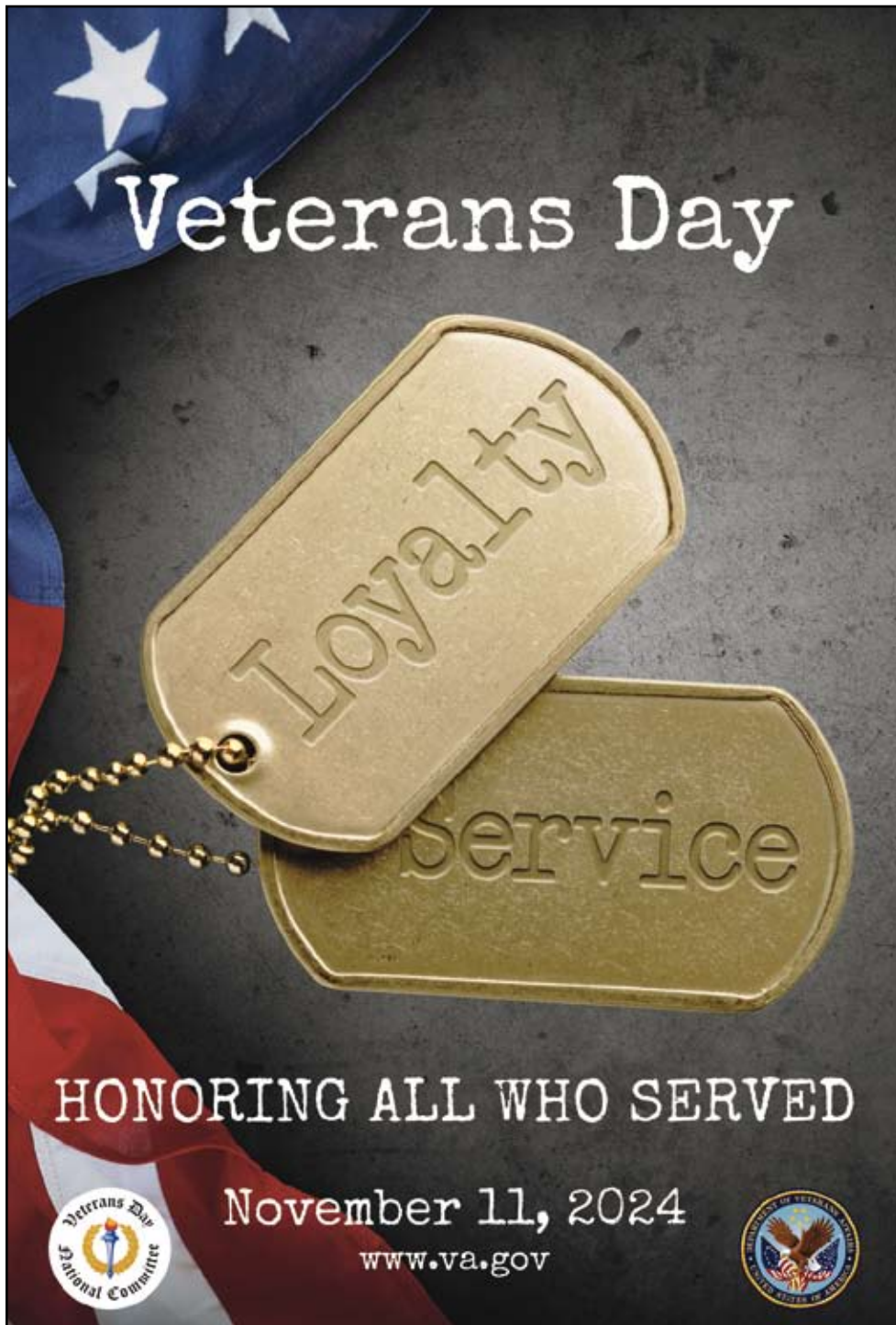


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SIXTY-FOURTH YEAR NO. 19
 NOVEMBER 1-15, 2024



Navy pilot who was second-longest held U.S. POW in line to receive Congressional Gold Medal

by Linda F. Hersey
 Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON - Lawmakers are pushing for swift passage of legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal - the nation's highest civilian honor - to a Navy veteran who was the first aviator shot down in the Vietnam War and the second-longest held prisoner of war in U.S. history.

Retired Cmdr. Everett Alvarez, Jr., now 86, was captured Aug. 5, 1964, while on a bombing mission near the North Vietnam-China border.

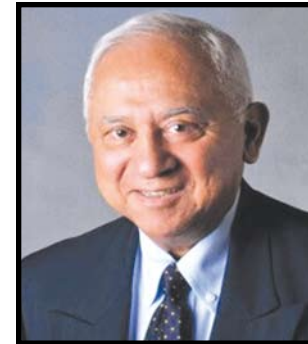
"I was in the very first raids into North Vietnam," Alvarez said in an oral history recorded for the Library of Congress. He was the first captured American during the war who was sent to the infamous North Vietnamese prison nicknamed the "Hanoi Hilton."

He survived beatings, torture and starvation during 3,113 days of captivity. "Cmdr. Alvarez remained loyal to the United States and assisted other American prisoners of war," according to the legislation.

Congress awards the gold medal to individuals and groups for significant achievements that influenced U.S. culture and history.

"I am humbled beyond belief," Alvarez said. "There is no way I am able to express my profound appreciation for this recognition."

Alvarez said he sees the award



Everett Alvarez, Jr. Courtesy photo

as not only recognizing his war experiences and determination to survive but also as commemorating the hundreds of other POWs who endured the brutal conditions of captivity during the Vietnam War.

The Everett Alvarez, Jr. Gold Medal Act, with 301 co-sponsors, passed the House on unanimous consent in May.

"As the second longest-serving prisoner of war in the history

of our nation, Cmdr. Everett Alvarez, Jr. stands out as a symbol of American resiliency and selfless service," said Rep. Jimmy Panetta, D-Calif., a Navy veteran who led the House bill.

