Vice Adm. Thomas Moore, commander of Naval Sea Systems Command, speaks to the NIWC Atlantic team in the atrium during a Dec. 17 visit to the center. More on page 39.
NIWC Atlantic celebrated the 50th Small Business Industry Outreach Initiative gathering in April.

The Common Submarine Radio Room team has been bringing the power of commonality to the fleet for more than 14 years.

The Navy’s newest littoral combat ship is commissioned in its namesake city.

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NIWC Atlantic’s mission is to serve our nation by delivering information warfare solutions that protect national security.

NIWC Atlantic is part of the Naval Research and Development Establishment (NR&DE).

The Chronicle is a quarterly publication designed for NIWC Atlantic employees. Its purpose is to inform, educate, entertain and generate new ideas.

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The Chronicle

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Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command changed the names of Echelon III systems centers, SPAWAR Systems Center Atlantic and SPAWAR Systems Center Pacific, to Naval Information Warfare Center Atlantic and Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific, respectively.

SPAWAR Commander Rear Adm. Christian Becker made the announcement Feb. 13 at the WEST 2019 conference co-hosted by the U.S. Naval Institute (USNI) and the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AF-CEA) at the San Diego Convention Center.

The name change demonstrates that information is a fundamental element of warfare, an essential concept of the Navy’s Design for Maritime Superiority 2.0.

Use of “warfare centers” in the names reflects the centers’ focus, core capabilities and importance in the full spectrum of warfighting. It also improves clarity of mission and purpose with stakeholders across the fleet and industry, and throughout the broader information warfare community and Naval Research and Development Enterprise.

The name Naval Information Warfare Center also aligns the centers with Naval Air Systems Command’s (NAVAIR) air warfare centers and Naval Sea Systems Command’s (NAVSEA) surface and undersea warfare centers.

The intent of the name change is to recognize the importance of the information warfare mission and does not signal a change in SPAWAR’s mission of identifying, developing, delivering and sustaining information warfighting capabilities.

“The advantage information warfare brings to the fight is at the core of our Navy’s ability to compete and win today and in the coming decades,” said Becker. “Recognizing our systems centers as Naval Information Warfare Centers reaffirms our commitment to accelerate the development and delivery of advanced warfighting capabilities to the fleet.”
SBIOI enters ‘golden’ age of collaboration

By Diane Owens
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic celebrated its 50th Small Business Industry Outreach Initiative (SBIOI) April 2 at Trident Technical College in North Charleston, commemorating more than 12 years of engagement with industry.

SBIOI gatherings, which are sponsored by the Charleston Defense Contractors Association, focus primarily on fostering small business participation in contracting and expanding industry engagement at all levels to increase shared understanding.

“Industry partners are critical to our success,” said NIWC Atlantic Commanding Officer Capt. Wesley Sanders. “We partner with approximately 9,000 contractors and couldn’t deliver superior information warfare solutions to warfighters without them.”

Executive Director Christopher Miller opened the golden anniversary session discussing how the center’s new execution plan carries out big Navy strategy and its name change to NIWC Atlantic recently to more accurately portray its purpose. He also provided updates on a number of NIWC Atlantic accomplishments.

Keynote speaker Department of Navy (DON) Office of Small Business Programs Director (OSBP) Emily Harman discussed key initiatives of her office.

“DON OSBP places a strong emphasis on communication with industry and educating the small business industrial base on how to help us become the Navy the Nation Needs. Our DON Office of Small Business Programs YouTube Channel contains all of our Facebook Live interviews on topics that include other transaction authorities, industry

Continued on page 4

Above left, Kathryn Murphy, NIWC Atlantic Senior Scientific Technical Manager for Software Engineering, gives an update on successful results from technology exchanges. Above right, IWRP Project Manager Don Sallee briefs the SBIOI group on how NIWC Atlantic is using Other Transaction Authority to speed capability to the fleet.
engagement and how to do business with DON,” she said.

Senior scientific technical managers (SSTMs) discussed technical growth areas and upcoming technology exchanges between center leaders and industry partners. SSTM Kevin Charlow provided an overview of the Expeditionary Warfare (EW) Department and EW division heads held a panel discussion about services provided to Marine Corps Systems Command, their largest sponsor.

Contracts manager Steve Harnig discussed the evolution of SBIOI events over the years and the current contracting strategy, an overview of contract types and small business participation rates. “SBIOI meetings are truly a model of collaboration with industry,” he said. “We’re happy to get to 50 – and we want to continue getting better,” he said.

NIWC Atlantic executives speak at each event, providing a command overview and the latest information about the center’s technical growth areas, strategy and internal organizational changes. Contracting managers present updates on contract status, including announcements of upcoming and current requests for proposals, awards in progress and completed contracting actions.

Panel discussions on technical and contract-related subjects are also held and guest speakers include high-level local, state and federal elected representatives and Department of Defense officials.

Industry partners can ask speakers questions during the events and offer feedback after the business session during individual and group “speed networking” sessions (similar to speed dating) with technical leads knowledgeable about upcoming contracts.

Representatives from defense contracting firms also have the opportunity to serve on several joint councils and task forces that were generated from SBIOI, meeting regularly with NIWC Atlantic contracting and technical leads to reduce obstacles to more effective and efficient ways of doing business.

“The SBIOI provides a great forum for an open and transparent dialogue between industry partners and government technical and contracting leads,” said NIWC Atlantic Small Business Deputy Director Robin Rourk. “These outreach events allow NIWC Atlantic to emphasize a culture of small business inclusiveness in our acquisition strategy,” she added. During 2018, approximately 40 percent of eligible prime contract dollars were awarded to small business concerns.

SBIOI began in 2006 with 50 industry partners attending. Attendance has grown steadily over the years. Nearly 400 individuals now attend each session. Approximately half of SBIOI participants are first-time visitors and half are returning representatives from a wide variety of organizations; many participants travel from outside the region to attend.

Leadership from NIWC Atlantic’s Expeditionary Warfare Department host a panel discussion about services provided to Marine Corps Systems Command, their largest sponsor, and upcoming opportunities for industry during the 50th Small Business Industry Outreach Initiative (SBIOI) April 2.
Approximately 325 defense industry professionals recently attended the second annual Women In Defense (WID) Leadership Summit hosted by the Palmetto Chapter of WID at the Charleston Area Convention Center.

The summit featured keynote presentations and interactive training sessions focused on the topics of leadership, career and personal development.

The theme of the event was “Empowered by Women, Empowering the Community.” Presenters, speakers and trainers shared their perspectives on diversity in the workplace, tactical strategies for increased effectiveness, anecdotes on their personal experiences in the Department of Defense and industry, how the workplace has evolved and what the future holds for women in the defense industry.

Keynote speaker Rear Adm. Danelle Barrett, Navy Cyber Security division director, gave advice on challenging gender bias, maintaining work-life balance and being an effective leader.

“Be bold, be forgiving, be innovative, be humble,” said Barrett.

After Barrett’s speech, attendees broke into training groups and attended sessions on communication, self-esteem building and networking.

“One takeaway I gleaned from the breakout session was to start networking by first getting to know the person, not what they do,” said Emily Nystrom, NIWC Atlantic scientist.

Attendees reconvened for the luncheon keynote speaker Patricia Goforth, Booz Allen Hamilton executive vice president and Business Insider’s 5th Most Powerful Female Engineer of 2018.

The afternoon breakout sessions featured topics such as having difficult conversations, developing leadership skills, and using voice modulation and body communication.

