

# ANNUAL JAG

Official Magazine of the United States Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps

2013  
Vol. 16

INSIDE:

FROM NAVY ENLISTED  
TO LAWYER

MILITARY JUSTICE  
SYSTEM UPDATES

LEGAL SERVICES TO  
NAVY YARD GUNSHOT  
VICTIMS, FAMILIES



# INSIDE

<b>From Navy Enlisted to Lawyer: JAG Corps Establishes Commissioning Program</b>	<b>4</b>	JAG Corps Public Affairs
<b>Naval Justice School Innovative Training Prepares Legal Professionals for the Fleet</b>	<b>6</b>	Naval Station Newport Public Affairs
<b>Navy Legalmen Revive “Tacking on the Crow”</b>	<b>8</b>	Naval Justice School
<b>China Lake JAG helps Sailors on USS Nimitz</b>	<b>9</b>	NAWCWD Public Affairs
<b>Well, JAG, What Do You Think?</b>	<b>10</b>	Lt. James D. Carson
<b>Legal Services to Navy Yard Gunshot Victims, Families</b>	<b>11</b>	Lt. Cmdr. Paul Kapfer
<b>Victims’ Legal Counsel Program Spans the Globe</b>	<b>12</b>	CTF 51 Public Affairs
<b>Wilderness Challenge: Accepted</b>	<b>14</b>	Lt. j.g. Simone Harbas
<b>Network Strives to Help Military Spouse Lawyers Pursue Legal Careers</b>	<b>16</b>	Lt. Cmdr. Heather Henderson
<b>Civilian Mentoring Pilot Program</b>	<b>17</b>	Civilian Personnel Management Services ( Code 66)
<b>Updates to the Uniform Code of Military Justice and Military Justice System</b>	<b>18</b>	Criminal Law (Code 20)
<b>Book Review: <i>You are Not so Smart</i></b>	<b>20</b>	Lt. Cmdr. John Barclay Reese
<b>Photos From the Fleet</b>	<b>21</b>	

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Submissions are welcome on all Navy JAG Corps-related topics and, if published, are subject to editing for length and clarity. Written and photographic submissions that show active and Reserve judge advocates and legalmen are strongly encouraged. We prefer to receive all written and photographic submissions by e-mail to [natalie.morehouse@navy.mil](mailto:natalie.morehouse@navy.mil). Images should include captions and be unmodified; digital files should measure at least 300dpi at 5x7 inches. All submissions must include the author’s full name, rank, duty contact telephone number and e-mail address. Feature articles should be 750 to 1000 words. Accompanying photos should show emotion or action if possible.

If necessary, send submissions by regular postal mail to: Office of the Judge Advocate General, Attn: Public Affairs Office, 1322 Patterson Avenue, S.E., Bldg. 33, Suite 3000, Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5066. Telephone inquiries should be made to (202) 685-5394.

# JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL

Welcome to the annual issue of the JAG Magazine, a showcase of photos and stories from 2013. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to those who contributed to this issue and online throughout the year. The content provided in the JAG Magazine, as well as that provided on our website and social networking sites, are collaborative efforts by all members of the JAG Corps community.

2013 was particularly challenging, as we faced sequestration cuts, a civilian hiring freeze, a government shutdown, and furlough of civilian employees. The work our civilians do is vital to our legal mission and to the well-being of our Sailors and their families. Congressional budget work continues and may lend more stability to FY 14 and FY 15 budgets, but the longer-term commitment to reduce discretionary spending will continue to require all of us to make smart and efficient choices. Working together, I know we'll meet whatever challenges lie ahead.

We released JAG Guidance 2014, identifying annual initiatives that will enable the JAG Corps to fulfill its mission and strategic vision. We will:

- Oversee the phased execution of our knowledge management (KM) strategy and plan for the JAG Corps
- Develop sustainable processes to routinely capture review, validate, and disseminate standardized command advice practices to yield efficiencies in conjunction with the KM initiative.
- Implement the Legalman Utilization Instruction, Doctrine, and Professional Development Standards for optimal employment of paralegal-trained Legalmen.
- Continue to refine a civilian personnel resource guide with information for JAG Corps personnel on civilian employee management resources, training opportunities, and career development.
- Have military justice, legal assistance, and command advice practitioners work with program developers in the multi-year design and execution of the Naval Justice Information System (NJIS).

This edition of the JAG Magazine highlights the Naval Justice School's Innovative Training. The JAG Corps Public Affairs Officer discusses the In-Service Procurement Program (IPP), a pathway for enlisted Sailors to become judge advocates. Additionally, Lt. Cmdr. Paul Kapfer shares the legal assistance services provided to the gunshot victims and their spouses and children.

The annual JAG Magazine remains a wonderful resource. However, to keep it relevant and informative, the JAG magazine will shift to include more substantive and in-depth articles that tackle some of the significant legal issues being addressed by uniformed attorneys. You can keep up with the latest happenings around the Fleet via the following social media sites:

Facebook ([www.facebook.com/navyjag](http://www.facebook.com/navyjag))  
Twitter ([www.twitter.com/Navy\\_JAG](http://www.twitter.com/Navy_JAG))  
YouTube ([www.youtube.com/NavyJAGCorps](http://www.youtube.com/NavyJAGCorps))  
Wordpress ([www.usnavyjagcorps.wordpress.com/](http://www.usnavyjagcorps.wordpress.com/))  
Flickr ([www.flickr.com/photos/navyjagcorps/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/navyjagcorps/))

Thank you for everything you do for the Navy, our clients, and each other. Keep up the terrific work!



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nanette M. DeRenzi".

Nanette M. DeRenzi  
Vice Adm. JAG Corps, U.S. Navy

# JAG MAGAZINE

JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL  
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# From Navy Enlisted to Lawyer: JAG Corps Establishes Commissioning Program

*From JAG Corps Public Affairs*

In a NAVADMIN released June 4, the Navy Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps announced the In-Service Procurement Program (IPP) designed to create a pathway for enlisted Sailors to become judge advocates.

The JAG Corps IPP is open to qualified and career-motivated enlisted personnel of all ratings. Candidates selected for the JAG Corps IPP have the opportunity to complete a Juris Doctor degree in preparation for a JAG Corps commission.

"The JAG Corps IPP provides a commissioning option for talented and motivated Sailors," said Vice Adm. Nanette DeRenzi, Judge Advocate General of the Navy. "Officers commissioned through JAGC IPP will provide diversity of perspective, thought, and experience not widely found in the civilian law student population."

The JAG Corps IPP provides both funded and unfunded paths to JAG Corps commissions. Sailors who have earned a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree may apply for funded legal education; Sailors who have already earned a Juris Doctor degree from an American Bar Association accredited law school and a bar license from any state may apply for direct appointment.