Lawmakers now are urging swift adoption in the Senate, where the bill has collected 67 co-sponsors. Senate lawmakers are expected to take up the bill when Congress returns to session on Nov. 13.

"Cmdr. Alvarez is an American hero and remained a source of hope and encouragement for the other prisoners of war during his time in Vietnam," said Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Calif., the bill's sponsor in the Senate. "Cmdr. Alvarez's unwavering courage and bravery in the face of torture and isolation deserves the highest recognition in Congress."

<https://www.stripes.com/veterans/2024-10-25/navy-pilot-vietnam-pow-congressional-medal-15626300.html>

DOD RELEASES NATIONAL DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Department of Defense published the unclassified National Defense Industrial Strategy Implementation Plan Oct. 29 detailing how the DoD will achieve the four strategic priorities laid out in the NDIS.

Released by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy, the document outlines ongoing and

future actions that DoD is currently taking, and will continue to take, to modernize the defense industrial base.

The NDIS-IP describes six cross-cutting initiatives, and associated lines of effort, that will enable the DoD to achieve a more resilient defense industrial ecosystem and buy-down risks. In addition to detailing the

work being done across the Services and DoD components, the NDIS-IP demonstrates activities and initiatives which the U.S. Government, private industry, and international allies and stakeholders are undertaking, emphasizing that this effort cannot be a DoD-only initiative.

"This implementation plan offers industry, global allies, and

partners clear direction on the Department's priorities for industrial capacity building" said Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy, Dr. Laura Taylor-Kale.

The unclassified NDIS-IP is available at: <https://www.businessdefense.gov/docs/ndis/NDIS-Implementation-Plan-FY2025.pdf>.



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FLEET WEEK SAN DIEGO 2024 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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|------------|--|
| Oct 19 | MCRD San Diego Boot Camp Challenge |
| NOV 1 | Enlisted Recognition Luncheon |
| NOV 1 | Military & Veterans Appreciation Concert |
| NOV 2 | Meet the Fleet at 32nd St. |
| NOV 6 | Fleet Week SDMAC Breakfast |
| NOV 6 - 8 | Student STEM Days (Students only) |
| NOV 8 | SDSU Fleet Week Football Classic |
| NOV 8 - 11 | Broadway Pier Opens to The Public w/Military Displays, Ship Tours, and Innovation Zone |
| NOV 10 | Military Family Day |
| NOV 11 | Veterans Day Boat Parade |
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Coast Guard relieves commander and top enlisted leader of San Diego sector

from U.S. Coast Guard
District Eleven

SAN DIEGO - The U.S. Coast Guard temporarily relieved the commander and command senior enlisted leader of Coast Guard Sector San Diego Oct. 25.

Rear Adm. Joseph Buzzella, commander, District Eleven, temporarily relieved Capt. James Spitler and Master Chief Petty Officer Michael Dioquino following an investigation leading to a loss of confidence in both unit leaders.

“The Coast Guard can’t accomplish our missions without the respect and trust of each member,” said Buzzella. “A safe and professional environment for each member is crucial to the success of our service and we will not tolerate behavior that goes against our core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty.”

The Coast Guard is committed to a service culture that ensures every member has a safe and supportive workplace, where they are free from harm and feel respected and empowered.

Sector San Diego remains



Capt. James Spitler, left, and Master Chief Petty Officer Michael Dioquino were temporarily relieved of command Oct. 25 as the commander and senior enlisted leader of Coast Guard Sector San Diego after an investigation into reports that they had treated subordinates unfairly. U.S. Coast Guard photos

fully operational in all mission areas and there is no impact to public safety.

Capt. Patrick Dill, chief of incident management for District Eleven, has temporarily assumed the position of commander, Sector San Diego.

In a *Stars and Stripes* report, the investigation was sparked by reports of unfair treatment of individuals under their command,

said Lt. SondraKay Kneen, a spokeswoman for District Eleven. No further details were available, she said. The men are temporarily relieved pending their option to appeal the decision, Kneen said.

Sector San Diego is responsible for about 120 miles of California coastline, 750 miles of the Colorado River, and the U.S.-Mexico southwest maritime border.

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All-female skydiving teams excel in competition, leadership

by Randy Roughton
Air Force Academy

From 11,000 feet, the two Wings of Blue all-female competitive skydiving teams enjoy a breathtaking view of the U.S. Air Force Academy below them.

While three of the six team members are aspiring pilots, each parachuting cadet will be able to rely on the skills they have developed as skydivers in their future careers as officers. They know the importance of always preparing before any mission and planning as a team.

“We plan every part of the skydive first on the ground,” said Cadet 1st Class Allison Henderson, a geospatial science major. She is a member of the four-way formation team named Air Force Halo alongside Cadets 1st Class Julia Ahrendt, Abby Halasi-Kun and Riley McGarry.

“The more we plan our jumps on the ground, the more prepared we are in the sky,” said Henderson.”

For the first time, the Academy has two all-female skydiving teams in its highly successful competitive skydiving program.

Cadets 1st Class Kate Cardinal and Katy Felix formed the two-way mixed formation team Air Force K2.

The Wings of Blue has a long history of success having competed in local, national and international competitions since 1962. Team members won 29 gold medals at the United States Parachute Association National Collegiate Skydiving Championships in 2023.

The Wings of Blue is the most victorious collegiate parachute team in history. Both Halo and K2 contributed to this legacy when they won bronze medals in their competitions at the USPA at Skydive Chicago in September and K2 also qualified in the speed competition for the world championships next summer.

Parachuting team members develop confidence, leadership and mental toughness as they master skydiving. Cadets learn fundamental free fall skills during the Airmanship 490 basic parachuting course. They complete ground training, and five free fall jumps from UV-18B Twin Otter aircraft. Each August interested rising third-class cadets are invited to try out for



Air Force Halo skydiving team members Abby Halasi-Kun and Allison Henderson pack parachutes together after training at Davis Airfield Sept. 28. Halo is one of two all-female skydiving teams in the Air Force Academy Wings of Blue parachuting program. U.S. Air Force photo by Dylan Smith

Wings of Blue and complete their control free fall parachuting, formation flying and canopy control training. As members of Wings of Blue, they go on to complete hundreds of jumps a year. They later serve as AM-490 instructors and mentors for younger cadets who are learning to skydive.