The summit ended with a panel on mentoring and the challenges women face in the workplace today, moderated by Elizabeth Colbert Busch, Director of Business Development at Clemson University’s Restoration Institute, and featured various government and industry panelists.

“We have to stay mindful of unconscious bias,” said NIWC Atlantic Executive Director Chris Miller. “We have to stay mindful of who is at our table. Are there enough seats at the table for women, or do we need to take a step back and reevaluate our blind spots?”

Bridget Rencher, Deputy Equal Opportunity Employment officer at NIWC Atlantic, suggested having conversations about women in the workplace improves their inclusion in the workforce itself — a lesson she learned during her time in the Air Force.

“Before we were able to focus on this notion of inclusion, we had to start having difficult conversations,” said Rencher. “The only way to close the gap is to start having those crucial conversations.”

Events like the WID Leadership Summit serve as a catalyst for including women in the workplace by opening the floor for those crucial conversations and giving attendees the tools they need to succeed in the defense industry.
The Contracts Competency (Code 2.0), which is responsible for the end-to-end management and execution of the contracting process from solicitation, proposal, evaluation and award through contract closeout, is making efforts to improve the contracting process.

“Everybody wants the contract process to move faster, and I do mean everybody,” said Steve Harnig, 2.0 Competency Lead. “Our warfighters deserve it, our IPTs [Integrated Product Teams] need it, and yes, even our contracting professionals want it.”

The NIWC Atlantic contracting process is regulated by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), which is the principle set of rules in the Federal Acquisition Regulations System regarding government procurement in the United States. The FAR System governs the acquisition process by which executive agencies of the federal government acquire (i.e., purchase or lease) goods and services by contract with appropriated funds.

“The Federal Acquisition Regulations are not being changed fast enough to help our teams move in a more agile and quick manner,” said Harnig. “There have been some improvements, but overall the process is still cumbersome.”

Despite the challenges, the Contracts Competency remains focused on reducing the cost of doing business for our IPTs and ensuring auditability.

In an effort to deliver information warfare solutions that protect national security, the Contracts Competency meets the advertised Procurement Action Lead Time (PALT) around 85 percent of the time. They recently received approval authority for actions up to $75 million, a significant increase from the $5 million authority in 2014. The 2.0 team successfully completed inspector general reviews and headquarters audits with zero findings, and continues to improve their contracting competence.

“Without wide sweeping changes in the Department of Defense or federal contracting rules, we are doing what we can to go faster,” said Harnig. “This includes implementing a few key approaches to contracting and acquisition.”

The Contract Competency’s Five Key Approaches to Improve the Lead Time to Awarding Contracts and Orders:

1. **Firm Fix Price the requirement.**
   A firm-fixed-price contract provides for a price that is not subject to any adjustment on the basis of the contractor’s cost experience in performing the contract.
   “This does require a little more work upfront to make sure you are defining the requirement with a good deal of specificity, but there are benefits if you can do it,” said Harnig. “When we fix the pricing we avoid a lengthy and

**Contracts improvements**

*Advancing efficiency to accelerate capability delivery*

By Holly Carey
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

The Chronicle
Spring 2019
Contracts improvements

detailed cost analysis. It also removes the most controversial portion of a protest. We may not be able to do this often, but if we can, it helps.”

2. Pre-price line items in the basic contract.

Pre-priced line items help streamline the contracting process by establishing a contract that allows the contracting officer to order items at a set price. Since the price is established in the contract, the ordering process is easier because we do not have to spend time justifying the price we are paying on each individual order. The reduced paperwork for each order significantly reduces our lead time to award an order.

“Think of a menu. If we put the menu in the contract, and then just order off that menu, we would reduce ordering times to 30 days or less,” said Harnig. “When we do not pre-price items, we are required to prepare business clearance memos that justify the action and cost/price. Pre-priced actions skip the extra requirements.”

3. Improve planning and communication.

The command and the Contracts Competency are focused on building and maintaining customer relationships by keeping the lines of communication open, delivering on time and utilizing a budget-conscious approach.

“One thing we have already started that helps with the process is more upfront planning and communication,” said Harnig. “The earlier you can get into conversations about what you need, the quicker we can build a realistic schedule and then work as a team to meet the dates for each step in the process.”

4. Consider acquisition as a team sport.

Acquisition is a team sport, and a well-rounded team that helps meet goals is required to be innovative. The contracting process can only be successful and efficient if all participants recognize and respect other participants’ roles and responsibilities.

“Many steps in the process are completed by IPT members other than 2.0 personnel,” said Harnig. “We need integrated teams working together to meet schedules. Early documents like the Performance Work Statements (PWS), Contract Data Requirements Lists (CDRL), Quality Assurance and Surveillance Plan (QASP) and Independent Government Estimates (IGE) are artifacts that are built by the IPT. Contracts has a role in every document from a review standpoint, but we don’t own them all. When we are working well together, many documents are developed concurrently and build off of each other so that we meet schedules.”

5. Use a zero-based approach for requirements and evaluation criteria.

The zero-based approach involves starting with nothing; each requirement or criterion earns its way into the acquisition. Requirements can be built so you only receive what you actually need. Evaluation criteria can be minimized to avoid asking for and evaluating items that aren’t differentiators. The command should set a goal to only evaluate those requirements that are most significant to the IPT.

“We have all seen or heard of the CDRL deliveries that become shelf ware,” said Harnig. “That ends up wasting funds (we pay for those deliverables), time and effort. The more we ask for the more effort contractors put into proposals, the more effort we put into evaluations, and the more risk we build into the contract process. Bottom line, the least complex evaluations are the best!”

The Contact Competency remains committed to delivering timely contractual solutions. They are focused on making solid progress and awarding procurement actions efficiently and effectively.

“We in 2.0 work each day to always learn, always improve and always close,” said Harnig. “We look forward to continuing to build on the teaming we now have on the acquisition process so we all see better and faster awards.”
When NIWC Atlantic forerunner SPAWAR Systems Center Charleston delivered its first Common Submarine Radio Room (CSRR) in 2005, it was praised as a paradigm shift in the way submarine communications technology is procured, integrated and managed.

Fourteen years later, through more than 140 major installations and modernizations of five submarine classes, the NIWC Atlantic CSRR team has improved the program even more, saving money through combined procurements, process improvement and state-of-the-art training systems for Sailors.

The CSRR has evolved using a system of systems engineering and integration approach from initial procurement of equipment to deployment and sustainment. Using a common, modular, open systems architecture, the CSRR offers a standard baseline across all submarine classes, with flexibility for tailoring to unique platform characteristics of Ohio (SSBN and SSGN), Seawolf (SSN), Virginia (SSN) and Los Angeles (SSN) submarines. The open systems architecture combines and leverages its constituent systems to deliver capabilities not possible in an individual manner.

The CSRR program sponsor is the Undersea Communications and Integration Program Office (PMW 770) within PEO C4I. At NIWC Atlantic CSRR is part of the Fleet C4I and Readiness Department’s Submarine Integration Division, headed by Dave Bednarczyk. Joe Manzi is the Afloat Submarine C4I Integrated Product Team Lead and Bruce Edmund is CSRR Production Lead of a government/industry team 100 strong, including many former submariners. NIWC Atlantic’s CSRR team partners with Naval Undersea Warfare Center in Newport, Rhode Island, with NIWC Pacific and Lockheed Martin. NIWC Atlantic provides production/integration facilities, Capability Based – In Service Engineering Activity (CB-ISEA) modernization/sustainment support, trainer/curriculum development and logistics support for CSRR.

