



# Watch

May/June 2011

*Edward Banks:*  
**A MAN ON FIRE**

# CONTENTS

**2** Saturday Scholars  
does it again.

**5** Meet Liz Russo.  
Guys, she  
doesn't hate you!

**16** NIOC recognized  
for community  
service.

ANCHOR WATCH  
In its 37th year of publication  
January/February 2011  
www.niocmd.navy.mil  
Staff

Commanding Officer

Capt. Steven Ashworth

Executive Officer

Cmdr. Rachel Velasco-Lind

Command Master Chief

Master Chief Petty Officer J. Scott Drenning

Managing Editor/Layout and Design

MC2(SW) Regina Wilken

Command Photographer/Staff Writer

MC2(SW) Regina Wilken

MC3 Matthew Jordan

Contributors

The "Anchor Watch" is published by Navy Information Operations Command Maryland, and is printed commercially from appropriated funds in accordance with NAVEXOS P-35 (Rev. May 1979). Opinions are not necessarily those of the Navy Department nor the U.S. Government. We reserve the right to correct, edit and omit material. Photos are official U.S. Navy unless otherwise indicated.

Story ideas are due the first working day of each month to the Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 9804, Rm. 110, Fort Meade, Md. 20755-5290. Phone: 301-677-0860 FAX: 301-677-0399.

Story ideas are also accepted electronically at  
regina.wilken@navy.mil

Sailors practice before their volleyball game during the Armed Forces Week sports day held at Burba Lake.

Petty Officer 1st Class Will Jackson demonstrates Southern Chinese Martial Arts to the beat of a Chinese Lion Drum played by a member of Wong People of D.C., during the Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebration at Starr Park hosted by the NIOC Maryland Diversity Committee, May 26.

## Diversity Committee Observes Asian Pacific Heritage

Story by MC2(SW) Regina Wilken  
Photos by MC3 Matthew Jordan

NIOC Maryland Sailors, families, and guests gathered in Starr Park to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, May 26.

The celebration included guest speaker Cmdr. Rachel Velasco-Lind, NIOC Maryland executive officer, a Lion Dance, a martial arts demonstration from Petty Officer 1st Class Will Jackson and plenty of authentic Asian Pacific cuisine.

Velasco-Lind spoke about what it was like growing up in San Diego, Ca., her Filipino grandmother's peanut butter and jelly (a.k.a. sugar) sandwiches, and diversity in not only the Navy, but America.

"I think it was very entertaining and informative to know where she came from and how she grew up. She has a great sense of humor, so it makes it fun to get to know someone like that," said Petty Officer 3rd Class William Dowdell.

After Velasco-Lind shared her upbringing, two Kung Fu artists from Wong People of D.C. performed a traditional Chinese Lion Dance that is believed to drive away bad spirits.

"They handed out lettuce so you could feed the lion, and when you fed the lion, you were giving him all of your good and bad luck. After he chewed it up, he would spit the lettuce back at you and however many pieces hit you, is how many years of good luck you will have," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Starr Daniels.

So the next time you see your department's Diversity Committee member, be sure to thank them for their part in putting on an outstanding event to celebrate Asian Pacific American heritage month with entertainment, laughs from the chain of command, and a spectacular variety of ethnic foods.



Capt. Steven Ashworth delivers his speech at the Saturday Scholars graduation.



Tutors sit with their scholars during the graduation.

The spring session of Saturday Scholars graduated on March 19, with parents, family members and friends gathered at the Child and Youth Services gym to watch their scholars walk across the stage and get congratulated with a certificate and a handshake from Col. Daniel Thomas, Ft. George G. Meade's Installation Commander, and Capt. Steven Ashworth, Navy Information Operations Command Maryland Commanding Officer.

During his opening speech, Ashworth said, "This is really about two things, as I look at it. It is about investing in our future, which are our scholars, and really making a difference not only in our community but where we are going as a society as a whole."

After encouraging the kids that they can grow to be anything they would like, even the President of the United States, he turned the microphone over to Thomas.