The 98th Flying Training Squadron did not deliberately set out to create the Academy’s first all-female skydiving teams. Cmdr. Lt. Col. Jonathan Vaage said both teams formed because

of the team members’ skillsets and interests in working together in the two- and four-person formations. In the summer of 2022, the two K2 team members expressed interest in competing in a mixed formation together. In November 2023, McGarry, a biology major, joined the already formed Air Force Halo team after the fourth member left the team.

“The importance of having all-female competitive skydiving teams at the Academy is a difficult thing to measure, but it

shows that anything is possible in aviation,” Vaage said. “If you pursue your goals and set your mind to them, nothing can hold you back. The wonderful thing about skydiving as a sport is there is no intrinsic advantage to being male or female.”

Wings of Blue’s primary mission is to operate Airmanship 490, the Academy’s basic free fall parachuting course. Cadets who excel serve the program as jump masters and instructors, developing leaders of character through a unique training experience.

“I have learned and developed so much as a leader,” said Halasi-Kun, a physics major. “We get cadets who are just like we were — very scared to make that first jump. I always tell them it’s normal if they are afraid right now. I love getting to see them land after the first jump, watching them grow in their confidence and realizing they can do things when they’re scared.”

“Seeing the impact I can have in a leadership role and giving someone a once-in-a-lifetime experience is one of the coolest experiences I have had at the Academy.”

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Editor.....Scott Sutherland

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Soldiers injured in Oct. 22 raid headed to Walter Reed

by C. Todd Lopez
DOD News

On Oct. 22, Iraqi Security Forces, working with service members from Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve, conducted strikes and follow-on raids on multiple ISIS locations in central Iraq.

Two service members were injured during the raid and are now headed to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Maryland, while a third service member is being evaluated for traumatic brain injury, said the deputy Pentagon press secretary during a briefing Oct. 24.

“During the operation, two U.S. military personnel were wounded by an explosion while assisting Iraqi forces with site exploitation,” said Sabrina Singh. “While both service members sustained serious injuries, they are in stable condition and are currently en route to Walter Reed Medical Center for follow-on care. Additionally, we recently learned a third service member is being assessed for potential [traumatic brain injury.]”

During the raid, Singh said ISF targeted several senior ISIS leaders and killed at least seven

ISIS operatives.

Singh said on Oct. 24 that Iraqi and U.S. forces partnered again as part of the Defeat-ISIS mission.

“Earlier today, U.S. forces participated in an Iraqi-led operation against ISIS fighters in the Anbar province in Iraq,” Singh said. “Our assessment of the operation is still ongoing, and to my knowledge, there were no U.S. personnel injured in the operation.”

Both raids were led by Iraqis, with the U.S. participating in an assistance role, Singh said.

While Singh said there is no indication of an ISIS “resurgence,” she did say ISIS continues to be a threat that warrants attention.

“ISIS is not what it was from 10 years ago,” she said. “I think we continue to see ISIS operate within Iraq and Syria, and their footprint has spread to other parts of the world. I don’t think that demonstrates necessarily ... their resurgence in Iraq or Syria, but it represents that they still remain a threat, which is why we do these partner raids with the Iraqi Security Forces.”



Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina Singh conducts a press briefing at the Pentagon, Oct. 24, 2024. U.S. Air Force by Tech. Sgt. Jackie Sanders



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- Stability in Soldiers’ lives: Army secretary lays out suggestions for her successor
- Army breaks up 4 bands as service realigns and readies a smaller force for looming fights
- Army looking to expand aerial tier of network to gain more feedback
- Active-duty Soldiers deployed for hurricane response returning home this week

Navy

- New London sub base completes micro-grid to supply its own electricity
- Navy and UAE wrap up drone-focused drills in Persian Gulf
- Navy carrier group sends destroyers to Russia’s Arctic doorstep
- Navy to name submarine after the city of Atlanta

Marine Corps

- Palawan ‘key terrain’ to defend and operate from, says Marine commander in the Philippines
- JJ DID TIE BUCKLEE? Marine Corps adds ‘E’ for ‘Empathy’ to list of leadership traits

Air Force

- Air National Guard master sergeant hangs tough on ‘The Summit’ reality show
- PACAF deputy: Large-scale exercise next summer will feature nearly 300 aircraft

Space Force

- Challenges facing Space Force and commercial industry: Gen. Guetlein’s candid take
- Space Force taps Millennium for 6 additional missile warning, tracking satellites

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Navy to showcase new 'Strike Group' mixed-reality experience during San Diego Fleet Week

Multi-scenario experience provides hands-on look into Navy STEM careers

Throughout San Diego Fleet Week, Navy Recruiting Command will showcase its brand-new 'Strike Group' multi-scenario, mobile mixed-reality experience, which was designed to showcase the breadth and depth of Navy STEM careers.

Through leading-edge mixed reality, the 'Strike Group' provides users with a fully immersive, hands-on look into the technology and teamwork that are central to every role in the Navy.

"From the depths of the

sea to the heights of the stars, America's Navy is the most highly skilled, technologically advanced military force in the world," says Rear Adm. James P. Waters, commander, Navy Recruiting Command. "A career in the Navy provides a life-changing experience filled with adventure, teamwork, and support, and the 'Strike Group' brings all these aspects to life in the most realistic ways possible."

Strike Group comprises two distinctive, interactive challenges and experiences:

All Hands

Players will test their skills on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier in a five-person virtual reality game. Participants will



PHOTO COURTESY OF NAVY RECRUITING COMMAND

don a Meta Quest 3 headset and be transported out to USS *Gerald R. Ford* where they will team up to launch an F-35C Lightning II jet.

Working together in different roles – from loading fuel to flying helicopters to piloting the aircraft itself – each player will be immersed in the experience of what it's like to serve aboard an aircraft carrier and have their efforts influence a Navy mission.