The modernization effort presents unique challenges depending on the submarine class. In general, the production team builds alteration installation kits and provides them to the installing activity. The kitting process is used to minimize on-site install time and costs with an integrated kit fully prepped for installation. Cables are fabricated at NIWC Atlantic with one end of the cable terminated prior

_USS Minnesota (SSN 783) at sea._

Common Submarine Radio Room

_Bringing the power of commonality to the Fleet_

_USS Virginia (SSN 774) under construction shows the modular design which reduces cost._
to shipment. The second end is terminated on site after the cable length is finalized and routing is accomplished. This permits a more accurate length of cable, reducing excess cable issues in narrow spaces, also saving time. Kits include everything required for installation, even cable tags and tie wraps. The more accomplished in the controlled environment of the production facility, the less required shipboard.

The cables, connectors, mounting kits, etc., are assembled to the maximum extent possible to facilitate installation. The equipment, also part of the kitting process, undergoes rigorous configuration validation and Pre-Installation Test and Check Out (PITCO). During PITCO, the equipment is integrated into the production test facility, preloaded and configured for operational use. The Afloat IPT maintains an arbor which mimics the shipboard configuration of the radio room for each class or configuration of submarines.

In the lab, with the CSRR operating as it would on the submarine, approximately 85 percent of possible shipboard testing is accomplished using a simulation-stimulation interface, which saves time and money. This production quality assurance approach mitigates the risk of failures during systems operational verification testing shipboard.

“The Integration and Test Area test bed is so important, especially in new construction CSRR development,” said Edmund. “We are able to adapt to change quicker, which helps us drive the latest product to platform. It costs less and is easier for the government to do,” he added.

Once fully tested, the shipset is kitted and sent as a unit to the boat. Shipsets can go from Charleston to pierside anywhere in the U.S in three to five days. The AIT installs the new room on board the submarine, then there is more testing to bring the system up and fully operational.

The biggest strength of NIWC Atlantic’s CSRR effort, according to Edmund, is the seasoned, knowledgeable team. That includes Steve Faith, Virginia and Columbia class new construction CSRR program manager; James Herndon, CSRR program manager for SSBN/SSBGN modernization; Jason Jansen, senior field service engineer for submarine radio rooms; and a host of technicians and subject matter experts who have worked on CSRR for years through four blocks of submarines and various increments and versions of software.

Faith, who has 38 years of submarine experience, has seen the CSRR program evolve from early on when new construction submarine radio rooms were built by Electric Boat using contractor furnished equipment. With USS North Dakota (SSN 784) NIWC Atlantic picked up procurement of the radio room and started using Government Furnished Equipment. “We were able to adapt and change, and bring costs down with 784. We have had the Virginia-class SSNs since 2012 – that’s 12 boats we currently have integrated CSRR into – that’s a great learning curve,” Faith said.

For new construction boats, funding begins five years in advance, which allows the CSRR team to spread out processes. “We are procuring equipment, building harnesses, testing equipment inside the lab environment, in test beds and working the bugs out,” Faith said. Now on its 16th Virginia class sub, the team continues to drive costs down. “We’re saving $1.1 to $1.5M on each hull, and that money goes back to program office,” Faith added. “We’ve evolved to doing almost full interior communications support. We do all fabrication, testing for Capability Based In-Service Engineering Agent, verification tests, lifecycle logistics support, and we have a training team,” he said.

Training takes place on the Multi-Reconfigurable Training System (MRTS), a series of flat screen panels run by control software that replicates shipboard component interfaces. MRTS features high-definition graphic simulations of CSRR system hardware circuit emulation. MRTS training will be even more realistic in the future as they move from 2D to 3D virtualization with headsets. The control software can be loaded to replicate different sub platforms within minutes, maximizing critical training time. MRTS at NIWC Atlantic is now migrating existing systems to a UNITY-based operating environment, which allows radio room simulations to be run in any hardware environment.

Continued on next page
In essence, the program becomes hardware agnostic and can be run on a server, an iPad or even an iPhone. A smaller UNITY-based maintenance trainer has already been delivered to the school houses for one of the antenna systems.

Herndon, who has 38 years of experience in submarines, has seen the team rise to challenges as they have progressed through different software versions and platform modifications through the years. When his team started fielding CSRR Increment 1, Version 3 a few years ago, it was taking up to 120 days. “We were challenged by Commander Submarine Force Atlantic to get it done in 90 days. We took 62 days of production and 28 of installation to meet the goal,” he said.

For SSBN modernizations the team saves time with ‘swing racks,’ preparing and outfitting new racks before the installation start, then removing the old ones and installing the preloaded new ones at the same time. The removed racks are cycled back into the swing rack rotation. “That’s worked very effectively for us on nine SSBN modernizations, with fielding in less than 90 days for six of them,” he added.

Like the rest of the core group, Herndon has seen the benefit of experience and collaboration as the team has worked through challenges. They have worked with the Fleet Readiness Directorate to make the Request for Proposal process more productive. “We have a very efficient model here,” Herndon said. “Why not share it with others?”

**CSRR**

*Continued from previous page*

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*Continued on page 17*
NIWC Atlantic team repairs cutter’s antenna

By Jerry Sekerak
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

NIWC Atlantic’s U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) team successfully repaired the OE-82 UHF satellite communications antenna system aboard USCG Cutter Douglas Munro (WHEC 724) Dec. 24-26, 2018.

The team endured harsh weather conditions with limited support during the Christmas holiday routine and completed all objectives, including the replacement of the cutter’s aft antenna and the repair of the forward antenna slip ring assembly at Dutch Harbor, Alaska, located in the Aleutian Islands, 1,200 miles off Alaska’s mainland.

Despite encountering several significant challenges including traveling to a remote location on short notice just before the holidays, arranging other logistics to facilitate the repair and making expedited repairs on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the team completed the five-day task in only three days.

The USCG team also overcame additional challenges, including coordinating the delivery of a 670-pound crate of equipment to Dutch Harbor’s remote location in just over two weeks and arranging for a crane operator to work at the port during the holidays.

“The team did an outstanding job facilitating crane operations in the extreme cold weather conditions, providing updates to our sponsor and providing overall coordination and support for the technical assistance despite the holiday and time difference,” said John White, USCG team lead.

“The government and contractor team members displayed a high level of commitment and dedication to supporting the sponsor and the warfighter. It was a job well done!”

The efforts of the joint government and contractor team helped quickly return the cutter to its normal operations of supporting search and rescue, law enforcement and fisheries management for USCG Pacific Area and Defense Forces West and District 17. The cutter, which uses military satellite communications for a long-range secure type-one tactical network to coordinate critical operations for each of these missions, was also supporting a polar security mission for U.S. Northern Command.

“Thank you to all the people who worked silently in the background and after hours to make the whole time difference not even matter… Bravo Zulu!” said USCG Chief Warrant Officer Nicholas E. Medalis, the Command, Control, and Communications Engineering Center Radio Frequency Communications Division, military satellite communications system support agent.

The USCG team provides engineering sustainment, modernization and acquisition support services for USCG platforms, delivering the latest technology and advanced capabilities ensuring an optimum state of readiness in support of USCG missions.

Dutch Harbor, Alaska, is located in the Aleutian Islands, 1,200 miles off Alaska’s mainland.
NIWC Atlantic officially opened the Maritime Positioning, Navigation and Timing (M-PNT) Laboratory March 14 onboard Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek, Virginia.

