



**Association of NROTC Colleges and Universities  
2021 Virtual Annual Meeting Minutes  
Friday, October 8, 2021**

**Attendees:**

NSTC: Admiral Jennifer S. Couture, Captain Christopher Adams, Mark Gough, Ivan Martinez

Members: Tony Bernard, Emily Bozich, Robert Clark, Rick Escalante, Eric Fretz, Bruce Grissom, Christian Hall, Neil James, Jenna Johnson, Bill Kehoe, Bill LaCourse, Daniel Lopez-Cevallos, Erin McAvoy, Katherine McComas, Michael McGinnis, Keith Moo-Young, Robert Morro, Ted Pickerill, Josh Ragadio, Ben Ringsel, Jodi Salter, John Sarao, Leslie-Jo Sawada, Scott Shappell, Miriam Sherin, Kimone Simmons, Terry Stentz, Jill Stratton, Mat Sutton, David Tate, Thomas Teper, Ray Trygstad, Aylin Tunay, Matt Tuohy, Lisa Zapata, Frank Zerunyan

**1:02 p.m. Welcome and Vice President's Remarks**

- Welcome and Introductions
  - Discussion of next year's meeting at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.
    - Meeting dates are October 6-8, 2022.
    - Dr. Scott Shappell is planning our meeting at their wonderful campus and new facilities.
    - Meeting will be hosted in the Student Union Building.
    - Hopefully, there will be a tour of the Kennedy Space Center on Navy Day.
- Invitation for institutions to host annual meetings in 2023 and 2024.
  - Please let Aylin Tunay ([association1950@outlook.com](mailto:association1950@outlook.com)) know if you are interested to host.
- Treasurer's Report from Jodi Salter:
  - Our target goal is to always have \$10,000 to \$15,000 in our Chase account.
  - We have paid half of our administrative fees. Waiting to get paid the dues through Eventbrite (around \$6,800.00).
  - We have \$13,092.36 right now in the Chase account.
  - Having the amount that we have in our balance should allow us to really put on a very fun and engaging in-person meeting next year.
  - We want to continue to grow our association and would appreciate everyone's help. If we all can reach out to our colleagues and other institutions, get them on board and continue to be active members of the association, it will help to grow.

## 1:30 p.m. Program Update with Captain Christopher Adams

- We have made some progress in areas that are very important to us, and I'm pleased to be able to share those results as we get to them.
- Our mission remains the same; we are here to develop future officers.
- While they're attending your institutions, our mission is to develop them mentally, morally, and physically and ultimately, and commission college graduates as Naval officers, both in the Navy and the Marine Corps.
- Overall, we continue to meet our mission and thanks to everybody for all the support, during some very interesting times over the last two years.
- ROTC was founded in 1926; we are coming up on a hundred years of ROTC in the country. Originally started with six units, now we're up to 78.
- Coincidentally, ROTC has been producing about 780 midshipmen every year, so about 10 per unit on average.
- The 78 expands to 172 via our relationships with crosstown schools.
- The map has changed, expanded out with new units, such as University of Hawaii where the ROTC unit is up and running in full.
- The Navy Nurse Program is still running but is small; commissioning only about 10 nurses a year out of the program right now.
- We are in to produce some Marine officers, surface officers like the Admiral, pilots, Naval flight officers, seals, and ordinance disposal technicians. That's our primary mission in ROTC, which differs a little bit from some of your ROTC programs on campus.

### NROTC Prep Program

- Some of you who are participating in this relatively new program, and you know, you're footing the bill for the room and board on this program.
- You are making the selections with input from your local professor of Naval Science to bring those students in and get them through a prep year.
- If they meet our standards at the end of that prep year, we put them in front of a board to validate and verify that they have met our minimum standards at which point they then matriculate in that four-year education and professional process.
- We want to be bringing into the NAVY the ones to make sure it reflects our society, our country.
- Particularly for our combat arms associated with things like nuclear propulsion plants, we have a goal to make sure that, at graduation, 65% of those commissioning into the NAVY is graduating from your universities with what we call a "technical degree", such as engineering.

## Scholarships

- This past year, we made 1,104 scholarship offers out of a pool of 2,597 applicants. Selectivity was in the 40% range, whereas, in the past two years, we had been selecting over half of the folks that applied.
- Recently we lowered the minimum SAT score, and then also during the COVID period, we have waived in some cases, the requirement for an SAT or ACT scores, given that not everyone was able to access testing resources equally across the country.
- We are very much interested in the academic success of our midshipmen, but that is not our overriding concern. We are taking a “whole person” approach towards our selections and that they absolutely need to graduate in most cases within four years to earn that commission.
- As you know, the student that graduated with a 4.0 is not necessarily guaranteed to be a better officer than the one that graduated with a 2.75. There is a standard we need to meet, but we do not want to make it so high that, we are limiting those other factors that we very much value in terms of leadership, potential resilience, and other factors.
- We are holding steady at about 4100- 4200 scholarship midshipmen at any one time in the program.
- The SAT scores have come down a little bit, but it is still pretty competitive.
- One thing we are watching very closely is, the decrease in the number of tech majors coming in as freshmen.

## New Student Indoctrination Program

- The program is still alive but is challenging to execute in the COVID environment that we faced. We are committed to doing a full Navy new student indoctrination this coming summer, here at recruit training command at Great Lakes.
- Every incoming scholarship student will attend three weeks of intensive training to:
  - Number one, they understand what the Navy is about and what they can expect
  - Number two, they can make an informed choice as to whether they want to really go forward and activate that scholarship or not.
  - That first summer they'll have the opportunity to attend what we call a “quarter mid-career orientation and training” for midshipmen, where they will be exposed to the submarine community, the Naval aviation community, the surface warfare community, the seals, and the Marine Corps, helping them to be able to make a more informed decision when we ask for their preferences and in what capacity they would like to serve.