Train

Navy SEALs have a legacy of strenuous training and intense qualifications. In this experience, a Navy SEAL trainer will guide participants through a series of challenges that will test their physical strength, mental fortitude, and willpower.

San Diego Fleet Week ♦ **Tues. Nov. 5 - Mon. Nov. 11** ♦ **8 a.m.-4 p.m.** ♦ **Broadway Pier** ♦ **1000 N. Harbor Dr.**

CMSAF hosts senior enlisted mission command training

ARLINGTON, Va. - Senior enlisted leaders from across the Air Force recently mission command training in the Indo-Pacific area of responsibility, Oct. 20.

The six-day training, hosted by Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force David Flosi, placed senior enlisted leaders in resource-limited locations and scenarios to

see the capabilities and limitations of agile combat employment deployments.

Mission command training is an evolution of the annual Senior Enlisted Leader Summit to better align with DAF reoptimization efforts and embrace employing a force development model, favoring small and dynamic teams

focused on mission-centric skill-sets over functional skill sets.

Mission command is a leadership philosophy where Airmen are empowered to operate in complex environments through understanding their commander's intent, which is essential to quick and effective execution, even if isolated from higher-

level decision makers.

Senior enlisted leaders are a key component of executing mission command.

"Chiefs shape the environment, build solid plans and translate commander's intent into action," Flosi said. "This training will allow our enlisted leaders to fully understand the

threats we face in Great Power Competition and see what agile combat employment will look like firsthand. This context will be essential as they advise Airmen to carry-out their missions."

There are six principles of mission command: provide clear commander's intent, cre-

ate shared understanding, exercise disciplined initiative, build teams through mutual trust, accept prudent risk, and use mission-type orders – which focus on an operation's purpose versus details of performing assigned tasks - when appropriate.

<https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3943815/>



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USS JACK H. LUCAS WINS SURFACE LINE WEEK PACIFIC 2024

by Joseph Millar
Naval Surface Force

SAN DIEGO – The 41st Surface Line Week (SLW) Pacific 2024 came to an end with an award ceremony where USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125) was announced as the overall winner Oct. 25.

The week-long competition highlighted the professional and athletic skills of members of the Surface Warfare community in San Diego while enhancing camaraderie and team building.

“It’s a huge win for the team,” said Capt. Andrew Bucher, DDG 125’s commanding officer. “We’ve done a lot this year, and this was a great opportunity to come together as shipmates and friends.”

As part of the honor, DDG 125 can proudly display the 2024 SLW banner on the ships brow until the 2025 winner is selected.

“Our Navy needs an esprit-

de-corps to win and that starts on the deckplates and the athletic fields,” said Vice Adm.

combat ready crews to man the ships rails and bring her to life, everything is superfluous.

“We were really excited to get the invitation to participate this year,” said Cmdr. Bernard Dobson, DDG 41’s commanding officer. “We threw everything we had at it and it really solidified the interchangeability mission that we have be-

tween the Australian Navy and the U.S. Navy, [Surface line week] was like the cream on the cake.”

The mission of CNSP is to man, train, and equip the Surface Force to provide fleet

commanders with credible naval power to control the sea and project power ashore.

For more information from CNSP, visit <https://www.surf-pac.navy.mil/>.



Vice Adm. Brendan McLane, commander, Naval Surface Force, Pacific Fleet, presents an award to Sailors assigned to destroyer USS Jack H. Lucas for the ship’s first place win at Surface Line Week 2024. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Claire M. DuBois

Brendan McLane, commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet. “We never fight alone. Incredible acts of courage require incredible teams, whether on the soccer field or beyond the horizon. Steel and brass are great, but without

In war and peace, strong teams are what our nation, and what our Navy needs.”

HMAS Brisbane (DDG 41) from the Royal Australian Navy won the 2024 SLW spirit award for small unit commands.

Navy considers electrical microgrids at major shipyards as shield against outages

STARS AND STRIPES - The Navy is studying options for supplying its four public shipyards with electricity and potable water in the event of a power grid or utility outage that could last up to two weeks.

The Naval Facilities Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center last month awarded a \$3.7 million contract for an electrical microgrid study, according to a news release Sept. 26.

The contract went to Jacobs Engineering CH2M Hill/Clark Nexsen Energy Partners Joint Venture, which is expected to complete the study in about a year. The contract expects proposals for ensuring up to 14 days of power and water for the shipyards during an outage, ac-

ording to the release.

The study will look at Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, Va.; Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard in Honolulu; Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine; and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, Wash.

The study is part of the Navy’s ongoing Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, which was established in 2018 and led by the engineering systems command. The program tackles infrastructure deficiencies that hinder shipbuilding and maintenance capacity at the yards.

The aging shipyards were built in a bygone era of conven-

tionally powered ships and are not configured to efficiently maintain and modernize nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and submarines, according to the Navy.

The optimization program to date has completed 30 projects costing \$867 million, with another \$6 billion of projects under contract, according to the Sept. 26 release. The Navy is building a \$3.4 billion submarine dry dock at Pearl Harbor and a \$1.7 billion dry dock complex in Kittery.

https://www.stripes.com/the-aters/asia_pacific/2024-10-24/navy-shipyards-power-microgrids-15619497.html

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NOV 1	Enlisted Recognition Luncheon
NOV 1	Military & Veterans Appreciation Concert
NOV 2	Meet the Fleet at 32nd St.
NOV 6	Fleet Week SDMAC Breakfast
NOV 6 - 8	Student STEM Days (Students only)
NOV 8	SDSU Fleet Week Football Classic
NOV 8 - 11	Broadway Pier Opens to The Public w/Military Displays, Ship Tours, and Innovation Zone
NOV 10	Military Family Day
NOV 11	Veterans Day Boat Parade
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Expeditionary medical Sailors prepare for Keen Sword exercise in Japan

by Christopher Jones

Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms
As U.S. forces gear up for the latest iteration of Keen Sword, Navy personnel from across the globe are preparing for one of the largest bilateral military exercises between the United States and Japan.