The lab is the Navy’s new home for research, development, test, evaluation, integration and certification for both surface and submarine PNT systems.

The M-PNT laboratory will primarily support new technologies being developed and introduced into the fleet for operating in a Global Positioning System (GPS) or sensor denied environment. These technologies include enhancements to the inertial navigation systems, and alternative positioning system technologies to GPS, which are primarily in support of the Program Executive Office – Integrated Warfare Systems - 6 (PEO IWS 6).

“Today we at NIWC Atlantic are the forefront of our Navy’s information warfare efforts, and this laboratory enables us to expand our Sailors’ advantage at sea,” said Capt. Wesley Sanders, NIWC Atlantic commanding officer. “It was a team effort by many that allows us to leverage our technical expertise and capabilities.”

The laboratory will also facilitate research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) efforts for other Navy and Department of Defense customers, including the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency in support of maritime geospatial intelligence technical standards, and exploitation by the fleet.

“The work done in this laboratory helps ensure the safety of navigation and the safety of our warfighters at sea,” said Sanders. “Accurate PNT is vital to our information warfare mission at NIWC Atlantic, and it is critical to the fleet’s ability to get to and fight the battle.”

Construction on the approximately $3 million laboratory began in May 2018 and is still in progress. Although the lab structure is complete, some minor work remains before the lab attains a fully functional status. A separate, but related project includes the construction of a fenced-in secure storage area for the mobile test lab outside the current laboratory.

“I am glad we are nearing completion. The team that works in the lab has been most patient and accommodating for the construction period so far,” said Robert Greer, PNT Engineering team lead. “We are all excited for some new projects that are starting this fiscal year in GPS denied navigation, and we are happy the lab will be able to support these RDT&E efforts.”

The laboratory also supports the navigation suite certification process being developed for the fleet, which tests the design, integration and interoperability of the entire PNT system of systems (architecture) in both surface ships and submarines. Initially the lab will support guided missile destroyer-class and Virginia-class architectures, then grow to be reconfigurable to support all fleet PNT system of systems architectures.

In-Service Engineering Agent support will be provided by the M-PNT Laboratory for the Navigation Sensor System Interface and GPS-based PNT Service systems sponsored by the Navy’s Communications and GPS Navigation Program Office.

“This new facility, the investment, the skills of the workforce, the technical knowledge of the workforce and the location are all important,” said Sanders. “We take great pride in this opening of the M-PNT Lab as another step to providing more information to protect our warfighters.”
CND lab enhances cybersecurity

By Maison Piedfort
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

NIWC Atlantic celebrated the opening of the Computer Network Defense (CND) Development Lab with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Charleston Nov. 8.

Capt. Wesley Sanders, NIWC Atlantic commanding officer, thanked several NIWC Atlantic team members for readying the new lab and designing it to be on the cutting-edge of cybersecurity innovation.

“Many people played key roles in bringing us to this moment, allowing us to leverage our experience and technical expertise in the area of cybersecurity,” said Sanders.

Planning for the new CND Development Lab began four years ago when NIWC Atlantic outgrew its previous lab due to the increased demand for network security work for its cybersecurity team. The lab was built by refurbishing existing space formerly used by a recently completed project.

The CND Development Lab is larger, has more effective cooling and power systems and will enable the team to work more closely and frequently with product vendors. Close vendor relationships enable the Navy to use commercial off-the-shelf products and equipment to fulfill their work requirements more efficiently.

“Wesley Hilderbrand, our network security lead, and his team are immensely invested in the work that will take place in this lab and the unique operational cyber capabilities NIWC Atlantic is fulfilling for our Navy and our nation,” Sanders said.

The CND Development Lab also facilitates vendor partnerships, which allows for a full breadth of system testing and easier collaboration. Additionally, the lab’s seating area was designed with the goal of increased collaboration. Its accessibility and network configuration enable efficient and timely evaluation and implementation of more advanced cyber COTS products targeted to mitigate threats.

“This lab represents a down payment on our highest priority technical growth area. We all know too well that the threat is real,” said Sanders. “The urgency to answer these threats is real. I’m excited and proud that we have been able to apply the intellect, energy and ideas found here at NIWC Atlantic in new and exciting ways to respond to these ever-evolving threats.”

From left to right, NIWC Atlantic Commanding Officer Capt. Wesley Sanders, Samir Othman, Rob Diaz and NIWC Atlantic Executive Director Chris Miller cut the ribbon for the grand opening of the CND Development Lab.
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

NIWC Atlantic participated in a number of key industry engagements last year aimed at developing and enhancing future information warfare solutions.

Utilizing both traditional and non-traditional platforms, NIWC Atlantic supported more than 40 industry events in 2018 alone.

According to NIWC Atlantic Executive Director Chris Miller, the center could not perform its mission effectively and affordably across five continents without industry partnerships.

“Industry partners are key to our success in bringing the best information warfare solutions forward to our nation’s warfighters,” said Miller. “We want to give our industry partners more venues and opportunities to get their ideas in front of the right people.”

The center utilized multiple avenues to increase partnership opportunities and dialogue, to include industry days, technology exchanges, defense summits and traditional outreach events.

“NIWC Atlantic held 20 industry days in Charleston, Hampton Roads and New Orleans in fiscal year 2018,” said Steve Harnig, NIWC Atlantic chief of contracting. “The events were attended by more than 1,000 contractors and facilitated 13 task orders and seven contract actions.”

Additionally, a new industry opportunity opened last year through the launch of the Information Warfare Research Project (IWRP), giving prospective members an understanding of the Other Transaction Authority (OTA) and defining the 14 technical scope areas. Since the initial event in February 2018, NIWC Atlantic awarded the first prototype project agreement under the OTA for the IWRP for $1.3 million.

“The center also participates annually with the Charleston Defense Contractors Association (CDCA) summit, as well as the Small Business and Industry Outreach Initiative (SBIOI), to improve our collaboration and innovation,” said Robin Rourk, deputy director for the office of small business programs. “These events, attended by more than 2,300 people, happen at multiple locations, including at NIWC Atlantic’s Hampton Roads and New Orleans detachments.”

Other annual defense summits with NIWC Atlantic participation included the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association West, Department of the Navy Gold Coast in San Diego, the Navy League’s Sea-Air-Space event and the Office of Naval Research Science and Technology gathering in Washington, D.C.

“We are always looking to identify innovations and efficiencies in our technology growth areas, such as autonomy and embedded systems, cloud computing, data science and analytics, and more,” said Harnig. “By utilizing events like our technology exchanges, we were able to interact with close to 400 industry partners and discuss the latest in tech advancements.”

Another key NIWC Atlantic collaborative outreach effort is the Contracts Industry Council (CIC), chaired by Steve Harnig and industry representatives of both large and small businesses. The CIC, held every other month in Charleston, is a meeting made up of various contractor types and focused on topics that impact government and industry.

Outreach efforts and partnerships have continued for NIWC Atlantic with the 50th SBIOI and Sea-Air-Space 2019 offering even more collaborative learning.

