



Commanding Officer
United States Coast Guard
Air Station Clearwater

15100 Rescue Way
Clearwater, FL 33762
Staff Symbol: MWR
Phone: (727) 535-1437
Fax: (727) 532-1817

1520

MEMORANDUM

From: Bryan L. Durr, CDR
NNOA Tampa Bay, President

Reply to: B. Durr, CDR
Attn of: X1400

To: T. A. Sokalzuk, CAPT
CG AIRSTA Clearwater

Thru: Aylwyn Young, CDR
NNOA Tampa Bay, Vice President

Subj: TRIP REPORT: NATIONAL NAVAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE
21-24 JULY 2009

1. In July 2009, LCDR Heather Turner, LCDR Julie Kuck, LT Jeanine Menze, LT Soumangue Basse, LT Kraig Jones, LT Jesse Hyles and I were afforded the opportunity to attend the National Naval Officers Association (NNOA) 37th Annual Conference held at the Westin Galleria Hotel in Houston, TX. The NNOA is a professional organization that actively supports the Coast Guard, Navy, and Marine Corps in recruiting, retaining, and developing the careers of junior and senior officers. Founded in 1972, the NNOA's initial mission was directed solely towards minority officer recruitment and progression in the Sea Services. Now the organization's general mission encompasses leadership, professionalism, and diversity issues that pertain to Naval Officers who are currently serving or have previously served in the Sea Services. This mission is also reflected in the organization's vision statement "Strengthening of a diverse officer corps to enhance operational readiness in the Sea Services." This year's conference theme was "NNOA: Building a Strong Foundation for Future Generations." The week was filled with keynote speakers, separate and joint service sessions, and formal and informal discussions focusing on leadership, professionalism, and diversity throughout the sea services. The following trip report highlights the Air Station attendees' experiences during the conference.

2. Tuesday, July 21, 2009 (Navy Day) – The conference commenced at 0800 with the traditional opening session with CAPT Bernard Jackson, USN (ret) providing welcoming remarks as the current President of the NNOA. Welcoming remarks were also provided by the following guest speakers:

VADM Robert Papp, USCG – Commander, Atlantic Area and Defense Force East
VADM Anthony L. Winns, USN – Naval Inspector General
LtGen Richard Natonski, USMC – Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command
LCDR Elaine Pearson, USN (ret) – NNOA Houston Chapter President
Honorable Al Green, U.S. Congressman
Representative for Honorable Bill White – Mayor City of Houston

Following the opening session a Parham Lecture was held. This lecture series is held every conference and is named after CAPT David Parham Jr, USN (ret). CAPT Parham was the first black officer in the Navy to achieve the rank of Captain. This year's guest speaker was Chaplain J.C. Williams, CAPT USN (ret). His presentation was entitled "Embracing Diversity and Inclusiveness to Build a Strong Military" and the focus was on the reason why embracing diversity is important. Chaplain Williams gave two fundamental points for diversity:

Subj: TRIP REPORT: NATIONAL NAVAL OFFICERS 1520
ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 21-24 July 2008

- a. Create a workplace that reflects the diversity of the general population from which we draw our people.
- b. Create an environment that celebrates people's differences.

Chaplain Williams also explained that for a diversity effort to have impact and success in an organization, commitment includes:

- a. Actively contributing to the vision, mission, and strategy of the strategic diversity management plan.
- b. Communicate the importance of diversity to all stakeholders.
- c. Holding directors, managers, supervisors accountable for moving the diversity plan to all levels of the organization.
- d. Remove barriers to successful implementation.
- e. Adequately funding the diversity plan.
- f. Senior leaders must demonstrate their commitment to diversity.

During the presentation, Chaplain Williams also discussed his interaction with CAPT Parham and the effect that he had on his personal career. He presented the audience the following quote from CAPT Parham; "I often had to swallow my pride, but I have never digested it."

Following the Parham Lecture there was a panel discussion held entitled "State of the Sea Services." This panel focused on the current situation and problems faced by each of the three services. The panel participants were:

VADM Anthony L. Winns, USN
LtGen Richard Natonski, USMC
VADM Robert Papp, USCG
VADM Mel Williams, USN
CAPT Cedric Pringle, USN – Moderator

During the panel discussion VADM Papp discussed his concern with a lack of diversity amongst command positions in the Coast Guard. At the conclusion of the discussion, each panel member provided advice on how to migrate to the top of their perspective organization. These four points were:

- a. Don't focus on being a CAPT or Flag Officer, focus on what you enjoy.
- b. Performance is paramount; Get to the fight!
- c. One day at a time, focus on what you can control at your level.
- d. You must take care of your people because they will take care of you.