"This is one of my favorite events. I am enthusiastic about this

program because of what it represents, and that is substance in commitment. What you guys are doing to your community, for yourselves and each other, it's real. It has substance, it is a real accomplishment, and that pumps me up, that's what makes me feel good. It fills my heart up, it really does," said Thomas.

Thomas guaranteed the scholars that excelling in scholastics won't stop with their graduation from Saturday Scholars, but that it was just one more step in their journey, and their parents agreed with him.

Kate Fischer, whose daughter Anna, 10, was enrolled in the program said, "I have seen a huge improvement in her grades, especially in reading. She has that extra confidence to raise her hand in class to volunteer to read out loud. She likes school, she just doesn't like reading."

Having volunteers who aren't their parents or their normal teachers really allowed the kids to open up and learn more freely.

"There was a lot of math that we studied. A lot of questions and

difficulties in math and kind of just breaking it down and making them realize that it is a lot simpler than they were making it out to be," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Jade Fitzwater, a first-time volunteer.

Each scholar had their own tutor to help ease the learning process of math, reading and any other subjects they were struggling in.

"My teacher was my favorite part. Alan Trahan was my teacher. He helped me with everything, math, reading. He helped make it easier at school to do my work. After all our work was done, we got to play," smiled Jeremiah Drinnon, Jr., 10, a scholar in the program.

The program will start back up in the fall with new volunteers and new scholars, but the same mentality remains - help kids learn what they may have not otherwise understood. The one-on-one teaching style builds a bond between the student and the tutor, and that relationship encourages curiosity and simply helps the child be brave enough to try.

# Brave enough to try

Story and photos by MC2(SW) Regina Wilken



MC3 Matthew Jordan tightens a ribbon that was tied to a tree in support of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

# *the* Strength *of her* program

Story by MC2(SW) Regina Wilken

*“One of my advocates is on the Comfort and she has two kids, a one year old and a three year old. She was sent down to Haiti after the earthquake and was telling her three year old the reason she had to go, was because there were kids there that didn’t have mommies because of what happened and she had to go and tuck them in and make sure they were taken care of. How are you not humbled by people like that?”*

*- Liz Russo*

The walls were covered in oversized yellow Post-it notes, with words like bar, alcohol, and stranger, written on them under the titles of: *myth* and *fact*. Tables were organized in a U-shape, facing towards a blank screen that would later display slides to explain the legal verbiage of assault and victim.

The advocates appeared relaxed, dressed in everyday street clothes, void of any sign of rank or responsibility, with only their first name displayed in front of them. The atmosphere was light and airy, while their instructor was at the front of the class adamantly trying to make the one working plug in the room support all of her electronics.

A victim's advocate, by definition, is an individual who interacts closely with victims of crime, and supports them in a number of ways. In the civilian world, most are educated in criminal justice or social services, while in the military community, they volunteer their time freely, titled as a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Advocate. Here at Ft. Meade, SAPR Advocates are educated and trained by Liz Russo, the Navy Sexual Assault Response Coordinator.

"I knew fairly early on that I was interested in psychology, and I wanted to work in that field. But I thought I wanted to pursue a doctrine in psychology where you do counseling and have clients and things like that," Liz said. "So I was kind of looking towards the end of my sophomore year for intern opportunities, so I could get some one-on-one opportunities with some clients."

Lucky for us, and the general population, they don't let 19-year-old college students provide counseling, so Liz looked other places for an opportunity to do her internship for the summer.

"One of the few places I could get that interaction was working at a crisis hotline. So I ended up volunteering at a rape crisis center during the summer, just kind of something to do towards my end goal," she said.

Liz really enjoyed working at the center and interned her junior and senior year at another Boston rape crisis center.

"So by the time I got to my senior year, I kind of had one of those uh-oh moments and was like, 'I don't think I want to do counseling anymore,' but didn't really know exactly what I wanted to do

either," she said.

After graduation, she returned to one of the crisis centers as a full time victim's advocate.

Liz said, "I did that for a year, and at the end of the year, I still wasn't really sure what I really wanted to do and the agency I was working for actually offered me a job as the client services coordinator, running the department. So I just keep having all these really cool opportunities come up, and in that way it has been a happy coincidence that I kind of stumbled into the field."