“Industry partnerships have proven to advance efficiency and the process effectiveness needed to accelerate capability delivery,” said Harnig. “This is a key focus area we are working toward as part of NIWC Atlantic’s 2019 Execution Plan and SPAWAR’s strategic goals.”
NIWC Atlantic Executive Director Chris Miller served as keynote speaker at a meeting of the Tidewater Association of Service Contractors (TASC) in Norfolk, Virginia. Other NIWC Atlantic employees also presented overviews on command contracting and small business. The event provided an opportunity for conversation and collaboration between government and industry.
Building a credentialed workforce

CERF team earns DoD award

By Diane Owens
NIWC Atlantic
Public Affairs

A NIWC Atlantic team received a Department of Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Innovation Award Feb. 5 at the Pentagon for their work on a cybereducation resource.

The team’s efforts led to the creation of the Cyber Education and Certification Readiness Facility (CERF) based in Charleston, South Carolina.

Eleanor M. Lord, undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, presented the award to NIWC Atlantic Executive Director Chris Miller, Total Workforce Competency Lead Pam Bell, CERF Lab Lead Fred Bisel and team members Wesley Jones and Kamau Buffalo.

The state-of-the-art facility was constructed in less than a year using excess government equipment, resulting in a cost avoidance of more than $1 million.

Since its opening in 2017, more than 500 employees have taken networking and operating system classes to learn about various off-the-shelf software and to achieve commercial certification. A second CERF opened recently in Virginia to train personnel at NIWC Atlantic’s Hampton Roads sites and the development of a third lab to serve employees in New Orleans is underway.

“We are proud of the successes of the CERF and are working hard to continue to expand the capabilities and offerings,” said Ann Rideout, senior scientific technology manager, communications and networks. “Look for more great things to come.”

Offering the courses in-house rather than having employees travel to attend commercially-provided training has saved approximately $1.2 million and represents a major step forward in NIWC Atlantic’s investment in credentialing its technical workforce and development of its cybersecurity specialists. During unscheduled time, students can come to the lab and use the equipment to reinforce concepts conveyed during formal training.

On Oct. 16, 2018 the team also received a Department of the Navy Acquisition Excellence Innovation Excellence Acquisition Team of the Year Award at the Pentagon. Acquisition Excellence Awards recognize individuals and organizations that demonstrate ingenuity and superior performance acquiring products and services for the Navy and Marine Corps.

The outcome of the CERF team’s accomplishments is far-reaching,” said Miller. “Not only are our team members being trained through the lab, but programs across the Navy and DoD enterprise are utilizing the CERF team and the lab’s capabilities. As a result, the team is providing cyber training to civilians and military members across the globe.”

Instructors and participants share experiences in CERF courses not traditionally offered in vendor training and cover topics on applying commercial technologies to unique and critical DoD and Navy applications used by the warfighter.

“Here, students know they are safe,” said Bisel. “This lab is a risk-free playground for learning networks that makes for more nuanced learning.”
NIWC Atlantic’s LeSane, Eure recognized

By Alex Jackson
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

Two NIWC Atlantic engineers were recognized at the Women of Color Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Conference in Detroit, Michigan, in October. Shana LeSane and Brianeisha Eure received 2018 Technology Rising Star Awards for helping shape technology for the future.

LeSane is the deputy lead engineer for the Navy Marine Corps Intranet/Next Generation Enterprise Network End User Services in Charleston. She provides engineering support and solidifying guidance on all client-impacted devices, systems and applications.

“I’ve been interested in engineering since I was a little girl,” said LeSane. “My uncle was a computer engineer and I saw an article written about him. That was very impressive to me, especially being a black man in that era. That gave me the courage to chase my dreams of being a computer scientist.”

She said she is grateful to be able to give back to our youth and especially young girls and minorities.

“Shana is a positive person with great morals,” said Amanda Patterson-Womble, who nominated LeSane for this recognition. “Shana’s coworkers benefit from her positive energy, and she actively impacts the command by mentoring others.”

Similar to LeSane, Eure enjoys her career and helping others on her team. “Brianeisha is the gold standard for how to be an effective member of a team,” said Kevin Hahn, Eure’s supervisor. “She does what needs to be done regardless of whose responsibility it is, and she always has a smile on her face.”

As a cybersecurity engineer in Norfolk, Virginia, Eure is responsible for designing and building information technology (IT) solutions with security at the forefront. She is also responsible for maintaining an effective security posture throughout the lifecycle of a program through the use of security controls, policies and other techniques.

Eure studied information technology and computer science with an emphasis in information assurance at Norfolk State University.

“I saw engineering as a way to utilize the skillsets I obtained to be able to have the most impact at NIWC Atlantic,” Eure said.

The Women of Color STEM Conference helps women improve their education and careers in STEM fields. The conference opens up many opportunities for women to achieve their STEM goals and aspirations.

Both LeSane and Eure said it is an honor to be recognized alongside an esteemed group of women and trailblazers in their field.

Common Submarine Radio Room

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“We would go anywhere to support anyone, if we need to,” Jansen added. “Not just our program, but whatever the fleet needs. We’ll find a way to support them.”

“I think that’s what makes this IPT different,” Edmund said. “We have this great wealth of knowledge, and we are truly integrated as a team. There is a real sense of ownership in what we are doing.”

“It’s just a different group of people here,” Faith added. “We like what we do. No one wants to leave.”

Even so, the CSRR team is grooming the next generation to support the fleet far into the future. David Parker, Krista Carter, Mitch Witherspoon and others will continue to use the power of CSRR’s commonality across submarine classes to make smart procurements, increase interoperability, reduce lifecycle costs and train efficiently. By leveraging dedicated, expert people with effective processes, the CSRR team will continue to accelerate capability deliveries that pay off in improved fleet readiness.

- Susan Bullinger, Chronicle Editor
40 under 40 selectees

Jackson makes a difference for youth, at work, in community

By Heather Rutherford
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

Charleston Regional Business Journal has selected Martina Jackson as a recipient of the 2019 Forty Under 40 award. Nominated by members of the local community, this elite group is composed of individuals under 40 years old who excel in the professional arena and in community involvement.

A Monetta, South Carolina, native, Jackson began her career at NIWC Atlantic as part of the student co-op program in the summer of 2000 and graduated from Clemson University in 2004. Today, she is the C4I Foreign Military Sales (FMS) IPT lead supporting the FMS, Air Integration and United States Coast Guard division in the Fleet C4I and Readiness department.

“It is such an honor to even be recognized and nominated, let alone win,” said Jackson. “I’m very grateful and humbled, and this win has strengthened my belief to just keep being me, be determined, and run my race while appreciating and enjoying people and life.”

Jackson’s volunteer activities arenumerous within the command and local community. She credits her parents with fostering her desire to make a difference. “As a kid, I watched my mom and dad commit themselves to helping others and it was instilled in me then that giving back and serving others is one of the most treasured things one can do in life,” she said.

A STEM advocate, Jackson has participated in several of NIWC Atlantic’s science, technology, engineering and math outreach initiatives designed to engage middle and high school students, including Dimension U, Girls’ Day Out and My Brother’s Keeper.

As a member of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Charleston Professionals, Jackson has worked with

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Williams helping build nation’s future cyber defense workforce

By Diane Owens
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

Dr. Justin Williams, code 59220, was selected as a recipient of the 2019 Forty Under 40 award sponsored by Charleston Regional Business Journal.

Born in Huntsville, Tennessee, Williams achieved an associate degree in electronic systems technology from the Community College of the Air Force; a bachelor’s degree in management of computer information systems from Park University; a master’s degree in systems engineering from Southern Methodist University; and a doctorate in cybersecurity from Capitol Technology University.

At NIWC Atlantic Williams is deputy chief, Defense Health Agency (DHA) Cyber Operations Center (CyOC). He’s worked with Navy Medicine for 13 years.