## Service Assignment Panel

- We try to match students to the warfare community they are most interested in. But at the end of the day, the Navy is going to need X number of qualified people to run our nuclear reactors and X number of people to drive our ships and X number of people to fly our airplanes or manage the airplane systems. Again, our mission is to commission officers and war fighters into the Navy.
- It is never a perfect match between preferences and the needs of the Navy, but we try to meet in the middle as best we can.
  - 71% of our graduates were able to get their first choice.
  - It was 72% last year and a 12% of our upcoming graduates this year were able to get their second choice and that's down from 15% last year.

## 2:10 – 2:25 p.m. Break

## 2:25 p.m. Program Update with Captain Christopher Adams Continued...

### Optimization and transformation

- We have been talking about this for about three years now, setting ourselves to sustain the programs that we implemented to transform ourselves, moving into the future. With COVID, a lot of the things that we were doing to transform ourselves never really got the chance to get to be set in place.
- At what NAVY refers to as “comprehensive review”, we talk about these initiatives, and a lot of these are designed and aimed at addressing causes of the variance in terms of quality of training and aim to set standards across the board.
- The professional core competencies are what we use to measure the progress of midshipmen towards achieving the level of training, that we believe they need to succeed in the fleet as officers.
- The standards across the board and all efforts are designed to make sure that those standards in one ROTC unit is equivalent, if not identical, to what it takes to achieve same standards at another ROTC unit.

### Vaccination Requirements

- This coming summer, one of the things we are going to have to work through is, what are the vaccination requirements to be able to attend NSI (New Student Indoctrination)?
- I anticipate that we will likely have to make vaccination a requirement to attend since we cannot get 1800 midshipman candidates through if we're going to have to add an extra two weeks on the front end of any NSI for a quarantine period.
  - Getting the COVID vaccine is now a requirement to be a member of the military, and to stay in the military.
  - We are asked if there have been any issues with current midshipman separating because they have chosen not to take the vaccine?

- We had 4,175 midshipmen on scholarship as of fall of 2021. I have heard reports of midshipman dropping off from the program and I then realizing that they probably will have to pay back their scholarship.
- Though some are dropping off, it is not threatening our ability to produce officers right now,
- We have not processed anyone out of the Navy yet for failure to be vaccinated.
- We have many midshipmen who have asked for a religious exemption, and each of those requests involves an interview with the chaplain and will be evaluated on an individual basis.
- I think there is a vice Admiral in the Navy that might have about a thousand packages across the Navy that he is looking at getting through.
- About 98 to 99% of the midshipman that we have are vaccinated, which has allowed us to get summer training done last summer.
- Unvaccinated midshipmen could not come on ships. A lot of them are at schools where they don't get to be a student unless they are vaccinated, which made it easy for us in those cases.
- If they are no longer a school student at your school, then we will process their disenrollment, but not based the vaccine, but on the basis that they are no longer a student.

#### Diversity

- Some of our communities do better than others, but overall, we are not very representative of United States.
- in 2020, only 3.3% of our applicants were African American. That turned into only 38 selects. Per the latest 2020 data, if we were to be representative of the United States, that should be 12.4%.
- We have work to do with the Hispanic ethnicity and then a female gender as well.

#### Candidate Guidance Office

- We are working to keep a "Candidate Guidance Office" inside the ROTC program here. We used to have one, and then Congress required us to expand the number of units that we had but didn't provide any additional funding to provide additional staff.
- We had to stand down that candidate guidance office to staff some of our new units.
- Now that we have taken this deep dive and recommitted ourselves, not just in ROTC, but the Navy as a whole, towards improving our diversity, I'm happy to report that we got some traction on that idea, and they are going to be hiring new staff for a new Candidate Guidance Office here.

## Dept of Defense - Medical Examination

- In many of our units, we have limited access to the Navy Bureau of Medicine resources. It is not so much an issue necessarily for units in San Diego and Norfolk, but again, like Utah, Idaho, or many others, it is a long way to find the nearest Navy medical treatment facility.
  - There is a process that folks go through when they're selected for an ROTC scholarship, called the "department of defense medical examination" which happens after they are selected. There are not enough resources to make it happen as it involves many doctor's visits, et cetera.
  - We have ended up losing a lot of folks who were selected but cannot activate their scholarship, because they have some medically limiting condition where we could not commission them, such as colorblindness. If you cannot see colors, we cannot let you drive a ship or fly an airplane or a submarine.

## Post COVID issues

- We said goodbye to probably more than 500 years' worth of corporate knowledge over the course of a couple of months and are starting from scratch in a lot of places, from the selection process to placements and to unit operations.
- It'll take us a while to replicate that 500 plus years of corporate memory and experience, and budget cuts.

## **3:41 p.m. -3:40 p.m. Break**

## **3:40 p.m. Campus Issues Discussion**

Representatives discussed matters of concern to their campuses and units, and shared best practices.

It was also discussed ways to bring in more active members:

- Out of 78 ROTC units, typically we get about 35 to 40 members join the annual meeting and pay dues.
- Number one benefit is the camaraderie and the relationship building, the networking that you get with other institutions, opportunity to talk about what is going on at your institution, what your concerns are, and the best practices on what is working.

## **4:33 p.m. Adjournment**

*Looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting in Daytona Beach, Florida between October 6-8, 2022, hosted by Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.*

*More information on the accommodations and agenda to come in July 2022.*