"JAG Corps IPP will expand the pool of applicants from which we recruit judge advocates," said Command Master Chief Paul St. Sauver, Office of the Judge Advocate General. "It will provide key enlisted fleet experience to the JAG Corps, thereby significantly enhancing the value of the JAG Corps to the fleet."

The JAG Corps IPP is open to active-duty enlisted personnel and Navy full-time support personnel, in any rating or military occupational specialty, in pay grades E-5 through E-7 with at least two years and not more than 10 years of service. Applicants must be at least 21 years old and under the age of 42 by the time of commissioning.

The FY-14 JAG Corps IPP Selection Board met on Jan. 30, 2014 and considered 11 highly qualified applicants. Due to unique circumstances this year, two exceptional applicants will commission through this program.

Next year's IPP Selection Board looks to be even more competitive as word spreads about this great opportunity. A NAVADMIN announcing the FY-15 IPP Selection Board will be released in June. We encourage anyone interested to apply and invite the JAG community to provide guidance and professional mentorship to those interested. Application procedures and education requirements are available at [jag.navy.mil/careers](http://jag.navy.mil/careers).



# Naval Justice School Innovative Training Prepares Legal Professionals for the Fleet

By Bob Krekorian, Naval Station Newport Public Affairs

**The Naval Justice School (NJS) provides innovative legal training to its students by creating a more operational context to the daily legal issues that are important to commanding officers, to the warfighters and their families, and to the Navy's world-wide mission at sea and ashore.**

NJS, located in Helton and Morrison Halls at Naval Station Newport, is divided into five departments: Marine Legal Service Specialists, Legalmen, Civil Law, Military Justice, and Operational Law. The staff of NJS consists of officers, enlisted, and civilian administrative personnel from each of the sea services.

Based on feedback received from commanding officers, staff judge advocates, and legal professionals in the fleet, a six-month curriculum review at NJS last year determined that changes needed to be made to better prepare judge advocates to practice in the Fleet.

While many Coast Guard and Marine Corps judge advocates have some military background, most Navy judge advocates accessions have little or no military experience prior to accepting a commission into the JAG Corps.

The Basic Lawyer Course (BLC), a 10-week course for new lawyers, trains Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard judge advocates in the fundamentals of military justice and relevant civil law, administrative law, investigations, operational law, and legal assistance. Approximately 150 students graduate annually from BLC.

"We wanted to determine if we were teaching them everything they needed to know," said Marine Corps Maj. Matt Stewart, Operational and International Law department head and curriculum review leader. "We found that our recent Basic Lawyer Course graduates didn't understand the context of the legal issues," said Stewart.

"From day 1, we stress accountability, integrity, professionalism, and commitment to the warfighter and military mission," said Capt. Stacy Pedrozo, NJS commanding officer.

BLC now includes more practical exercises such as mock client interviews, legal briefs to the commanding officer, and mock trials involving alleged sexual assaults and other types of UCMJ violations.

While NJS emphasizes trial advocacy skills for new military attorneys who serve

as counsel at courts-martial, the BLC curriculum also focuses on training in basic operational law for deployed units which covers rules of engagement, law of armed conflict, law of the sea, and environmental law.

"In an increasingly complex warfare environment, we have to train our judge advocates to recognize legal issues associated with the emerging technology such as unmanned systems and cyberwarfare capabilities," Pedrozo said.

Stewart said questions frequently come up about simple legal issues, but the larger mission needs to be considered.

"A problem that we saw is that our students needed to know how military justice supports the commander and how it helps to maintain good order and discipline," he said.

"Part of our mission is to make sure that new BLC graduates are Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard officers first. At the end of day, you have to figure out how to fit into the commanding officer's staff and best support the mission," said Stewart.

Thinking like a military professional is important for the new BLC graduate, and so the Navy JAG Corps, in particular, has instituted an on-going mentoring program to support first-tour judge advocates.

"We need the BLC graduates to be excellent military professionals first. If they are not credible, their advice will fall on deaf ears within the organization," said Lt. Cmdr. Paige Ormiston, NJS Professional Development and Leadership Training curriculum coordinator.

In addition to the BLC, NJS also focuses on enlisted legal training by ensuring Marine Corps legal service specialists and Navy legalmen have the skills to become paralegals. Through a newly-designed continuing education curriculum for the Marine Corps legal service specialists, courses are provided throughout the legal service specialist's career. Legal service specialists also return to NJS periodically to receive more intensive and practical civil, administrative and military justice law training.

The Coast Guard has also revamped their legal technician course at NJS to

**"In an increasingly complex warfare environment, we have to train our judge advocates to recognize legal issues associated with the emerging technology such as unmanned systems and cyberwarfare capabilities."**

**— Capt. Stacy Pedrozo  
NJS commanding officer**



Lt. j.g. Astrid Brouillard, Naval Justice School Basic Lawyer Course student, role plays the defendant during mock trials in which the new judge advocates are testing their trial advocacy skills. Lt. j.g. Nick Hambley, role plays as her defense counsel. The mock trials are one of the students' final graded events and are a culmination of their ten weeks of training at NJS.

provide new and more practical training to its yeomen, as there is no legal-specific enlisted rating, in order to ensure proper designation to take a billet coded for a legal technician.

For Navy legalmen, the Navy has instituted the Legalman Paralegal Education Program, which begins with an 11-week Legalman Accession course. All Legalman Accession students have prior enlisted service before becoming legalmen.

The 'A' school portion at NJS is followed by a full-time semester taught by the law faculty from Roger Williams University, Bristol, R.I. Graduates earn 10 college credit hours towards an ABA-accredited associate degree in paralegal studies. To date, the vast majority of the legalman community has obtained an associate degree in paralegal studies or is enrolled in classes and working toward a degree.

"This benefits the Fleet, the JAG Corps, and our independent duty legalmen," said Lt. Cmdr. Sara de Groot, NJS Military Justice Department.

NJS also focuses on training beyond the initial accession training. Judge advocates, legalmen, and legal service specialists have the opportunity to expand their knowledge base with just-in-time training via the NJS online legal education program.

"With distance education we are leveraging the technology to support the professional development of everyone in our legal community from accession

to retirement," said Lt. Cmdr. Sean Sullivan, online legal education program manager.

Beginning in the fall of 2012, NJS partnered with the Army JAG School and Legal Center, Charlottesville, Va., to make online courses available for the distance learner using the Blackboard learning management system and Defense Connect Online.

"Because there are only so many resident seats that we can fill at NJS, and considering the current fiscal constraints, we have created an online environment that provides an education and training opportunity that until recently was unavailable," Sullivan said.

Distance Learning provides up-to-date training that allows JAGs to keep their commanders and clients well informed of changes in regulations and law, thereby contributing to mission success.

Not only does NJS focus on ensuring members of the legal community are properly trained, NJS also provides training to several commands around Naval Station Newport. Its detachments in Norfolk and San Diego also provide courses to service members who are legal officers, senior officers, and senior enlisted.