The CyOC is a centralized capability for all cyber-related functions, including cybersecurity service provider (CSSP) services; red team assessments to identify vulnerabilities in processes or infrastructures; DHA network operations; implementation of higher authority cyber directives; and plans of action and milestone submission, tracking and reporting. The center employs approximately 180 government employees and contractors, and the security operations center is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

DHA is a combat support agency that delivers integrated health services to the 9.5 million uniformed service members, retirees and their families served by the military health system. It operates medical facilities across the globe for Army, Navy and Air Force members and dependents. After the rollout of the next generation medical records system, Medical Health System Genesis, is completed to replace legacy Army, Navy and Air Force medical record systems, the DHA network will be the fourth largest unclassified net-

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New Professionals stand out in 2018

By Maison Piedfort
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

Each quarter one New Professional (NP) is recognized for professional excellence, and one of those four is named New Professional of the Year. The NPs of the quarter and annual awards recognize the superior accomplishments and contributions of New Professionals to the command’s mission. NPs of the quarter for 2018 included Nicholas Phillpott, Alexander Vanderheyden, Gregory Wallace and Matthew Csernica, who was also named New Professional of the year for 2018.

Nicholas Phillpott
Nicholas Phillpott, software developer and NIWC Atlantic’s New Professional of the Quarter for the first quarter of fiscal year 2018, was recognized for his contribution to the Security Content Automation Protocol Compliance Checker project, Build and R system.

In addition to Nicholas’ achievements within his project, he has been actively involved in his community by participating in STEM outreach programs, such as career fairs and mentoring for First Tech Challenge. He volunteered for the 2017 Cyber Security Summer Camp and taught students about using and securing web servers.

He also volunteered for the 2017 New Professional Burger Burn. In his own time, he self-studied and passed the Security+ exam.

Alexander Vanderheyden
Wireless Integration Engineer Lead Alexander Vanderheyden, NIWC Atlantic’s New Professional of the Quarter for the second quarter of fiscal year 2018, was recognized for his work on an electronics deployment to the base hospital at Sheppard AFB in Wichita Falls, Texas, in support of the Health Systems Infrastructure IPT (HSI-IPT).

Vanderheyden recently accepted a new role as a team lead for the Wireless Integration Engineers on the wireless side of the HSI-IPT.

Gregory Wallace
Gregory Wallace, network/software engineer and NIWC Atlantic’s New Professional of the Quarter for the third quarter of fiscal year 2018, contributed to multiple installations for the Enterprise Infrastructure Modernization project on sites including Marine Corps bases Lejeune, Quantico, Kaneohe Bay, Foster, MCAS, Humphreys, and Mjuk.

Wallace’s efforts on installs helped minimize the footprints of the data centers and maximize their processing capability.

Wallace has also volunteered in STEM outreach events, including leading a FIRST LEGO League Robots team to the 2018 state level competition and volunteering for the command’s 2017 My Brother’s Keeper initiative.

Matthew Csernica
Systems Engineer Matthew Csernica, NIWC Atlantic New Professional of the Quarter for the fourth quarter and 2018 New Professional of the Year, contributes to NIWC Atlantic’s mission on multiple fronts across two projects.

While working on the Maritime Operations Center (MOC) Video Display System (VDS) Program, he developed a detailed site questionnaire to gather system capability requirements, supported multiple site assessments worldwide to assist in the requirements analysis and design of the MOC VDS, and documented detailed site assessment reports for the customer.

For the Surface and Mine Warfighting Development Center Exercise Control Center, he served as requirements manager by defining, categorizing and updating over 100 unique AV systems, Desktop AIS, Passive/Active network Infrastructure and Integrated Furnishing Systems technical requirements. Csernica served as an elected member of the NP Council, volunteered to aid the Command’s Awards Tactical Action Team, completed an additional rotation supporting the Network on the Move team and volunteers with the Lunch Buddies program.
NIWC Atlantic OSB director recognized nationally

By Alex Jackson
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

The director of NIWC Atlantic’s Office of Small Business (OSB) was recently honored for her work with the Department of Navy (DON) Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP) in Washington, D.C.

Robin Rourk spent two months on rotation with the DON OSBP to assist with special projects. During her rotation, Rourk summarized the training course requirements for DON Small Business Professionals (SBP), drafted a memorandum for DON SBP supervisory reporting requirements and researched the Navy’s use of small business participation evaluation criteria in DON solicitations.

She also represented the national agency during a Government Accounting Office engagement entitled “Federal Contracting for Small and Mid-Sized Businesses,” designed to discuss the ability of mid-sized companies to compete and secure Federal contracts.

In addition to her work with DON OSBP, Rourk was recognized by the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA) as the 2018 Small Business Person of the Year Award in the Government category.

That award is presented to a federal, state or local government employee who has championed small business concerns, is an AFCEA corporate or individual member, committed to AFCEA’s mission of bringing government and industry together.

NIWC Atlantic’s OSB provides the direction and resources needed for small businesses to participate and contribute to the delivery of critical information warfare capabilities to warfighters.

NIWC Atlantic partners with small business through active collaboration to provide information warfare solutions with speed and efficiency.

Williams 40 under 40

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work in the Department of Defense — and NIWC Atlantic is currently the lead organization providing defensive cyber operations for it.

Williams made significant contributions to planning and defining the scope of the organization, components, concept of operations, processes and charter and was an integral part of the CyOC standup. As a result, the center achieved full operational capability in April 2018 — within four months of receiving the tasking.

“I have been fortunate to be a part of an excellent team that has performed at a very high level. The award is a confirmation that the hard work has been recognized,” said Williams.

Last September, Williams led the successful temporary transition of CSSP operations to the NIWC Atlantic New Orleans Detachment due to Hurricane Florence and closure of facilities in Charleston. Despite a reduced staff and lack of the robust infrastructure available in the CyOC, his implementation of a successful CSSP Continuity of Operations plan enabled essential CSSP operations to be quickly established in New Orleans and sustained for seven days until the return to Charleston, enabling continued cybersecurity support to DHA and the Military Health System.

In February, the CSSP team received the 2019 Charles ton Engineers Joint Council /Project Management Institute Charleston Technical Project Team of the Year award.

A proponent of building the nation’s future cyber defense workforce, Williams has been an active participant in prior years in the Palmetto Cyber Defense Competition, a three-day event held by NIWC Atlantic in collaboration with the South Carolina Lowcountry Chapter of AFCEA International, and he served one year as a blue team mentor/coach and one year as a gold team development member. He has also engaged with South Carolina education officials on the development of STEM criteria in high school curriculums on behalf of NIWC Atlantic.

Williams also participates in many community service activities. He supported the Homeless Period Project in Charleston in 2018, helping assemble kits with basic hygiene supplies for homeless women. He has contributed to “blessing boxes,” providing nonperishable food items for those in need. Williams and his spouse hosted a “Cop Stop” in Goose Creek on three occasions, an event that welcomes local police force members to stop and share a meal at the homes of local residents. He also took home-cooked meals to police dispatch personnel so they could share in this community initiative. In addition, he participated in the Wreaths Across America project to lay wreaths in remembrance of America’s veterans and war heroes, focusing his efforts at Beaufort National Cemetery.
NIWC Atlantic hosted a Naval Research and Development Establishment (NR&DE) Data Science and Analytics Workshop in Charleston, South Carolina, Nov. 6-8.

