (Washington, DC).

Enjoy great stand-up comedy at one of the country's most famous stages. The showcase lineups feature top talent from DC, Maryland, Virginia and beyond. You'll see a variety of styles, get up close with some up-and-coming stars of comedy, support local talent, and (most importantly) laugh. For more information and a link to purchase your tickets, go to:

<https://fb.me/e/Zs0cSld3>



In

Fair Winds and Following Seas



While there are no submissions for retirements for the month of July, we would like to thank all of those who have left the NDW family. We appreciate all of your hard work and dedication.

You will be missed.

**Wishing all of you
Fair Winds and Following Seas
on your new adventures.**



Connect with Us

GOT A SUGGESTION, COMMENT, OR IDEA YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?
WE WELCOME YOUR INPUT.

Feel free to reach out to the Newsletter team at: NDW_COE_Newsletter@us.navy.mil
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For more detailed information, please select your installation at:

<https://www.cnic.navy.mil/regions/ndw.html>