She had been following the military's program, so when they created the position of the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator in 2005, Liz wanted to throw her hat in to see what would happen.

"I got two offers, but I didn't know anything about the military. Like, the most I knew was one guy I went to high school with went to the academy, and that was it," she said. "Oh, and I watched G.I. Jane."

After doing some research on the offer at Ft. Huachuca, Az., and the vast surrounding desert, she settled on the job at Ft. Meade, Md.

"So I got here in 2006 and had no idea what to expect, and looking back I must have been such an idiot walking around for the first year. I was calling our instructor, 1752.1Beta," Liz laughed. "I knew you couldn't just say B, you had to have a word for it."

Thankful for her mentor who finally broke the news to her that it was Bravo, not Beta, and who helped her get over her stigmas and her misconceptions of the military, she put her own twist on training and left some very interesting impressions.

"One of my favorite stories is after I had been here for like a year and a half, I was leaving the CO's office and was walking by the picnic tables, and these two young guys walked by me and I could tell they recognized me, but couldn't quite place me. Then all of the sudden, one of them said, '12 pound penis right?' and I was like 'Yup!' Because when I do my training, I talk about how victims don't always have genital injuries, because you can give birth to a 12 pound baby, but there aren't any 12 pound penises out there. So just because the victim doesn't have genital trauma, doesn't mean something didn't happen. It is just one

of those things, where yea, what that guy took away from my brief was that I said '12 pound penis,' but again in the context of that, what might also have sunk in was that not all rape victims have injuries. So in an odd way, that is a success story for me," Liz said.

Connecting a name to a face, and a face to a program, helps some people break down barriers, like asking for help.

"I have about 40 advocates, who are awesome, and ready to help, but calling a number and asking for help is really hard. So if I can make it so that people aren't thinking about asking for help from a nameless, faceless hotline, and have them think 'I'm going to call Liz for help, because that's who I know,' that makes me feel like I am making an impact," Liz said.

Liz believes that training her advo-

cate is where the strength of the program lies.

"I tell my advocates, the most important things about being a good advocate, aren't in the books, instructions, or the PowerPoint," Liz said. "What I want them to get out of the class is to think about their own beliefs, expectations and feelings."

When she would conduct training in the civilian world, it was very open and relaxed, so people felt free to talk about things that aren't always the easiest to talk about, but when she started working for the military, she wasn't exactly sure how to carry it out.

"The first training I did with the military, I thought it had to be like a classroom setting and very structured," Liz said.

"That lasted for a day."

Now, her training rooms are filled with military members sporting civilian clothes, everyone is on a first name basis, and a morning regimen that calls for each person to tell the class what they did the night before, in hopes that it creates free thinking and open expression.

"The open training environment provides people with the ability to really learn all the information," said Lt. j.g. Jeremy Linton, who attended her training class this March.

Not having any prior experience with victims or being an advocate, Liz's training is really helping Linton learn a lot.

"With this kind of stuff there are a lot of stereotypes that can get in the way and she addresses those so we can get rid of them," said Linton.

In the same class as Linton was Petty

Officer Third Class Diamond Howzell who has had previous experience with sexual assault victims and advocates.

"At my previous command, my mentor was an advocate, and she was very motivating about the program," said Howzell. "Also, I had a couple of girlfriends who were victimized."

Coupled with her previous experience and her current training, Howzell is confident she will be a responsible advocate.

"The training is very interesting. She really keeps you active in the conversation. It is a very open forum, with question and answer and it makes you feel very comfortable," said Howzell. "With this training, I think I will be able to work well with a victim."

After the initial five days of training, the advocates are required to have 10 hours of training a year, and Liz offers two hours a month at a minimum.

"We do different things. It's not just me doing a PowerPoint. We do field trips, like to the Baltimore-Washington Medical Center to do a walkthrough of their Emergency Department. We have had the detective in charge of the sex offender's registry come and talk about the process and the different levels of offenders. We do trips to the crime lab to learn about DNA analysis," Liz said. "I try to keep folks current on different resources that come out."