More than 150 data science professionals from the Department of the Navy (DON) attended to share information, baseline current efforts, identify key technology growth areas and gaps, and collaboratively plan for the future.

Robert Keisler, NIWC Atlantic data science and analytics senior science and technology manager, opened the workshop by explaining that the National Defense Strategy specifies big data, data analytics, artificial intelligence, machine learning and related capabilities will shape how the United States fights and wins future wars.

“This workshop is centered on strengthening the naval data science community,” Keisler said. “Data science professionals want to make connections and develop a community. It’s important we know our roles and responsibilities for the Department of Defense.”

Keynote speaker Margie Palmieri, Navy Digital Warfare Office (DWO) director, discussed DWO’s efforts in exploring how to apply data analytics to warfighting readiness issues. She explained how three digital pilot projects involving aviation, surface ships and personnel showed that applying analytics to data produced specific desired outcomes for issues that were not solved by a traditional approach.

“I’m excited that you’ve brought together data scientists from Navy organizations to collaborate and share information,” said Palmieri. “It’s a milestone for the Navy. Everything with data science has to start with outcome – the mission. Then we use analytics to help us improve execution of that mission.”

Todd Balazs, Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) digital integration officer, discussed NAVAIR’s digital strategy and how it will produce outcomes such as reduced manual effort, decreased overhead, near-real-time data, improved decision quality, and accelerated internal business operations and capabilities to the fleet.

“We must replace the current sustainment model, transition to model-based engineering and democratize the workforce,” said Balazs. “We have to change the organizational construct to an agile environment.”

During the three-day event, employees from a variety of agencies participated in a number of panel discussions and technology sessions about sensing, decision aids, modeling and simulation and predictive analytics. Participants discussed the challenges of readiness, business, warfighting and workforce development – and stressed the importance of cross-NR&DE collaboration in these and other areas to improve capabilities. They agreed on a need to educate leaders in participating organizations about what data science is, and to work together to develop a common lexicon and standards across organizations.

NIWC Atlantic Executive Director Christopher Miller reviewed the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command perspective on data science. He discussed how the pace of technology is accelerating, and said we’re overwhelmed with data and trying to keep up with technology.

“Data science is about impacting decision-making and addressing critical mission and enterprise questions,” Miller said. “We need to revolutionize decision-making and accelerate the Navy workforce into the age of automation.”

Miller said NIWC Atlantic’s advanced analytics and

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S&T research at NIWC Atlantic

Transferring cutting edge technologies to the warfighter

By Maison Piedfort
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

A mobile app to record data for Naval divers. Graph-theoretical models as tools to fight propaganda and misinformation. A flock of 20 drones — operated by just one pilot.

These are just some of the projects keeping scientists at NIWC Atlantic on the cutting-edge of science and technology (S&T) research. NIWC Atlantic’s mission is to provide information warfare solutions to warfighters. Whether those solutions end up looking like a mobile app or a remote-controlled flock of drones, NIWC Atlantic scientists continue to deliver.

“The command has already strategically aligned several key S&T departments to enhance facilitation of technology transitions and leverage programs like Joint Capability Technology Demonstrations for accelerating the delivery of capability,” said Dr. Scott Batson, S&T Lead Manager, Office of Naval Research and Advanced Technology Research Business Units at NIWC Atlantic.

“Through these opportunities, professional development, and an active recruitment strategy, we are building a strong competency of operationally-minded researchers capable of conceiving and developing critical technologies that will be essential to maintaining information superiority,” said Dr. Batson.

A Mobile App for Divers

That’s what one project, Automated Dive Profile Data Transmission and Synchronization (Auto-DPTS), aims to do.

Through its mobile app called Scuba Binary Dive Application (SBDA) 100, naval divers can log and record dive profile information digitally on a tablet. Before SBDA 100, dive supervisors or the person logging the dive would fill out a form or write down dive information on a piece of paper, a process that’s not ideal in wet and potentially windy conditions.

Four years ago, Scott Brodeur, Force Master Diver for the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, asked himself if that process could be improved for the operators, who at the end of a long day on the boat have to come back and manually fill out all the paperwork that goes along with diving.

“Looking at all the man hours it takes to log dives, it just seemed like something we could do better,” said Brodeur.

Now, divers can streamline the tedious logging process — which includes packing binders full of paper onto the boat — with a simple digital tablet that provides a structured profile for logging dives. And that’s not all.

“Our app also does Navy dive computer extraction of data and time series information,” said La’Keisha Williams, Scientist and Principal Investigator for the Auto-DPTS program at NIWC Atlantic. “It also automatically uploads into the DJRS system, which is the Dive and Jump Reporting System.”

SBDA 100 is intended to benefit Navy divers around the world, specifically those who do surface-supplied diving
and scuba diving, by alleviating the administrative burden of logging dives. This streamlining of processes helps divers focus more on other parts of the job like training Sailors, getting them dive-certified, planning dives, and diving itself.

REDHAWK

Another NIWC Atlantic project, REDHAWK, uses a software-defined radio (SDR) framework to support the development, deployment, and management of real-time software radio applications. Applications developed under the REDHAWK framework are 100 percent government owned, free, open source, and scalable.

One such REDHAWK application, developed by NIWC Atlantic Electrical Engineer Justin Sellers, receives and processes aircraft beacons.

“REDHAWK enables the rapid development and deployment of Software Defined Radio capabilities,” said Sellers. Applications developed under the SDR framework are compatible with many different hardware products and allows for more efficient rapid prototyping, code generation and testing. REDHAWK’s integrated development environment also provides tools to support the development of REDHAWK software by, for example, allowing users to interact with and control multiple running REDHAWK applications.

Sellers and his NIWC Atlantic colleagues also assist the Navy and Marine Corps with REDHAWK adoption through the Military REDHAWK Center of Excellence by aiding in the acquisition process and providing software development training.

“REDHAWK applications benefit the warfighter by giving them reusable signal processing algorithms to perform mission function,” said Sellers. “This allows speed to capability and cost savings. Additionally, it allows programs to then invest realized cost savings in platform and mission-specific tailoring.”

Drone Swarm Technology

In the realm of autonomous technology, NIWC Atlantic makes piloting drones safer for Marines by requiring less manpower to pilot more assets. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have been used for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions for more than a decade, but not without a human operator at the helm, guiding the vehicle’s every move from the control room.

But for the NIWC Atlantic Unmanned Systems Research (SAUSR) Range Team, there’s no need for a one-to-one drone-to-operator ratio; there are dozens, or a “swarm,” of them per pilot, and that pilot’s primary role is backup support.

NIWC Atlantic software developer D.J. Tyree explained drone swarms in the context of basketball. “Imagine you’re playing one on five. What can you do when you’re one guy, one asset, going up against five, or 50, or 100?” said Tyree. “You’ve got to increase your number of assets without increasing manpower. That’s where swarming comes in.”

Scalability, autonomy, cost-effectiveness and logistical agility are all tactical advantages to using unmanned drone swarms rather than popular, typically manned UAV models. And as drones become more commercially available, the cost to build them will be driven down.

“Current technology is a net reduction of force. If you want one drone in the air, it may take 10 people on the ground supporting it,” said NIWC Atlantic Mechanical Engineer Chad Sullivan. “What we’re trying to do with swarming is achieve a net multiplication of force where you need less people than you have assets in the air.”