All NJS locations provide a Chief of Naval Personnel-directed senior officer course for all O-6 commanding officers that addresses issues such as standards of conduct, ethics, disposition of sexual assault cases, and other complex legal issues. 🌐

# Navy Legalmen Revive “Tacking on the Crow”

From Naval Justice School

The Navy’s newest legalmen revived the old tradition of “tacking on the crow” during a frocking ceremony at the Naval Justice School on May 17, 2013.

“Tacking on the crow” involves Sailors taking turns stitching the petty officer rating badge on to the sleeve of a newly-advanced Sailor, representing the new rank/rate.

Chief Legalman Cheryl Elliott, a NJS course coordinator, started the first tack with a long white thread. “Remember to make your stitches nice and even,” she said as she demonstrated the stitches for the Sailors who would be stitching the patch next.

Seaman James Cameron, Jr., who completed the Legalman Accession Course, was unfamiliar with the recently-revived Navy tradition. While being frocked to petty officer, his new third-class crow was sewn on his sleeve by his shipmates, who were also unfamiliar with the practice.

The sewing on of Cameron’s crow marked the end of the group’s journey through their 11 weeks in the legal curriculum.

“Our heritage and traditions help build pride in our Navy, connect us with past generations of Sailors, and help keep our foundation strong for generations to come,” said Chief Legalman Karyn Sigurdsson, NJS assistant course coordinator. “In particular, the revival of the tradition of tacking on the crow is a way to show our young Sailors that we are here to help guide and mentor them as they continue in the Navy.”

The last stitch was sewn by Sigurdsson. By sewing the first and last stitches on Cameron’s service dress white uniform, the course instructors symbolized the equality of all who have worn the crow and the support offered to a new petty officer.

“I felt honored to be able to participate in this genuine military tradition,” said Cameron. “It was really special that each petty officer stopped by after they

“  
Our heritage and traditions help build pride in our Navy, connect us with past generations of Sailors, and help keep our foundation strong for generations to come.

– Chief Legalman  
Karyn Sigurdsson

stitched to tell me what knowledge has helped them as a petty officer.”

Over the years the tradition of stitching on the new rank had been distorted into a hazing ritual. However, the true spirit of “tacking on the crow” has been revitalized at NJS.

“It was a great and memorable experience in my Navy career,” said Legalman 3rd Class Celeste Jimenez. “This ceremony brought camaraderie.”

NJS provides accession-level and long-term legal training for all Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard lawyers and enlisted legal professionals, active and reserve. In addition, NJS provides training for civilian personnel, sea service commanders, legal officers, senior enlisted and others in the administration of military law. 🌟



Legalman 2nd Class Malisha Eley assists in the stitching on the rating badge of a classmate during a “tacking on the crow” ceremony.



Lt. Kristin Seewald, the staff judge advocate for the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division and the Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, takes a look around the deck of USS Nimitz. (U.S. Navy photo)

## China Lake JAG helps Sailors on USS Nimitz

*From Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division Public Affairs*

**T**he staff judge advocate for the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division and the Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake recently spent a week aboard USS Nimitz (CVN 68) helping its Sailors take care of legal matters before deploying.

With a little more than three years in the Navy, Lt. Kristin Seewald has already done a lot of things she never imagined she would – she did a tour of duty with Combined Joint Task Force 435 in Afghanistan, she served and lived in Hawaii, she moved to Ridgecrest, Calif., in August and now she has logged time on an aircraft carrier.

When Region Legal Service Office Southwest asked for volunteers to spend the week before Thanksgiving aboard the Nimitz helping Sailors as part of pre-deployment legal readiness preparation, Seewald said she couldn't wait to get out there. Slightly disappointed that she couldn't have the experience of landing on a carrier, Seewald said she and four other lawyers in the Navy's JAG Corps walked onto the ship in San Diego. As the ship cruised up the coast to Washington, the judge advocates helped the Sailors prepare wills and powers of attorney, and tend to other legal issues like closing out leases and phone contracts.

Seewald may have gone to help the Sailors, but she benefitted from the trip as well.

"I learned a lot on that ship," she said. "And, I gained a greater appreciation for what our Sailors go through out there."

Seewald observed a few executive officer inquiries and a captain's mast while aboard the Nimitz.

"I was able to see a completely different way of doing them," she said. "It was a good comparison between how things are done on a ship versus on shore. I can incorporate that into my knowledge base here."

Seewald said her week on the ship consisted of a lot of work, at a fast pace and long hours, and she would jump at the chance to do it all again.

"Working with the other judge advocates was a good reminder of how cool our legal community in the Navy is," Seewald said. "We are mobile and we can get things done no matter where we are."

Joining the Navy wasn't an automatic choice for Seewald, an Albuquerque native, as she didn't come from a traditionally military family, although she had an uncle who served in the Army during Vietnam as a language specialist. It was while she was still in law school at Lewis and Clark in Oregon that Seewald came across a job announcement for the Navy JAG Corps.

"I had not thought of the Navy as a potential employer before but I kept an open mind and pursued it," Seewald said. "I found it interesting because I could practice various types of law, and I could travel to new places. So far, it's fulfilled every one of my wishes. I love my job." 🌟

# Well, JAG, What Do You Think?

## Navy JAG Supports Joint Warrior

By Lt. James D. Carson, Region Legal Service Office Southeast

“Well, JAG, what do you think?” How little we realize how often that question is asked and how much depends on the answer. Nothing could bring that into sharper focus than the operational environment. This question was put to me as I briefed a critical rules of engagement (ROE) request during a recent coalition exercise. This was the pinnacle event of Joint Warrior 12-2 for me as a judge advocate.

Joint Warrior is a semiannual training event hosted by the Royal Navy’s Joint Tactical Exercise Planning Staff in the United Kingdom. It provides a multi-threat environment where joint forces from various NATO allies gain pre-deployment training and practice what it means to be a part of a Combined Joint Task Force. For me, it was an opportunity to advise the Commodore of a Combined Task Group on operational law issues in a simulated but high-tempo environment. It also gave me a much needed and much appreciated in-depth look at the work of the operational Navy.

I saw (and slept directly beneath) flight operations and watched replenishments at sea. I witnessed the five-inch gun firing inert, high-explosive, illumination rounds. I shared a freezing stateroom with five other staff officers, one of them from the Royal Navy. I socialized in the wardroom with ensigns and admirals. I observed the innovative counter-piracy strategy of using air assets to keep pirates away from their intended targets.

I also gained tremendous legal experience that helped me see how critical our trade is to effective warfighting. Even before the exercise began, I was called upon to review and update rules of engagement requests and rules of engagement implementation orders. These critical responsibilities continued unabated throughout the exercise. I drafted and executed a publication exercise to test the knowledge of ships’ company on ROE. I benefitted immeasurably from the opportunity to pick a seasoned captain’s brain on the bridge of his ship about the nuanced difficulties of operationally implementing various specific ROE. I learned to distinguish ROE that enable surface warfare from ROE that enable mine warfare, and the important practical distinctions between the two. I saw how ROE can both influence and implement strategy while executing a simulated

non-combatant evacuation operation and navigating the legal and public affairs challenges associated with taking custody of detainees. Perhaps most importantly, I felt the weight, even if only simulated, that rests upon the JAG’s shoulders.