Among those participating are Sailors from Navy Expeditionary Medical Facility (EMF) Bravo, currently stationed at Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command (NMRTC) Twentynine Palms. These Sailors will provide essential medical support throughout the exercise, ensuring operational readiness extends to medical care in the field. Their involvement highlights the critical role that medical teams play in maintaining the health and effectiveness of deployed forces.

The exercise, which concludes in early November, tests operational readiness and strengthening combat interoperability, bringing together key military assets from both nations for a coordinated effort in maintaining regional security.

Since 1986, Keen Sword has brought together thousands of American and Japanese service members to train for potential real-world conflicts, with a specific focus on joint operations. The exercise serves as a

platform for the U.S. military to work alongside Japan's Self-Defense Forces in a simulated, yet highly realistic, mass casualty environment.

One of the many Sailors participating in the exercise is Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Raymond Black from Colorado City, Arizona, a biomedical equipment repair technician. Black explained that the primary role of his team during the exercise is to set up and maintain a field hospital capable of receiving casualties in the event of an emergency.

"Much of the operation will be conducted by the Navy on ships, but our role will be setting up the field hospital to be on standby for patient evacs," said Black. "That way if this were a real-world event, we would be prepared to receive casualties."

The medical team participating in Keen Sword includes a wide variety of specialties,

bringing together a broad range of medical expertise to support the mission effectively.

"It's pretty much anything you'd need," Black expressed. "We've got biomedes like myself.



HM1 Raymond Black, a seasoned biomedical equipment tech at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms, works at his desk preparing for the upcoming 2024 Keen Sword exercise in Japan. U.S. Navy photo by Christopher C. Jones

We've got radiology. We've got preventative medicine. We've got a surgical team, admin — we're going to be basically a full hospital."

Black, a seasoned biomed, has extensive experience serving overseas, having deployed to Iraq twice and Kuwait once. His deployments have given him a unique perspective on the challenges of maintaining and repairing medical equipment in a field setting.

"Trying to perform maintenance and repairs while deployed is significantly harder," Black said. "You might have to wait weeks for parts, or the equipment could be so old that they don't make parts for it anymore. That experience helps me prepare for the unexpected challenges we might face in this exercise."

Lt.j.g. Belinda Larche, a patient administration officer originally hailing from Cameroon emphasized the importance of the exercise in evaluating readiness.

"Keen Sword is designed to assess EMF Bravo's ability to deploy within 10 days and provide Role III healthcare support in an austere environment," she said.

Larche, who has previously served overseas as a medical regulator in Iraq, believes the

skills she gained from her deployments will be critical during Keen Sword.

"I served in Iraq as the MEDREG of 28 Joint and 9 Coalition Units across the Combined Joint Task Force Area of operations in the U.S. Central Command," Latched said. "As the MEDREG for Navy Expeditionary Medical Unit Role-2E, I led a team of three medical operations personnel in executing 25 urgent, priority, and routine intra and inter-theater medical evacuations. I believe the skills I honed during that mission will greatly assist me and my team to accomplish Keen Sword successfully."

One of the less visible but equally essential roles during the exercise will be filled by Information Systems Technician 3rd Class Christopher Logan from Long Beach. Logan's responsibilities include ensur-

ing communication systems are fully operational, allowing seamless coordination during medical evacuations.

"I am going to help run the systems, make sure that nothing goes down, and try to maintain network stability as a system administrator," Logan said. "We'll also be setting up communications so we can transmit medical information and better coordinate patient care."

HM1 Isai Lopez, a surgical technician from Florida, will assist in setting up and maintaining a sterile environment for potential surgeries. Lopez, who has previously served at NMRTC Rota and aboard USS *Essex*, emphasized the value of training in realistic environments.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/image/8722297/nmrtc-twentynine-palms-sailors-prepare-keen-sword-exercise-japan>



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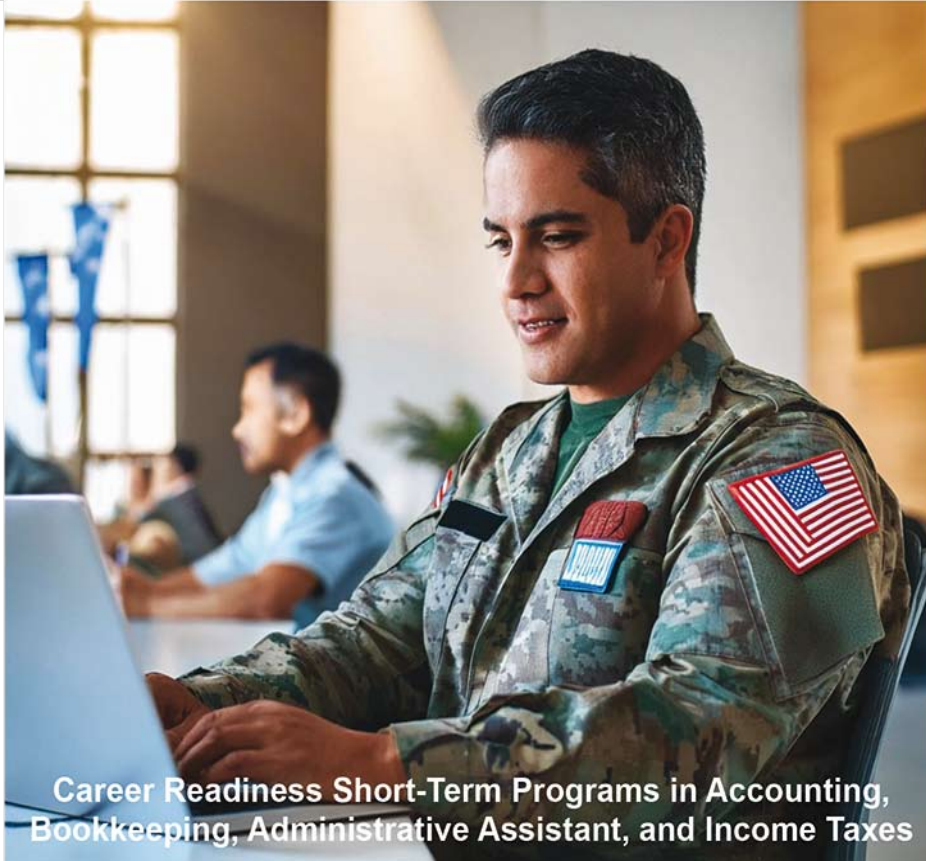
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USS Mobile, shown here docking pier-side as it returns to homeport. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Vance Hand

USS Mobile (LCS 26) returns to homeport San Diego

by MC1 Vance Hand
 SAN DIEGO –Littoral combat ship USS *Mobile* (LCS 26) returned to its San Diego homeport Oct. 25, following a 19-month deployment.