Following the panel discussion, the Navy Day luncheon was held with ADM Gary Roughead, Chief of Naval Operations as the keynote speaker. During ADM Roughead speech, he addressed the notion that standards were compromised at the Naval Academy when it was reported that the current incoming class will be the most diverse class in school history. He also reminded the

Subj: TRIP REPORT: NATIONAL NAVAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 21-24 July 2008 1520

audience that no matter where we are from or our background, we all share a country and a future. He stated "It is up to us to determine what that future is."

After the luncheon concluded, service breakout sessions were held. During these sessions, each service has their own presentations that are geared specifically toward their service needs. In the Coast Guard's breakout session, presentations were given by VADM Robert Papp, RADM Manson Brown, and CDR Adrian West. RADM Brown's presentation was entitled "The Real Keys to Success" and during this presentation he answered the question of how to boost the Coast Guard's trust and confidence in you? The answer was a simple function of four things:

- a. Your trust and confidence in the Coast Guard.
- b. Open and Honest communication with your chain.
- c. Sound knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- d. Sound core values.

CDR Adrian West's presentation entitled "The Basics" was the final session for the day. In this session, CDR West discussed basic characteristics of a successful officer. One of the many points that he made during the presentation was that every officer is always on stage.

3. Wednesday, July 22, 2009 (Coast Guard Day) – The activities this day commenced at 0800 with a panel discussion entitled "Diversity in the Sea Services." Panel members included:

VADM Mark Ferguson, USN - Chief of Naval Personnel
MajGen Cornell Wilson, USMC – Commander, USMC Forces Command
VADM Jody Breckenridge, USCG – Commander, Pacific Area and Defense Force West
LT Thomas Shuler, USCG – Moderator

During this panel discussion, each panel member discussed the current situation in respect to diversity within their respective services. Following this discussion a presentation from the Military Officers Association of America was given by CAPT Brian Blanchfield, USN (ret) entitled "Marketing Yourself for a Second Career." Following this presentation service breakout session were held. The Coast Guard's breakout session featured a question and answering session with four current Commanding Officers. The four Commanding Officers were:

CAPT Marcus Woodring – Sector Houston-Galveston
CAPT Roderick Walker – National Strike Force
CDR Cari Thomas – TRACEN Cape May
CDR Christopher Moss – Air Station Houston-Galveston

During this session CDR Thomas explained that commitment, courage, and character were three things that she felt was crucial for a successful career. CAPT Woodring mentioned that attitude was the number one thing he looked for in junior officers. At the conclusion of this session the Coast Guard Day luncheon was held with ADM Thad Allen, Commandant USCG as the keynote speaker. During ADM Allen's address, he discussed the progress made in achieving his diversity vision. Specifically he mentioned his order for Commanding Officers, O-4 and above, to attend

Subj: TRIP REPORT: NATIONAL NAVAL OFFICERS 1520
ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 21-24 July 2008

at least one affinity group national-level conference during their command tour. This mandate was outlined in ALCOAST message 285/09. After lunch, ADM Allen addressed all the Coast Guard attendees at the Coast Guard's breakout session for over an hour. He addressed a wide range of questions and concerns from members on modernization to diversity.

After the service breakout sessions concluded the Flag & General Officer panel was held. Members of this panel were:

RADM Cecil Haney, USN – Director of Submarine Warfare
MajGen Cornell Wilson, USMC – Commander, USMC Forces Command
RADM Mary Landry, USCG – Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District
Maj David Everly, USMC – Moderator

During this panel discussion, the panel members answered the following questions:

- What was the toughest leadership decision that you have made?
- What advice would you give a 1st tour junior officer?
- What was your hardest lesson you learned as a junior officer?
- What advice would you give an officer who is struggling to counsel a under performing subordinate?
- What are two leadership pitfalls that you have seen?
- What are your thoughts about the lack of diversity in the Senior Enlisted Corp?
- What advice/counseling would you give a person who was just relieved of their jobs?
- What issues did you have to deal with as a minority officer and how did you overcome them?

As usual, this panel was one of the highlights of the week. Following the panel discussion, the Coast Guard conducted a speed mentoring session. During this session, junior officers were paired up with selected senior officers and was afforded the opportunity to ask questions about the record and career opportunities. The senior officers that participated in this session were:

VADM Jody Breckenridge	RADM Scott Burhoe	RADM Manson Brown
RADM Cynthia Coogan	RADM Steve Branham	RADM William Baumgartner
RADM Mary Landry	RDML Peter Neffenger	RDML Daniel Neptun
RDML Daniel May	RDML (s) Cari Thomas	CAPT Steve Baynes
CAPT Todd Sokalzuk	CAPT Paul Thomas	CAPT David Throop
CAPT Steve Truhlar	CAPT Roderick Walker	CAPT Marcus Woodring
CAPT Rick Kenin		

This mentoring session was the final session for the day. The speed mentoring session provided all Junior Officers with an uncommon opportunity to speak directly with senior Coast Guard Officer on career development.