So what does this JAG think? To any judge advocate given the opportunity to practice operational law in an international context like Joint Warrior, I recommend the perfect word from our British allies who host Joint Warrior that warmly conveys gratitude, farewell, and excitement: Cheers!

Special thanks to Commodore Nelson Castro, the DESRON TWO SIX staff, and the captain and crew of the USS Gettysburg (CG-64). 🍷



Lt. James D. Carson stands in front of a Phalanx Close-In Weapons System (CIWS) onboard the USS Gettysburg (CG-64). Carson was the legal advisor for a Combined Task Group and its supporting forces during JOINT WARRIOR 12-2, a semiannual training event hosted by the Royal Navy’s Joint Tactical Exercise Planning Staff in the United Kingdom.



# WASHINGTON NAVY YARD

## Legal Services to Navy Yard Gunshot Victims, Families

*By Lt. Cmdr. Paul Kapfer, Region Legal Service Office Naval District Washington*

In the wake of the Sept. 16, 2013, Washington Navy Yard shootings, the Secretary of the Navy extended legal assistance services to the gunshot victims and their immediate or surviving spouses and children.

Region Legal Service Office Naval District Washington (RLSO NDW) mobilized immediately to support an Emergency Family Assistance Center (EFAC) established at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling as a "one stop" location for counseling, financial assistance, and legal services. During the EFACs first days of operation, RLSO personnel staffed a table with both active and Reserve JAG Corps personnel.

FBI victim service professionals escorted survivors and their families through the EFAC. Survivors were given the opportunity to have discussions with RLSO attorneys about potential legal concerns. Shortly after the incident, the Secretary of the Navy extended legal assistance services to otherwise ineligible victims

of the shooting and their immediate families. RLSO NDW legal assistance personnel responded by scheduling appointments with victims and families to look comprehensively at their legal concerns. Because victims were mainly civilian, contractor, or retired military, the consultations included advice on workers compensation, survivor benefits, government and contractor pay structures, life insurance procedures, and sources of community and local government support. For some families, the deceased had been the sole breadwinner, and an immediate priority was to secure additional resources and reduce expenses.

While the American Bar Association's Military Pro Bono program is usually limited to active-duty personnel (E-6 and below), at the request of RLSO NDW's legal assistance department head, the ABA also extended its pro bono legal assistance services to the shooting victims and their immediate families. Working with the judge advocate

.....  
"We want to ensure our Navy family is able to understand the resources available to them."  
.....

—Secretary of the Navy  
Ray Mabus  
.....

assigned to advise individual families, the ABA recruited local attorneys to provide services tailored to the applicable jurisdiction. This cooperative effort resulted in the best possible service to the shooting victims and their families in legal specialty areas such as probate and estate planning.

During the month-long effort, RLSO NDW contacted all 12 of the deceased victims' families, as well as the other individuals who were injured. The legal assistance department also offered legal assistance to the 55 Navy employees and contractors who were in proximity to the shootings, teamed up with OJAG's Legal Assistance Division (Code 16) to brief the Casualty Assistance Calls Officers assigned to each family, and participated in response efforts organized by Commander, Navy Installations Command. The Navy JAG Corps team (active and reserve), in partnership with the larger legal community, was privileged to be able to help in a tragic moment when a few families needed a steady hand. 🍷

# Victims' Legal Counsel Program Spans the Globe

From CTF 51 Public Affairs

The Navy's Victims' Legal Counsel (VLC) Program was introduced to forward deployed Sailors and Marines aboard the multipurpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) in the 5th Fleet area of responsibility, March 19, 2014.

Sailors and Marines assigned to the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and the embarked 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) received information about the VLC Program, established to provide legal advice and advocacy to eligible victims of sexual assault.

U.S. Navy Lt. Cara Addison discussed the program's details and her role as the Navy VLC stationed at Naval Support Activity, Bahrain. She explained the types of services provided, the attorney-client relationship and confidentiality, and the collaboration with other personnel available to assist sexual assault victims.

"I serve as legal counsel for the victim only, not for the government, nor for the accused," Addison said. "I ensure that victims have the opportunity to be heard and informed, and are treated with fairness and respect for their dignity and privacy."

Addison spoke to separate groups, each with a special role in the prevention of sexual assault and processing of a report. She stressed the program's focus on providing compassionate and coordinated support to victims.

Enlisted and senior leadership teams from the ARG, MEU, and USS Bataan, as well as, victim advocates, sexual assault response coordinators, chaplains, healthcare personnel, staff judge advocates and legal officers received interactive briefs about the independent VLC program.

"The Navy's Victims' Legal Counsel is a program needed for many years," said Senior Chief Master-at-Arms Katherine Gutierrez, Bataan's chief master-at-arms. "The VLC can help victims of sexual assault



U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class RJ Stratchko

Lt. Cara Addison discusses the Navy's Victims Legal Counsel Program to enlisted leaders aboard the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5). The Navy established its VLC program, August 15, 2013 to complement the support provided by Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and Victim Advocates (VAs) by offering legal advice, representation and, as appropriate, advocacy for victims of sexual assault. Bataan is the flagship for the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group and, with the embarked 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, is deployed in support of maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

by giving them a voice in the legal process and sound legal guidance from a lawyer assigned to represent victims only. This ensures the victim is treated fairly and with dignity at all times.”

The Navy established its VLC program, August 15, 2013. It is designed to complement the support provided by Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and Victim Advocates (VAs) by offering legal advice, representation and, as appropriate, advocacy for victims of sexual assault. Navy VLCs help victims understand the investigative and military justice processes, advocate in court as appropriate for the victim’s rights and interests, and provide legal advice to assist the victim.

“It is important for our Sailors and Marines to know that this program is available and that it provides an opportunity to have counsel that is focused solely on their interests as victims,” Commander, Task Force 51, Brig. Gen. Gregg P. Olson, said. “Lt. Addison’s zeal in seizing the opportunity to share the program with forward-deployed expeditionary forces is a tribute to her dedication and highlights the VLC Program’s commitment to providing comprehensive legal assistance to our Shipmates.”

Bataan is the flagship for the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group and, with the embarked 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, is deployed in support of maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility. Task Force 51 provides command and control of amphibious forces deployed to U.S. 5th Fleet.

For more information about the VLC Program, or to contact a VLC office, [jag.navy.mil](http://jag.navy.mil). 

### ***Editor’s Note:***

*Although Lt. Addison briefed both Sailors and Marines on the program, the Marine Corps also has Victims’ Legal Counsel. In fact, each service has judge advocates specifically assigned as victims’ counsel.*



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20360-1000

15 AUG 2013

SUBJECT: Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel today announced seven new initiatives to strengthen and standardize the department’s sexual assault prevention and response effort.