“*Mobile’s* maiden deployment to 7th fleet was incredibly successful, and we are extremely proud of the accomplishments of both crews,” said Capt. Douglas Meagher, commodore, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron One. “*Mobile* operated alongside

other U.S. Navy assets as well as international allies and partners to not only strengthen our relationships but to demonstrate the tactical capabilities and strategic value of littoral combat ships.”

Mobile participated in freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea, maritime domain awareness and patrol alongside the Philippine Navy, Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Thailand 2023, Malaysia’s Langkawi In-

ternational Maritime Aerospace Exhibition 2023 (LIMA 2023), and Noble Dingo with the Royal Australian Navy. *Mobile* also participated in trilateral exercises, multinational maritime cooperative activity exercises and bilateral operations with the Royal Netherlands Navy and Italian Navy.

“I’m particularly proud of the resiliency and self-sufficiency that our Sailors demonstrated throughout the deployment,”

said Cmdr. David Gardner, commanding officer of *Mobile* Gold crew. “*Mobile* operated for extensive periods of time outside of the normal Navy logistics umbrella, which necessitated deliberate planning and at times time-critical actions to ensure that *Mobile* was fully mission-ready despite the prolonged operations and distance from shore-based support. The man-hours and money saved through *Mobile’s* self-sufficiency and can-do attitude was a key to our success.”

LOCAL PHOTO GALLERY



CAMP PENDLETON (Oct. 24, 2024) Marines assigned to Light Armored Reconnaissance Company, Battalion Landing Team 1/5, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, unload 81mm mortar rounds from an LAV-25 here. LAR Co. conducted training to maintain readiness as part of the 15th MEU Marine Air-Ground Task Force and proficiency in mission-essential capabilities. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Patrick Katz



USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (Oct. 24, 2024) Sailors fight a simulated fire during a general quarters drill in the hangar bay aboard carrier *Lincoln* in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. U.S. Navy photo



SAN DIEGO (Oct. 22, 2024) A Navy MH-60R Sea Hawk hovers over a Peruvian navy submarine during a Diesel-Electric Submarine Initiative exercise off the coast here. DESI is an international program that works to enhance the Navy’s capability to operate with diesel-electric submarines by partnering with South American navies. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Keenan Daniels



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The mission of the Armed Services YMCA Camp Pendleton is to enhance the lives of military members and their families in spirit, mind, and body through programs relevant to unique challenges of military life. For the past 81 years, our goal has been to strengthen military families who work or reside on Camp Pendleton.



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<h4 style="color: #0070C0;">CAMP HERO</h4> <p>Encourages healthy living and provides outdoor activities and social bonding opportunities for military children.</p>	<h4 style="color: #0070C0;">OPERATION KID COMFORT</h4> <p>Custom, hand-made quilts to help children cope with the separation of a parent’s deployment.</p>	<h4 style="color: #0070C0;">SERVICE EVENTS</h4> <p>Support military families through dances, giveaways, and community events.</p>
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Halloween 2024 at SeaWorld San Diego



y themed activities.

themed bars and speakeasies.

I especially enjoyed the live musical performances by the Pirate Sea Shanty Band. Performing at various times throughout the day, this roving group of talented musicians delighted audiences by singing a variety of sea shanty songs, in a style that brought to my mind The Irish Rovers. I watched their performance as I relaxed at a waterfront park overlooking San Diego's Mission Bay.

Kids delighted in a pirate treasure hunt, trick-or-treating for candy at a number of candy stations throughout the SeaWorld, and meeting a mermaid.

At "Story Time with the Captain," two animatronic skeleton pirates — Captain Sweet Tooth and First Mate Peggy — entertained junior pirates with a "tale worth telling" (interspersed with repeated exclamations of "aaargh") — a story about their quest to find the largest treasure trove of candy the world has ever seen, locked away by the infamous Queen Esmeralda, and heavily guarded on the Isle of Licorice (licorice, "the devils candy").

Inside the Mission Bay Theater, O.P. Otter's Spooktacular Surprise was a live Halloween party performed on-stage, in song and dance, by O.P. Otter and his SeaWorld character friends.

Intended for a mature audience, SeaWorld San Diego went all-out to create their separately ticketed, annual Howl-O-Scream nighttime event, transforming "the once peaceful SeaWorld San Diego into a sinister, spine-chilling playground of terror" with "five angry haunts through seven scare zones and six vile vignettes," a live stage show and roller coaster rides. "Fiendishly delicious cocktails, beer and spirits" were available from six

SeaWorld San Diego is much more than an entertainment-focused theme park. They tell us that "for more than 60 years SeaWorld has advanced the conservation of marine life in and outside its parks through science, education, and exceptional animal care that is Humane Certified by American Humane and accredited by the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. SeaWorld is one of the largest marine animal rescue organizations in the world, helping more than 41,000 animals to date.

For example, on October 8th "SeaWorld San Diego successfully returned two rescued sea turtles to the ocean. After initial rescues from rescue organizations in the Pacific Northwest, each turtle received a private flight to SeaWorld San Diego by Turtles Fly Too, a non-profit that facilitates the use of general aviation to transport endangered species. After receiving extensive care and rehabilitation by the SeaWorld San Diego Rescue Team, the Olive Ridley Sea Turtle and Loggerhead Sea Turtle, both listed and protected under the Endangered Species Act, were ready to be returned home."