And because she works with the military and the mission does come first, Liz has creatively worked around that issue.

"Some people can't take two hours out of their day, so I may have them watch a certain movie or watch four episodes of Law and Order or something like that, and then do an assessment on it," she said.

Her goal is not to get everyone 'drinking the Kool-Aid' but to get people to look at things in a different light, and get them to understand there may be more than just the obvious.

"I want to get people's thinking from 'Why is she drinking so much? What did she think was going to happen?' but reframe it to them thinking, 'Why would someone choose to take advantage of someone who was in that kind of vulnerable state?' If I can get people to think about it like that, or reframe their thinking like that, that is a huge success to me," Liz said.



Liz speaks with people at a table set up with information on Sexual Assault Prevention at The House of Five Hats.

# A traveling career

Story and photo by MC2(SW) Regina Wilken

**T**he Navy Fleet and Family Support Center, together with other community and military sponsors, hosted Fort George G. Meade's first Military Spouse Job Fair, May 6, to encourage the employment of military spouses.

The event was held at McGill Training Center and provided access to 63 companies who support the recruiting and hiring of military spouses and understand the unique needs of families who move so frequently.

The opening ceremony began with the parading of the colors from the NIOC Maryland Color Guard, the National Anthem, and a speech to the businesses from Cmdr. John Myers, then executive officer of NIOC Maryland.

"This job fair is critical because some of you may have been in the military and you understand that as a military family you will PCS or move every two to three years, and if you do live that lifestyle, it is hard to maintain a job, excel in that job and get promoted in that job," said Myers. "So I want to personally thank each and every one of you for coming here to specifically recruit our spouses. From the bottom of my heart, thank you very much for that."

The majority of the companies offered unique benefits a military spouse would be grateful to have.

"We like to deal with military spouses because we think that it not only helps the military family, but it helps our store since

they can transfer from store to store when their spouse transfers," said Gwen Smith, a Human Resource associate for the Navy Exchange.

Being provided an opportunity for military spouses to separate themselves from the surrounding community is what one of the attendees appreciated.

"I have been to job fairs, but they were open to the public and trying to find employment is hard. We have been here three years, and I am still trying to find a full time job," said Mark Smedley, a military spouse of 15 years who attended the job fair.

Julie Yates, a Life Skills Educator and Career Counselor with FFSC, helped organize and ensure the successful execution of the job fair.

"The partnership with the Department of Labor's Mr. Jerome Duncan was invaluable because he was able to get such great employers for the event. I also felt that the support of our FFSC staff, NIOC Command, Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation and supporting agencies such as Army Community Service, USO and Picerne Housing made the event very successful," Julie said.

With over 300 spouses who attended, and the community and business support received, it is clear the Fleet and Family Service Center has outdone itself by providing the NIOC Maryland family another opportunity to succeed.



➤ A representative from University of Maryland, University College greets Amanda Phillips, an Army spouse of six years, at Ft. Meade's first Military Spouse Job Fair.



After leading the firing party in a 21-gun salute at a funeral ceremony held on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Academy, Banks salutes while the American flag is presented to the surviving family members.

# RAISING EDWARD BANKS

Story and photos by MC3 Matthew Jordan

## RAISING EDWARD BANKS

He is at bat and his naval career is flying toward him at top speed. Keeping his eye on the ball, he takes a deep breath, and times his swing perfectly. In the back of his mind he hears “It’s going... It’s going... It’s gone!” and smiles to himself knowing that whatever life throws at him he will continue to push forward, because he can see victory so close, he will do everything within his power to get there.



# RAISING EDWARD BANKS

Seaman Edward Banks raised in a family of veterans. His father, a retired Navy chief warrant officer, and several uncles who rose through the ranks were no doubt instrumental in his early success at Navy Information Operations Command Maryland.

“It was kind of a disciplined lifestyle that we led, because coming from a military background, it is just a different lifestyle,” said Banks.

When he was young, it was hard for him to understand why his father was gone for long periods of time.

“It was rough not having my dad around, being only 5 years old,” said Banks, “Not seeing him for six or seven months, kind of made me wonder if he was ever coming back.”