In a memo to the field, Hagel called elimination of sexual assault in the military one of the department’s top priorities.

“This effort requires our absolute and sustained commitment to providing a safe environment in which every service member and DOD civilian is free from the threat of sexual harassment and assault,” he wrote in a statement. “Our success depends on a dynamic and responsive approach. We, therefore, must continually assess and strive to improve our prevention and response programs.”

On May 6, 2013, the secretary directed the services and defense agencies to strengthen the program in commander accountability, command climate, victim advocacy and safety.

The secretary’s initiatives announced today strengthen these areas further. They include:

- The secretary directed the services to improve victim legal support. He directed the service secretaries to create a legal advocacy program to provide legal representation to sexual assault victims throughout the judicial process. He set Nov. 1, 2013, as an initial operating capacity for this and for it to be fully functional by Jan. 1, 2014.
- Hagel directed that pre-trial investigative hearings of sexual assault-related charges are conducted by Judge Advocate General officers.
- The secretary directed service secretaries to enhance protections calling on them to develop and implement policies allowing for the reassignment or transfer of members accused of committing sexual assault or related offense. Hagel wants this done in order to eliminate continued contact while respecting the rights of both victims and the accused.
- Hagel is requiring timely follow-up reports on sexual assault incidents and responses to be given to the first general or flag officer within the chain of command.
- He also directed the DOD Inspector General to regularly evaluate closed sexual assault investigations.
- Hagel ordered the service secretaries to standardize prohibitions on inappropriate behavior between recruiters and trainers and their recruits and trainees across the department.
- And, Hagel directed the DOD general council to develop and propose changes to the Manual for Courts-Martial that would allow victims to give input during the sentencing phase of courts-martial.

The new measures should strengthen the department’s sexual assault prevention and response programs, the secretary said.

“Remember, we are all accountable and responsible for eliminating this crime from our ranks,” Hagel said in the memo.

# Wilderness Challenge: Accepted

By Lt. j.g. Simone Harbas,  
Defense Service Office Southeast

**N**avy and Marine Corps judge advocates departed Norfolk, Va., to represent the Navy JAG Corps in the All-Military Wilderness Challenge in Fayetteville, W. Va.

A feat of true mental and physical toughness, the Wilderness Challenge is an outdoor adventure race in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains organized by the Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation. This year the race consisted of an 8K mountain run, a 12-mile mountain bike race, a 14-mile forced hike through the mountains, a 13-mile whitewater raft race on the Gauley River, a seven-mile kayak race on the New River and an obstacle mud course challenge.

Judge advocates from Defense Service Office Southeast, Region Legal Service Office Mid-Atlantic, and the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) split up into two teams. Team “Reckless Endangerment” was comprised of four officers: Lt. j.g. Simone Harbas, Lt. Greg Dixon, Lt. j.g. Victor Marquez, and Lt. j.g. Emily Jones. Team “Lethal Litigators” was comprised of four officers: Lt. Jacob Meusch, Lt. Keven Schreiber, U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Keaton Harrell, and Lt. Chris Caetano.

This was a truly amazing experience and a fantastic opportunity to meet and compete with service members from all branches of the Armed Forces.

Forty-one teams composed of active-duty service members, retirees, reservists and wounded warriors from around the country gathered, to compete in the race, which is approved



Lt. j.g. Simone Harbas, Lt. Greg Dixon, Lt. Chris Caetano, U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Keaton Harrell, Lt. Keven Schreiber, Lt. Jacob Meusch, Lt. j.g. Emily Jones, and Lt. j.g. Victor Marquez from the Defense Service Office Southeast, Region Legal Service Office Mid-Atlantic, and the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71), represented the JAG Corps in the 12th Annual Wilderness Challenge. The Wilderness Challenge is an outdoor adventure race organized yearly by the Mid-Atlantic Region, Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Department and is located in the Appalachian Mountains in West Virginia. Teams are made up of four members which complete in numerous endurance challenges over a period of three days.

by the United States Adventure Racing Association as a National Championship qualifying event.

Each team came together to prove that they had what it took to challenge themselves and the wilderness itself. As event coordinator Michael Bond remarked, “this is one of the most grueling, hard-fought competitions in the Armed Forces.”

Teamwork is vitally important to be successful in the Wilderness Challenge, as all team members must complete the entire race and all must remain in line-of-sight of each other at all times. Truly, no man could be left behind. Nowhere was this more apparent than the four-man raft race.

Team “Lethal Litigators,” captained by Meusch, acted together to heroically rescue their river guide who was thrown from the raft in the Class IV-V rapids of the Lower Gauley River. The team responded rapidly, working together to both paddle and steer the raft without assistance of the guide who was swept downstream. Using teamwork and quick thinking, they were able to catch up to their guide, haul him back in the raft, and complete the raft race.

Despite one broken wrist, one bruised and bloody eye, various cuts and scrapes, and numerous sore muscles, both JAG teams completed the race and all members were able to cross the finish line to compare battle scars and stories with the other teams.

The winning team this year came from the Navy, Team “Trample the Weak, Hurdle the Dead,” who completed the 52-mile course with a winning overall time of 7 hours, 11 minutes, 13 seconds. Team “Reckless Endangerment” came in 15th with a time of 9 hours and 22 minutes and Team “Lethal Litigators” came in 31st with a time of 10 hours and 53 minutes.

Although we may meet across the courtroom against one another, this really brought us together as friends and judge advocates. It taught us all about the power of working together as a team, remaining positive, and the sheer power of our wills. 🌟



Lt. Christina Caetano from Team “Lethal Litigators” broke her wrist and Lt. j.g. Emily Jones from Team “Reckless Endangerment” received a gash under her eye during the 2012 All-Military Wilderness Challenge.

# Network Strives to Help Military Spouse Lawyers Pursue Legal Careers

By Lt. Cmdr. Heather Henderson, Region Legal Service Office Southwest

Obtaining a license to practice law is challenging and often stressful. The process typically involves lengthy applications and intensive studying, culminating in a demanding examination and an anxious wait for results. The process takes almost a year and costs thousands of dollars. Military spouses who practice law must endure this evolution each time they move to a new jurisdiction. After licensure, military spouses have the additional task of finding a new employer to hire them.

Silvia Schaffer, an attorney and spouse of a Navy JAG Corps officer, knew that by marrying a military service member she would face challenges in advancing her legal career. Describing the licensing process as “daunting, time consuming, difficult, and expensive,” Schaffer acknowledged that it would be a “much appreciated break and assist in career support” if jurisdictions moved to modify licensing requirements to accommodate military spouse attorneys.