Subj: TRIP REPORT: NATIONAL NAVAL OFFICERS 1520
ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 21-24 July 2008

4. Thursday, July 23, 2009 (Marine Corp Day) - This day began with the Senior Enlisted Panel at 0800. The panel participants were:

MCPO Charles Bowen - MCPO of the Coast Guard
Sgt Major Fenton Reese – Command Sergeant Major of Recruiting Command
FORCM Ronney Wright – Navy Reserve Force Master Chief

Each panel members responded to three questions:

- What are your expectations of a Junior Officer?
- What advice would you give a Junior Officer who is struggling with job satisfaction?
- What is your life motto?

After answering these questions, the panel then fielded questions from the audience. During the panel discussion, each panel member made very insightful statements. FORCM Wright gave the following response when he discussed his life motto. “Convince the person in the mirror that you have done your best.” MCPO Bowen told Junior Officers to “trust but verify” when learning a new job and working with enlisted members. Sgt Major Reese stated “If you inspect a platoon of 72 men, you just got inspected 72 times” when he advised the conference attendees to hold themselves to a high standard.

After this panel discussion concluded, a presentation entitled “The Art of Networking” was given by CDR Carla Grantham, USCG (ret). During this presentation, CDR Grantham provided keys to effective networking. After this presentation, the Marine Corp luncheon was held and Gen James T. Conway, Commandant, USMC was the keynote speaker

After lunch concluded, service breakout sessions were held. In the Coast Guard breakout session, an OPM Career Workshop was given. CAPT David Throop, Chief, Office of Personnel Management introduced representatives from every section of OPM. These representatives were:

CDR James Andrew
CDR Casey White
LT Evelyn Samms
LT Kevin Karow

LCDR Rahshaan Engrum moderated a detailed presentation on OPM and provided advice on career management. During the presentation every representative explained what their division of OPM is responsible for. After the presentation, a Community Professional Development Session was held. This provided an opportunity for officers from the same community to discuss community specific concerns. This concluded the events for this day.

5. Friday, July 24, 2009 (Armed Forces Day) – This began at 0800 with the traditional prayer breakfast. LCDR Carl Barnes, Chaplain, USCG served as the guest speaker. At the conclusion of the prayer breakfast a financial planning seminar was held with CDR (ret.) Carl Logan, USN as the presenter. In this seminar CDR Logan explained that procrastination, lack of discipline,

and a lack of a financial foundation are three things that lead to a bad personal finance situation. He mentioned that most people know how to work for money, but few knew how to make money work for them. At the conclusion of his presentation, CDR Logan also stated the four cornerstones for a strong financial future. These cornerstones are:

- Growth
- Safety
- Tax-advantage investments
- Protection

After this seminar, a presentation was given at a service breakout session by CAPT Susan Bibeau, USCG, on the problems facing recruiting for the Coast Guard Academy and possible solutions. CAPT Bibeau is the current Director of Admissions at the Academy. Following her presentation, the conference attendees were asked to brainstorm and provide possible solutions to the diversity problems that the Coast Guard was facing. This brainstorming session was the last session for the day and the annual awards banquet was held that evening. This year's award banquet featured Maj Gen Charles Bolden, USMC (ret.), as the guest speaker. Maj Gen Bolden successfully completed four missions as an astronaut and has been nominated to be the next NASA Administrator. The awards banquet was the final event of the conference in which Tampa Bay NNOA Chapter was officially established and awarded the Most Outstanding New Chapter Growth Award.

6. This year's conference was no different. This trip report outlines what took place during the seminars and sessions but does not capture the amount of one on one mentoring that took place in between sessions and in the evenings. What makes this conference unique is the number of senior officers that are present and their willingness to spend time discussing various topics with junior officers. This year was drastically different and I believe it had a definite positive effect on the conference. It was definitely apparent in the aviation community. Commanding Officers from Air Station Clearwater, Miami, Clearwater, Houston, and ATC Mobile along with the Executive Officer from Air Station Los Angeles were in attendance. For our young aviators, having these officers at the conference and available to ask any question and receive advice from was tremendously beneficial. I believe that the Commandant's direction will dispel the idea or rumor that this conference or organization is only beneficial for minority officers. I recommend that every officer make an effort to not only attend this conference but also get involved in a local NNOA chapter.

Comment [t1]: This paragraph appears to have different formatting.

#

Enclosure: (1) NNOA 2009 Conference Agenda