As Banks grew up, he turned to sports to fill his time and fell in love with baseball and dreamed of making it in the pros (even if he couldn’t get on the fair rides until he was almost 17.)

“I was like 5’2” until junior year, I hit a real big growth spurt, it was just kind of late. I wanted to be a professional baseball player, but that didn’t work out, the next best thing is to be an admiral in the Navy one day. I think that will suffice,” he laughed.

As he got older, his love for sports melded with his passion for mentoring younger children.

“I coached baseball, so that took up a lot of time,” said Banks. “I liked being around the kids, being a mentor for them, teaching them the game of baseball, a lot of them had the same dreams I had.”

Getting yelled at by upset “soccer moms” taught him early on how to handle difficult situations.

“I was coaching my own team, so anything that happened it fell back on me. If I yelled at their kid the wrong way they might have some words for me, and I had to deal with that. I’m a 16-17 year old kid still, and I have parents coming to me with problems and I had to deal with it like an adult,” he said.

Banks continued down the right path throughout high school finishing with a 3.5 GPA, and he credits it mostly to how he was raised.

“We did what we had to do. Yeah, we would complain about it sometimes, but at the same time that is just kind of how I was brought up, you are going to do chores, you are going to get good grades, and you are going to be respectful,” he said.

Banks moved on to college, where a harsh realization came into view.

“I couldn’t get any scholarships, or loans or grants, because my parents made too much money. I was going to end up paying back about 40 to 50 thousand in student loans,” said Banks.

Before his first semester in college ended, he made the decision to join the Navy, and called his father to let him know.

“When I called him he was really shocked, but at the same time he understood and he supported me, he knew that college



Banks keeps his foot on second base until the pitch is released, then tries to steal third.

comes out of the blue, but it worked out great, I couldn’t ask for any more.”

Banks joined the Navy in the cryptologic field, and finished with the top of his class.

“I did well in A school, finished with a 95 in the class, finishing 4th,” said Banks. “I was the class leader, so I got some recognition at graduation for that.”

After A school he reported to his first command here at NIOC Maryland, where he became a vital part of the funeral honors division.

“My first impression of Seaman Banks was someone who could stand up and take charge,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Benjamin Chester, Funeral Honors Leading Petty Officer.

Banks excelled in the honors division and was promoted to train and lead other Sailors.

“He’s determined and is willing to put in that extra time with a Sailor that may be struggling to make sure that the job gets done,” said Chester.

The determination to excel doesn’t stop with his job, it bleeds over into every aspect of his life, which helped motivate Banks to pursue a commission.

“Chief Steagall did a brief with a senior chief from the Academy, and they gave us all the information. I was kind of iffy about it at first, I wasn’t very certain if I wanted to put that kind of commitment in to try and go to the Academy and be real boot camp like for the next four years. Then just one day I decided I am going to do this,” he said.

It took effort from Banks, as well as from others throughout the command, such as Chief Petty Officer Larry Steagall, NIOC Maryland’s Command Career Counselor.

right direction to making the most of their career,” said Steagall.

There is only so much effort that a career counselor can give to help Sailors, it ultimately comes down to the Sailor and how motivated they are.

“As a career counselor, as a chief, I will help any Sailor, anytime. When I said ‘Hey you need to get this done,’ he [Banks] took care of it right away,” said Steagall. “He showed me 100 percent, so I gave him 100 percent in return.”

The effort that Banks gave to get into the academy was proof enough for Steagall that he was going to be a success.

“He took the motivation, and initiative to get the job done faster than probably most Sailors would have done,” said Steagall. “That is why he is going to be successful as a midshipman, and why he is going to be successful as an officer, because he did what he was told.”

After all his I’s were dotted and T’s were crossed, he sealed the envelope and mailed in his package.

“I actually got called into Chief Steagall’s office and I was told the CO wanted to see me, so at that point I knew it was either good news or bad news,” said Banks.

With his mind racing and heart pumping, he walked into the CO’s office and heard him say... “Congratulations Seaman Banks, you got accepted into the Naval Academy Prep School.”