Licensing requirements and geographic instability lead many military spouses to give up on their pursuit of a legal profession to support their service member spouse. The Military Spouse JD Network (MSJDN), founded in June 2011, is striving to change this paradigm. The MSJDN was founded by two military spouse attorneys, Mary Reding, Esq., and the Hon. Erin Masson Wirth, who were inspired to make a change in their profession to improve the lives of military families. MSJDN is an international network of legal professionals who support military spouses by advocating for reforms including licensure without additional state-by-state

bar examination. The Network also works to educate state bar associations and employers on the challenges faced by military families and to encourage the hiring of military spouses. Additionally, they provide military spouses with a professional and personal network of practitioners in similar circumstances who can offer advice, job postings, and mentoring.

Since its founding less than two years ago, the MSJDN has garnered attention and support from the American Bar Association (ABA), the National Conference of Women’s Bar Associations, the National Conference of Chief Justices, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Military Family Association, and the Military Officers Association of America. MSJDN has also been recognized by “Joining Forces,” the program First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden started to support military families.

The successes of MSJDN are noteworthy. In February 2012, the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession passed a resolution urging bar admission authorities to “adopt rules, regulations and procedures that accommodate the unique needs of military spouse attorneys who move frequently in support of the nation’s defense.” In June 2012, the State of Idaho adopted specific admission rules for qualified military spouse attorneys, and in December 2012, the State of Arizona followed suit. Rule changes in additional states are expected to follow. In 2013, the MSJDN plans to host a career summit and luncheon in Washington D.C. in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Women’s Bar Association of the District of Columbia.

More information about ongoing initiatives and membership can be found at [www.msjdn.org](http://www.msjdn.org).



# CIVILIAN MENTORING PILOT PROGRAM

 MENTORS  
 MENTEES



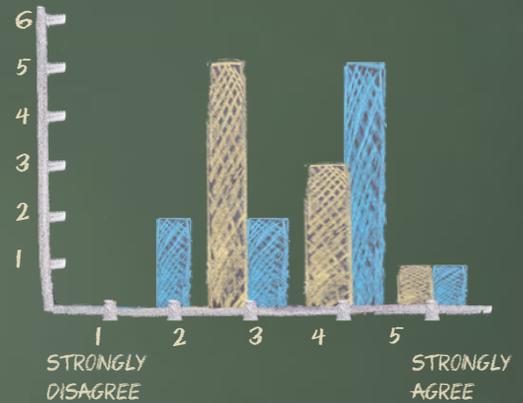
Civilian Personnel Management Services (Code 66) has developed a civilian mentoring program to increase civilian professional development and career satisfaction. Beginning in the fall of 2013, Code 66 administered a Civilian Mentoring Pilot Program that ran for two three-month cycles from October 2012 to April 2013. Participation was open to all OJAG civilian employees located in the D.C. area. A total of 29 employees participated, ranging in grade from GS-5 to GS-15. The program afforded mentors and mentees the opportunity to learn more about the organizational structure and discuss such topics as career development, networking, goal setting and leadership.

Participants provided feedback during and after the pilot program. The feedback was consistently positive, with 91 percent giving the program high marks. Mentors and mentees communicated that they benefited from the experience. Mentors' supervisors showed support for the program as well, stating that "this program has the ability to be an excellent source of knowledge for employees."

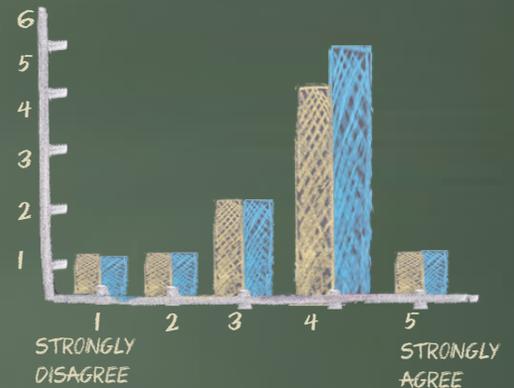
After the pilot cycles were completed, Naval Legal Service Command activities were surveyed and 40 percent of respondents stated they would be interested in participating in a mentoring program. NLSC input also included program concept, desired goals and benefits, and viability of virtual mentoring

Most commands felt that e-mentoring is a viable option, but prefer face-to-face mentoring. Commands also stated that they expect some challenges in coordinating across time zones. All input has been analyzed and program improvement recommendations are now under review.

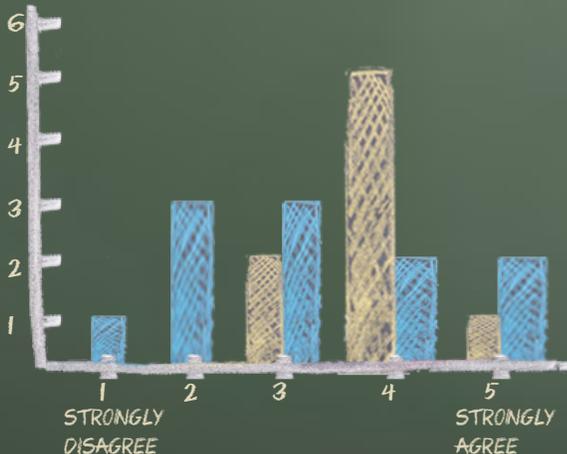
MORE SATISFIED WITH MY JOB



MORE VALUED IN THE ORGANIZATION



MORE SOCIALLY CONNECTED IN THE WORKPLACE



## How to Get Involved with Mentoring

Starting in January 2014, the JAG Corps will open civilian mentorship opportunities to all civilians in all locations. This program will introduce "virtual mentoring" through technologies in order to better connect our civilian staff in all duty stations. If you are interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, please contact Mr. Nathan Greathouse for more information. Please watch your email and other notices for more information, and get involved!

# Criminal Law

## Updates to the Uniform Code of Military Justice and Military Justice System

On December 26, 2013, the President signed the Fiscal Year 2014 National Defense Authorization Act (FY14 NDAA), codifying over 30 reforms to military justice and sexual assault response systems in the military, including immediate revisions to articles of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), and new provisions and policies taking effect over the next year. These reforms are in addition to the ongoing review of systems used to investigate and prosecute adult sexual assault crimes undertaken by the Response Systems Panel established by Congress and the Comprehensive Review of the UCMJ directed by the Secretary of Defense. Some key NDAA changes are highlighted below.

A major theme of these reforms is the expansion and protection of victim rights. Victims of sexual assault are entitled to advice and assistance from legal counsel, and communications with counsel are protected by the attorney-client privilege. Article 46, UCMJ now requires defense counsel to request interviews of sexual assault victims through the prosecutor when notified that the victim

may be a witness. Upon request, the victim has the right to have the prosecutor, victim's attorney, or a victim advocate present during such interviews.

Additionally, the federal Crime Victims' Rights Act is now incorporated into the UCMJ. The rights apply to victims of crime at all stages of the military justice process and include the right to be heard at certain hearings. Congress also directed the development and implementation of mechanisms to enforce these rights and sanction violators.