For more information about SeaWorld San Diego, including upcoming events, visit <https://SeaWorld.com/san-diego>.

To explore a wide variety of content dating back to 2002, with the most photos and the latest text, visit "AutoMatters & More" at <https://automatters.net>. Search by title or topic in the Search Bar in the middle of the Home Page, or click on the blue 'years' boxes and browse.

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Could what I think put my spouse in the clink?

I never considered myself an old-fashioned Navy wife, who showed up at command events with my signature chicken fricassee casserole, clutching my husband's arm and my pearls. However, unlike many modern military spouses, I've never been one to express my political opinions publicly.

I haven't put a political candidate's election sign in my yard or campaign bumper sticker on my car. I don't post, share or comment on political memes on social media. I've never attended a political rally or debate. And I haven't yet contributed to any political campaigns.

One may assume that I'm a wishy-washy wimp who's afraid to take a side, but this couldn't be further from the truth. I have very strong political beliefs that I've been honing since I first voted in 1992. In the hotly-contested national election happening in a matter of days, I know exactly who I'm voting for, and why.

Don't ask me, because I'll never tell. Why? Not entirely sure, but I'd be lying if I said that being a Navy wife hasn't affected my willingness to share my political preferences.

Back in the days when I was still trying to figure out how much to tip the baggers at the commissary, my husband said, "Whoever wins the election will end up being my boss, so I keep my political opinions to myself."

He didn't cite DoD 1344.10, a detailed directive prohibiting members of the U.S. Armed Forces (including military retirees) from participating in a long list of partisan political activities. Nor did he serve me with 10 U.S.C 888, Article 88, which states, "Any commissioned officer who uses contemptuous words against the President, the Vice President, Congress, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of a military department, the Secretary of Homeland Security ... shall be punished as a court-martial may direct."

I didn't need legal citations to understand that, if my husband took a public political stance, it could get him in big trouble. Even though

these laws didn't apply to me, my husband and I felt most comfortable adopting an unwritten policy that would protect his job: We don't discuss political preferences outside the family.

But then, as our nation crept closer to the hotly-contested November election, the pressure to voice opinions built like the steam

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

in a pressure cooker, leaving me waffling.

I began wondering, is our longstanding family policy antiquated, like the old etiquette manuals warning military wives not to be "a stone around his neck"? Is it silly to think that modern military spouses' political activities can put their spouses at risk of being court-martialed? Are military spouses' worth measured by the transparency of their political views?

Before I donned a campaign t-shirt and booked a bus to the next political rally, I decided to take a deeper dive into the legal implications for military families. Although DoD 1344.10 and Article 88 apply to military members only, spouses who are unit volunteers can't engage

in partisan political activities while volunteering or use their volunteer positions, email accounts, or social media platforms for partisan political purposes. Also, partisan political activities of military spouses who are federal employees are restricted under the Hatch Act.

Additionally, military spouses could get their service members into hot water if they use certain spouse-shared spaces to engage in political activities, such as soliciting votes or campaign contributions for a particular candidate on a shared social media account, posting political campaign signs bigger than bumper stickers on shared vehicles or outside of shared base houses, or sending email blasts disparaging the President from a shared email accounts.

Military members may take an oath that justifies curtailing their free speech, but military spouses make no such promises and may therefore not be silenced. Regardless, the unique nature of military marriage requires that spouses apply common sense when exercising their First Amendment rights.

Milspouses, feel free to shout your politics from the mountaintops, just do so while protecting your service member partners from unintended negative consequences. And for those spouses like me, there's no shame in remaining silent about the the upcoming election, as long as you're reserving your political expression for the voting booth.

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—Mahatma Gandhi

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- Afternoon snooze
- Nighttime party
- Soccer tiebreaker, perhaps
- County on the English Channel
- Canyon namesake of dry California winds
- Tree with elastic wood
- *Matches with known outcomes
- Hi-___ TV
- What "X" may mean
- Music center?
- Dennis the Menace, for one
- Beloved
- Monk's title
- Cultural setting
- Black and blue?
- H or O, in H2O
- Contrasting ornaments
- Roald Dahl title heroine
- Submitted, as a manuscript
- Kvetching sounds
- Weakens
- Give voice to
- ___ Lingus
- Partner in a 2020 peace agreement with Isr.
- Quite a ways away
- *Music group's lead violinist, casually
- Anger
- Imagining
- Photo taken backwards?
- Marine Corps motto, briefly, and a hint to the answers to starred clues
- Thrills
- General on a menu
- Fair-hiring letters
- Flair

Down

- Syrian leader
- W.C. Fields persona
- *Fast-food alternatives to burgers
- RN workplaces
- Sailing danger
- Ancient mystic
- Jazz trumpeter Jones
- Meeting group
- Biblical boater
- Bee, to Opie
- School orgs.
- Leave
- Name seen on one's way to the penthouse?
- License plates
- Marked on a ballot
- "La Boh me" role
- Banana covering
- Hunk's pride
- *Like half a chance
- APR-reducing loan
- Pt. of AAA
- Office notice
- "Now ___ me down to sleep ..."
- Being severely criticized
- Numbered rds.
- Novelist Jaffe
- Diner check
- Aussie parrot, briefly
- Mourful
- 33-Down demand, perhaps
- Luncheon end?
- "... or ___!"
- Cartoon mermaid
- Actress Witherspoon
- Punch deliverer
- March time
- San ___ : Italian resort
- Recon target
- Sniggler's catch
- Map line: Abbr.