Banks said, “He shook my hand, and the first thing I did was call my parents and let them know. They were real excited.”

Banks will leave for prep school mid-July, and has big plans to catch up on some old dreams while there.

“I am going to try and play baseball up at NAPS, and when I get to the Academy I am going to try and get on the baseball team there,” said Banks

normal day at the Five Hats galley, Banks sat down with some friends to eat, and noticed a shipmate choking at the table next to him.

“He stood up, actually looked like he was going to leave the chow hall, and he started to spit something up, looked like orange juice,” he said.

Banks went up to him and asked ‘Are you alright?’ as he grabbed at his throat, Banks reacted.

“My instinct was to get up behind him and do the heimlich on him,” he said. “He spit up some stuff, kind of threw up and eventually got whatever was lodged in his throat out. It’s one of those things you don’t want to see it happen, but you’re glad that you’re there and can help them get through that tough time,” said Banks.

While most Sailors in their first year may be thinking of the upcoming weekend, the next advancement cycle, or trying to get more familiar with their job by taking on more responsibilities, Banks will be thinking about waking up at 0600 to PT, a full day of school, training and study time until taps and lights out at 2300. The next few years will be intense, but the motivation that has gotten him this far will carry him through until he speaks the words...

“I, Edward Banks, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.”

Story and photos by MC2(SW) Regina Wilken

# Step up your game!

The District of Columbia, District Department of the Environment's (DDOE) Watershed Protection Division (WPD) hosted their annual Anacostia River Environmental Fair, May 6. Navy Information Operations Command Maryland Sailors joined 350 students from seven Washington D.C. schools to help promote environmental education, such as the harms of pollution and the impact of trash in local rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.

Volunteers filled reusable grocery bags for each of the students to take home, packed with information about how to recycle whether you live in a house or an apartment, Earth Day "I'm Green" stickers, rulers, pencils, crayons and coloring books.

While some Sailors packed bags and assisted at the information tents, across the Anacostia River at the Anacostia Community Boathouse, were Sailors brave enough to enter paddle boats with students who were to row.

"We were assisting the teachers out there in helping the kids learn how to paddle a dragon boat and the basics of rowing," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Chris Lucas, a volunteer at the event. "It was a great time. You're out there on the water in a boat with kids who were learning how to row and paddle for the first time. It was an interesting experience."

For adopting the project and providing the much needed support, NIOC Maryland was selected to receive the Naval District Washington (NDW) Community Service Program Plate Steppers Award. The award recognizes the command that "stepped up to the plate" when a call for help went out to rescue a Community Service Program project that did not have adequate support.

"It is this type of dedication and commitment to the Navy's core values that enhances the quality of life in our local community. Your nomination for this award clearly demonstrates that the men and women in your command are committed to the goals of the Navy Community Service Program," said Olivia Hunter, NDW Regional Community Service Program Manager. "Please convey my sincere appreciation and thanks to your volunteers for their dedication and splendid can-do attitude!"

Petty Officer 2nd Class Will Sweats is the Environmental Stewardship Flagship Lead who made the decision to adopt the project.

"I saw an amazing opportunity for our command and Sailors to get involved with not only our local community, but the inner-city D.C. community that also needs our help," said Sweats. "Taking on a project that no other command would, shows the community that the Navy is here to make a good impact on our citizens and the youth of America."

**Top:** Petty Officer 2nd Class Chris Lucas vigorously rows with students from Roots Public Charter School in Washington D.C. **From left:** Seaman Rosalyn Ogburn fills reusable bags with take-home goodies for the students. Students from Roots Public Charter School in Washington D.C. paddle away from the pier in the 'dragon boat' on the Anacostia River. Chief Petty Officer John Wagner (middle back) jokes with the kids trying to drink out of the water hose by turning it on and off quickly. Petty Officer Richard Gaston and Seaman Audrie Gomez fight the wind to fill bags for the kids to take home after the Environmental Fair.





### Friends of the Environment

Petty Officer 1st Class Michael McCall helps students from Severn Elementary School make environmentally friendly bird feeders out of pine cones, honey and birdseed at their Earth Day celebration, April 29.