Another key theme in the NDAA is the placement of limitations on convening authority discretion in cases involving charges of rape, sexual assault, rape and sexual assault of a child, forcible sodomy, and attempts to commit these offenses. Convening authority discretion is limited in both pretrial referral and post-trial actions. At the pretrial referral stage, where a general court-martial convening authority's

staff judge advocate (GCMCA SJA) recommends referral of charges to court-martial in formal, written advice and the convening authority declines to refer the charges, the case must be forwarded for review by the Service Secretary. Alternatively, if the GCMCA SJA recommends against referring charges to court-martial and the convening authority agrees, the case must be forwarded for review by the next superior GCMCA.

With respect to post-trial action under Article 60, UCMJ, when an accused is convicted of any offense described above or of an offense for which the maximum authorized punishment exceeds two years, or the accused is sentenced to a dismissal, dishonorable discharge, bad conduct discharge, or confinement for more than six months, the convening authority may not dismiss a charge or specification or change a finding of guilty to a lesser included offense except as part of a pretrial agreement or, in limited circumstances, upon the recommendation of the trial counsel.

Furthermore, victims are given a formal opportunity to submit comments to the convening authority before action is taken on the case. In cases where the convening authority dismisses

**A** major theme of these reforms is the expansion and protection of victim rights.

or changes a charge, or reduces an adjudged sentence, a written explanation must be inserted into the record.

While each Service policy differs, most convicted sex offenders will be processed for separation from the military. However, the NDAA also mandates that a notation be placed in a member's service record if the member is convicted of a "sex-related offense" by a court-martial or receives non-judicial punishment or administrative action for such an offense. Commanding officers are required to review newly-reporting members' service records to familiarize themselves with the member's history.

Within the year, UCMJ Article 32 pretrial investigations will also be revised. Its scope and purpose will be limited to a determination of whether probable cause exists to believe an offense was committed and the accused committed it. The new "preliminary hearing" will no longer be used for the purpose of defense discovery and crime victims will not be required to testify at the hearing.

Other reforms include limiting jurisdiction over the sex-related offenses discussed above to general courts-martial and mandatory dismissal or dishonorable discharge upon conviction. Additionally, consensual sodomy is removed as an offense and the five-year statute of limitations for the enumerated offenses of sexual assault and sexual assault of a child is removed, permitting prosecution for those offenses regardless of when committed (but only for offenses committed after December 26, 2013).

The Services remain focused on reforms that ensure our military justice system remains fair, effective and efficient, holds offenders appropriately accountable, protects the due process rights of the accused, provides justice to victims, and maintains the highest standard of discipline. 🌐

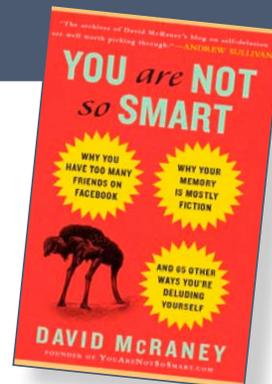


# You are Not so Smart:

## Why You Have Too Many Friends on Facebook, Why Your Memory is Mostly Fiction, and 46 Other Ways You're Deluding Yourself

Book by David McRaney

Book review provided by Lt. Cmdr. John Barclay Reese, Technology, Operations & Plans (Code 67)



I am at an age where I cannot help but strike up conversations with perfect strangers while waiting in line. It is one of the many benefits of being an outgoing, middle-aged man. So, while waiting for a haircut (and eyebrow trim...seriously, when did this happen?!) recently at the Washington Navy Yard barber shop, I was pretending not to watch The Today Show with the other patrons when Matt Lauer made a statement that prompted me to engage the gentleman sitting next to me with the observation, "My mother has always said that if we only knew how uninterested other people are in us, we'd be a lot happier." To which the gentleman replied, "That's called the spotlight effect, and I'm reading a book about it that you might really enjoy." Eureka!

And so I was introduced to David McRaney's *You Are Not So Smart: Why You Have Too Many Friends on Facebook, Why Your Memory is Mostly Fiction, and 46 Other Ways You're Deluding Yourself*, a delightful collection of enduring myths that McRaney, a self-described "psychology nerd," challenges with a great deal of wit, humor, and no small amount of research. Each concise chapter, which can be taken in any order, is introduced with a common misconception, followed by the truth, and an explanation of why we all are victims of our own cognitive biases, heuristics (mental shortcuts), and logical fallacies.

McRaney is not out to make us all feel inadequate and foolish; rather he debunks forty-eight of these misconceptions and offers all of us the opportunity to become more self-aware and, hopefully, avoid such psychological pitfalls in the future.

For instance, the Dunning-Kruger Effect: "The Misconception: You can predict how well you would perform in any situation. The Truth: You are generally pretty bad at estimating your competence and the difficulty of complex tasks."

Sound familiar? Are you a judge advocate who has ever had his hat handed to him in a "no brainer" situation? Just me, huh?

Well, fear not, because despite the book's title, McRaney is not out to make us all feel inadequate and foolish; rather he debunks forty-eight of these misconceptions and offers all of us the opportunity to become more self-aware and, hopefully, avoid such psychological pitfalls in the future. No small feat, however, given that we have developed these "fictions" over the course of the entirety of human existence in order to negotiate a scary world that requires such delusion in order to "stay sane." Also, as McRaney points out in Chapter 3, we are subject

to the "Confirmation Bias," which means that our opinions are "not the result of years of rational, objective analysis," but "the result of years of paying attention to information that confirmed what [we] believed, while ignoring information that challenged [our] preconceived notions."

And there it is, three years of law school right down the drain.

Don't worry, even if you aren't up for a little self-reflection and the shattering of your preconceived notions, you will enjoy, as McRaney explains, applying these lessons to others and reading the details of case study after case study in which human subjects never fail to disappoint. At the very least, you may find some comfort in better understanding why there's no need to get so upset while watching pundits say ridiculous things on twenty-four hour news channels and, perhaps most importantly, you will be possessed of a whole catalog of interesting anecdotes with which to start a conversation with strangers. 🐪

Read any great books lately? Submit your book review to [natalie.morehouse@navy.mil](mailto:natalie.morehouse@navy.mil).



Chief Legalman (SW/AW) José Macumba, Jr., Defense Service Office North, receives his collar device from his son during a chief pinning ceremony.



Commander, Naval Legal Service Command, Rear Adm. James Crawford cut the ribbon for the new JAG Consolidated Administrative Business Office (JCAB). The JCAB office consolidates NLSC's security, travel, and supply into one centralized office in order to improve the administrative support for the members of NLSC and ensure the JAG Corps is compliant on all administrative requirements.



Lt. Corey Bean, Region Legal Service Office Japan, competes in a triathlon in Japan. Bean has established himself as an accomplished triathlete on two continents. Both at his previous duty station in San Diego and in Sasebo, Japan; Bean reached the podium in several triathlons.