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65							66			
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Visit our military museums

The Veterans Museum at Balboa Park. The Veterans Museum and Memorial Center is a museum located in historic Balboa Park of San Diego, California. Founded in 1989, it is dedicated to create, maintain, and operate an institution to honor and perpetuate the memories of all men and women who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

Active duty military, Museum Member, Children under 12: Free
Veterans/Seniors: \$4 • Adults: \$5 • Student ID: \$2
2115 Park Blvd, San Diego (Balboa Park) • (619) 239-2300
http://www.veteranmuseum.org/
Hours: Call for current hours (619) 239-2300

MCRD Command Museum & Historical Society. Museum focusing on Marine Corps history from the 19th century to today is also a research library. https://www.mcrdmuseum.org/
Free admission • The Pass and ID Center may issue day passes to visitors who wish to visit the museum and do not possess military ID-call (619) 524-4200 for information on base access.
1600 Hochmuth Ave, San Diego, 92140 • (619) 524-4426
Hours: Mon 8am-3pm, Tue-Fri 8-4; Family day 8-5:45; Sat 10:30-5, • Closed Sunday

USS Midway Museum. The USS Midway Museum is a maritime museum located in downtown San Diego at Navy Pier. The museum consists of the aircraft carrier Midway. The ship houses an extensive collection of aircraft, many of which were built in So Cal. FREE-Children 5 & under, Active Duty military including reservists (w/ valid ID). Adult \$34 (ages 13+). Youth \$24 (ages 4-12). Veterans (w/ID) \$24*Must show ID at entrance.
Open daily 10-5, last admission 4pm. https://www.midway.org/

The Ranch House Complex at Camp Pendleton. Listed as the Santa Margarita Ranch House Nat'l Historic Site and as a California State Historical Landmark. Docent-led tours are available by appointment; masks required. Please email your request to: MCB CAMPEN_history@usmc.mil or phone (760)725-5758 The Camp Pendleton Historical Society is a 501(c)3 organization in support of the base's History and Museum's programs. Go to: www.camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/ for information. Hours: Open daily 10am-5pm • Last admission at 4pm

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New Navy Medicine command to enhance expeditionary medical training, readiness

From Arsenio R. Cortez Jr.

Navy Medicine celebrated a pivotal moment in its expeditionary mission with the official establishment of a new command and renamed Naval Expeditionary Medical Training Institute (NEMTI) to the Naval Expeditionary Medicine Warfighter Development Center (NEMWDC) during a ceremony at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 4.

The command establishment signified a strategic shift in Navy Medicine's approach to combat trauma readiness and operational medical support.

"This transformation represents more than a change in name; it marks the continued evolution of Navy Medicine's mission to support the warfighter, strengthen our operational capabilities, and provide unmatched medical expertise both in garrison and in forward-deployed locations," said Rear Adm. Guido Valdes, Naval Medical Forces Pacific (NMFP) commander.

The ceremony also marked NEMWDC's organizational realignment from Navy Medicine Operational Training Command (NMOTC) to NMFP as an echelon 4 command, gaining more resources, capacity, and a broader and more dynamic role in bolstering Navy Medicine's ability to support the warfighters.

NEMWDC will serve as a center of excellence for unit level training for medical capabilities, enhancing combat trauma skills and certifying expeditionary medical platforms for future operations. This new command aligns with Navy Medicine's "North Star," ensuring that by 2027, the force will deliver trained and certified medical units capable of supporting the Fleet, Fleet Marine Force, and Joint Forces in any environment.

"The impact of this change will resonate across Navy Medicine and serve to amplify our role in ensuring that medical forces are ready and fully equipped to support any mission, anytime, anywhere," Valdes said.

Capt. Kevin Bailey, the first com-



Camp Pendleton, CA - Sarah Bailey, wife of Capt. Kevin Bailey, pins the commanding officer's insignia on her husband during the establishment ceremony for Naval Expeditionary Medicine Warfighter Development Center. Bailey, the first commanding officer of NEMWDC, reflected on the journey that led to the establishment of the new command, noting that the foundation laid by Naval Expeditionary Medical Training Institute (NEMTI) will guide NEMWDC's efforts as it prepares expeditionary medical teams for the future fight. Photo by Arsenio R. Cortez Jr.

manding officer of NEMWDC, reflected on the journey that led to the establishment of the new command, noting that the foundation laid by NEMTI will guide NEMWDC's efforts as it prepares expeditionary medical teams for future fight.

"NEMWDC is truly a unique gem in Navy Medicine," Bailey said. "This command is at the focal point for unit-level training leading to basic phase certification of Expeditionary Medicine (EXMED)."

Capt. Bailey also shared his vision for integrating innovative technologies like health informatics and virtual reality into the training pipeline, ensuring that NEMWDC remains at the forefront of medical readiness.

As NEMWDC evolves, it will focus on training medical personnel to deliver seamless care from Role 1 to Role 3 medical units, ensuring lifesaving support from the frontlines to more advanced medical facilities.

manding officer of NEMWDC, reflected on the journey that led to the establishment of the new command, noting that the foundation laid by NEMTI will guide NEMWDC's efforts as it prepares expeditionary medical teams for the frontlines or equipping them with the skills to operate in humanitarian or disaster scenarios," Valdes said.

The event concluded with a message of gratitude to the NEMWDC staff for their tireless dedication.

"To the Sailors of the newly designated Naval Expeditionary

Medicine Warfighter Development Center, I look forward to serving you as your commanding officer," Bailey said.

Naval Medical Forces Pacific (NMFP) provides oversight for 11 Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Commands (NMRTC), on the West Coast and Pacific Rim that train, man, and equip medical

forces, primarily in military treatment facilities. Globally, NMFP oversees eight research laboratories that deliver research expertise in support of warfighter health and readiness. Additionally, NMFP manages the Naval Expeditionary Medicine Warfighter Development Center (NEMWDC), which plays a critical role in preparing medical teams for expeditionary and operational environments.



Naval Medical Forces Pacific (NMFP) staff joins NEMWDC personnel and to commemorate the official establishment of the Naval Expeditionary Medicine Warfighter Development Center at Camp Pendleton, Oct. 4, 2024. The new command is positioned to enhance Navy Medicine's operational readiness and medical support capabilities. The establishment ceremony marked NEMWDC's organizational realignment from Navy Medicine Operational Training Command (NMOTC) to NMFP as an echelon 4 command. Photo by Arsenio R. Cortez Jr.



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