Lt. Cmdr. Jonathan Mitchell, Rule of Law Field Force – Afghanistan, awaits transport to conduct a rule of law visit in Helmand province. ROLFF-A's mission is to provide essential field capabilities and security to Afghan, coalition and civil-military rule of law project teams in non-permissive areas of Afghanistan, in order to build Afghan criminal justice capacity and promote the legitimacy of the Afghan government. Mitchell is a reservist assigned to the U.S. Pacific Fleet legal unit.



Judge advocates of the Navy Office of Legislative Affairs in Summer 2013: Lt. Cmdr. Barbara A Kagle, Cmdr. Aundrea Taplin, Capt. Kirk Foster, Cmdr. Dom Flatt, and Lt. Cmdr. Erin Quay. The Office of Legislative Affairs plans, develops, and coordinates relationships between representatives of the DoN and members of the U.S. Congress.



Two years ago, the Navy JAG Corps community lost one of its own, Lt. Jentso Hwang. In his memory, the JAG Corps sponsored a 5K run at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling. Hwang was accepted into the JAG Corps Student Program and commissioned in October 2005. He completed Naval Justice School in 2006 and reported to the Naval Legal Service Office North Central. In 2008, Hwang deployed to Al Anbar, Iraq with the 1st Marine Logistics Group, and earned his Fleet Marine Force Qualification. After his first tour Hwang clerked for the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals.



Region Legal Service Office Southwest and Defense Service Office West staff finish up the last of the long line of clients during the Veteran's Village of San Diego Stand Down 2013. The stand down is an annual three-day event where an estimated one thousand of San Diego's homeless veterans can receive a variety of free services, including help finding employment, substance abuse counseling, health care, and legal assistance.



Members of Region Legal Service Office Midwest get ready to head out for a bike ride along the Green Bay Trail for command PT. Left to right: Lt. Cmdr. Kelly Trunnell, Lt. j.g. Taurean Brown, Lt. j.g. Drew Austria, Lt. Andrew Murray, Lt. Howard Smith, Lt. j.g. Adam Smith, Legalman 1st Class Earl Brown, Legalman 2nd Class Deandra Whitehead, Legalman 2nd Class Dameon Smith and Legalman 2nd Class Alexis Lowe.



Lt. Cmdr. Ben Ammerman, Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A), speaks with local children in Kabul, Afghanistan during a walk from International Security Assistance Force Headquarters. Ammerman is serving as an operational law attorney in the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at Camp Eggers.



U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jacob G. Sisco/Released

Legalman 2nd Class Alina Davis sends an email from the legal office on the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70), while underway off the coast of Southern California conducting unit-level training.



Embracing the winter spirit at Region Legal Service Office Midwest (RLSO MW), Lt. Cmdr. Kelly Trunnell, Lt. Liz O'Connor, Lt. j.g Tom Bright and Fire Controlman Percy Francois built a snowman during a recent snow storm in front of RLSO MW offices at Naval Station Great Lakes.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Carlos M. Vazquez II/Released

Lt. Rachel Weidemann, deputy mission judge advocate for Pacific Partnership 2013, talks with a child in Seghe, Solomon Islands. Pacific Partnership is an annual deployment of forces designed to strengthen maritime and humanitarian partnerships during disaster relief operations, while providing humanitarian, medical, dental and engineering assistance to nations of the Pacific.



U.S. Navy Photo by Chief Legalman K. Sigurdsson

Senior Chief Legalman Lyn Pirtle inspects Damage Controlman 3rd Class Celeste Jimenez' uniform during a personnel inspection of the Legalman Accessions Class at Naval Justice School.



Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC) legal team after completing the Airborne Operations on the North Shore of Oahu, Hawaii. Pictured left to right: Army Sgt. 1st Class Samuel Robles, Cmdr. Kimberley McCann, staff judge advocate, Army Maj. Franklin Rosenblatt, deputy staff judge advocate.



Legalman 1st Class Demieka Wilson and the combined first class petty officer associations served up food and drinks for the flag football tournament "Snow Bowl" attendees at Misawa Air Base. Naval Air Facility Misawa and several of its tenant commands competed against each other on a field covered in almost two feet of snow aboard this northern Japan-located U.S. military installation.



Ms. Sandy Dixon of Region Legal Service Office Mid-Atlantic at the RLSO Mid-Atlantic health and wellness safety stand down. The event provided resources to promote safety, health and quality of life through an exhibition of information and services. Some of the topics covered included driver safety and motorcycle safety information, home fire-prevention safety, and additional health and wellness topics.



Lt. Ben Sandel, staff judge advocate for Naval Base Guam, takes a break from the tropical weather of Guam to travel to the Himalaya Mountains. He poses here at 17,765 feet above sea-level at Thoron-La Pass in the Manang District of Nepal.



Members of Region Legal Service Office Southwest and Defense Service Office West got together Thanksgiving morning for a JAG Turkey Bowl football game. RLSO SW supports the operational readiness of Navy commands and Sailors by providing legal guidance, support services and training in the areas of military justice, administrative law and legal assistance. DSO West provides legal representation to military service members at administrative separation boards, boards of inquiry and courts-martial, in addition to providing advice to service members on defense-related topics such as nonjudicial punishment.



A team from the Region Legal Service Office Midwest traveled to the VA Hospital in Milwaukee to draft and execute a will for a paralyzed wounded warrior. The team consisted of Lt. Josh Bennett, Petty Officer Emily Thomas, Ms. Cyndi Bartelt, and Mr. Tom Digan. The team conducted a bedside intake interview at the VA hospital and, with the help of the local Navy Operational Support Center, was able to prepare the will for execution. RLSO Midwest is located at Naval Station Great Lakes, Ill., and has a branch office in Millington, Tenn. The office oversees a geographic area encompassing 16 states.



Twenty of the Navy's Victims' Legal Counsel (VLC) attended the U.S. Air Force's Special Victims' Counsel Course at the Air Force Judge Advocate General's School, Oct. 15-18, 2013. Students received training in effective victim interaction, policies and procedures related to victim legal support, and practical advocacy of victim rights and interests. The Navy established the VLC Program to provide additional support and legal counsel to victims of sexual assault.



Chief Legalman Sean Harris goes through an obstacle course at Naval Base Coronado as a part of the San Diego Chief Petty Officer Legacy Academy. The academy is a six-day course in which the selectees live aboard the USS Midway Museum and participate in preservation activities, leadership training, community service projects and learn lessons about the history and heritage of the U.S. Navy and chief petty officer community.

Judge advocates assigned to Region Legal Service Office Southwest and Defense Service Office West pose for a picture outside of 3rd Fleet headquarters in San Diego, Calif. The judge advocates received a briefing on operational law and 3rd Fleet activities, along with a tour of headquarters. The visit was put on by RLSO SW and gives new judge advocates an opportunity to gain exposure to different areas of law, military knowledge, and leadership development.



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