NATO Events and Exercises

It’s not always easy translating products in the lab into applications on the battlefield. That’s why NIWC Atlantic’s participation in NATO events and exercises is crucial in transitioning their technology products for warfighter use. One NIWC Atlantic project, Warfighter Experiment Design, was on display at NATO event Trident Juncture in 2018.

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Jackson 40 under 40

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NIWC Atlantic and local industry to support professional development, youth education programs and scholarships for local high school students pursuing STEM, and participated in various career fairs in the Charleston area to bring STEM awareness to young people.

Jackson serves as treasurer for the Charleston Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., where she performs a variety of community service events and works with more than 200 local women to promote the development of goals, including educational, social action and physical and mental health. She also acts as a mentor for young women 14 to 18 years old in the Delta GEMS (Growing and Empowering Myself Successfully) program.

Data Science & Analytics

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data science efforts apply in many areas, and its employees need to collaborate across the Navy to build robust partnerships, since every activity struggles with the same concerns.

Other data science and analytics leaders from across the DON discussed how data science is being applied in their organizations.

Tam Nguyen, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) digital officer, described NAVSEA's digital transformation and how she's helping accelerate it, and Dr. Ryan Zelnio, Office of Naval Research (ONR) chief analytics officer, reviewed ONR's artificial intelligence projects. Dr. Dale Moore, director, strategy and innovation, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development, Test and Evaluation), talked about the data analytics transformation, and said data and analytics is the basis of everything since the U.S. is committed to being the artificial intelligence global leader by 2030.

Dr. Luke Overbey, NIWC Atlantic data science and analytics science and technology lead, directed the final workshop session, presenting a technology roadmap and the way forward to collaborate and develop an NR&DE data science community of practice.

S&T research

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"Warfighter Experiment Design for Information Environment Assessment aims to gain an understanding of rumor, social hysteria propagation, and crowd manipulation and determine how social network analysis techniques and algorithms, along with emerging computational and social science techniques, may together be exploited to achieve desired effects in the online domain space," said Michael Grass, Lead Researcher for Warfighter Experiment Design.

Warfighter Experiment Design is a set of appropriate, effective tools, techniques and procedures for assessing adversary activities within online platforms.

"Accelerated evaluation of the algorithms and tools, together with the development of appropriate, effective tools, techniques and procedures are key to getting on top of the rapidly evolving adversarial information campaigns that potentially threaten and undo mission objectives on the ground," said Grass.

One such tool is TRACER, software based on mathematical algorithms designed to thwart the missions and proliferation of bots or botnets—networks of computers infected with malicious software and controlled by an external source without the users’ knowledge — by modeling their efforts in a graph theoretical structure called a competition graph (CG).

"These adversaries use social media in Information Warfare campaigns to spread misinformation, manipulate crowds, propagate social hysteria and cause group polarization," said Grass.

TRACER analyzes large, complex, directed social networks of bots through CGs to provide an interpretation of current and novel graph-theoretical and social network analysis measures with the goal of identifying and combating trolls, bots, botnets and the organized spread of misinformation on social media and social networks.

"Our department bridges the gap between newly-available technologies and fielded programs," said Chief Technology Officer Dr. Suzanne Huerth. "We are innovating tomorrow’s Navy today with a technical workforce and aligning our capabilities to the needs of the Navy."

Through projects like these, NIWC Atlantic’s Science and Technology department is focused on ensuring warfighters retain technological advantage on the battlefield today and well into the future.

Additionally, Jackson holds the position of treasurer for the Charleston chapter of the National Pan-Hellenic Council where she chairs financial efforts for the collective council of 11 local organizations, promotes Greek unity in the Charleston area, participates in holiday food and gift drives for families in need, organizes scholarships and oratorical contests for local youth, and works with Habitat for Humanity.

Jackson has also volunteered with Clemson Black Alumni at the Clemson University Orange Carpet Reception, Charleston Youth Summits, and Ladies Enriching The Community (LETC), Inc.

“This award certainly encourages me to keep helping and uplifting others, whether at work, in the community, or in my social circles,” said Jackson.
Simpkins’ AWS stint a boost for Navy

By Diane Owens
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

A NIWC Atlantic employee completed a six-month fellowship at Amazon Web Services (AWS), a unit of Amazon that provides cloud computing services to private industry and government.

Brandon Simpkins, a lead network engineer, participated in the AWS program to gain technical expertise in the area of cloud computing as an opportunity to translate his learning in a way that could positively impact the fleet.

As a member of the first group of Department of Defense Cyber Information Technology Exchange Program (CITEP) selectees, he was assigned to AWS in Herndon, Virginia and embedded in the DoD Solutions Architecture team — the front line dealing with government customers as part of their sales activity.

Simpkins said he encountered people who were willing to help him and benefitted from the extreme collaboration AWS employees use to achieve goals.

“My teammates were highly technical and experts at discussing complex topics with potential customers in easy-to-understand language,” said Simpkins. “They were, hands down, the smartest people I’ve ever met in my life.”

Simpkins took advantage of a number of training opportunities during the fellowship. During the first month, he attended internal training courses, completed self-paced computer training, and pursued learning through commercial vendors to gain a better understanding of how various services worked.

Simpkins achieved the AWS Certified Associate Solutions Architect certification and was certified as a cloud practitioner.

As part of the fellowship, Simpkins also completed a monitored master builder project aimed at solving customer problems and engaging in mock interactions. He tailored his project to help address some of the challenges the Navy faces deploying software onto shipboard environments, which include limited bandwidth and slow upgrade schedules.

“The master builder project really helped cement the theory and gave me hands-on practical experience working in the cloud,” said Simpkins.

During the project, Simpkins analyzed problem sets and focused on several nontechnical solutions including containerization, micro services and DevOps, cost analysis and pricing. His work during this portion of the project helped to create an application prototype using modern technology that allowed applications to run detached or auto-scale in the cloud.

When it comes to the AWS fellowship opportunities, Simpkins said it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and participants get out of it what they choose to put into the program.

“Supporting the warfighter is a huge motivator for me,” said Simpkins. “The AWS fellowship was a great experience, and I’d encourage people to shoot for it.”

When he returned to NIWC Atlantic, Simpkins integrated AWS techniques into his everyday work as a network engineer, a benefit that his supervisor, Scott Ainsworth, said is a boost for NIWC Atlantic and the Navy.

“Programs he works on benefit from his in-depth, experiential cloud knowledge and the firsthand AWS perspective enables him to provide technical guidance that will expedite Navy cloud adoption,” said Ainsworth.

Individuals interested in pursuing a fellowship can learn more about the application process by visiting http://dodcio.defense.gov/ITEP.
Educational partnership is a win-win

NIWC Atlantic has established an educational partnership with Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC), boosting the college’s cybersecurity program and creating a pipeline to fill cybersecurity positions at the center.

The educational partnership enables HGTC to expand its cybersecurity certificate program to a two-year associates degree program. Courses will focus on cybersecurity operations, ethical hacking, healthcare networking infrastructure, application development and computer forensics. The new associates degree in cybersecurity will be offered next fall.

“We engineer, integrate and secure information systems for the Navy, and we look forward to working with you to meet our common goal of ensuring cybersecurity for our Navy and our nation,” said NIWC Atlantic Executive Officer Cmdr. Jeffrey Williams, who traveled to Conway with Joe Henline, NIWC Atlantic’s deputy for Mission Assurance, and team members Mike Morris and Hank Osborne to formalize the partnership with HGTC President Dr. Marilyn Murphy Fore.

“We are excited to be here today to acknowledge and celebrate the hard work that has strengthened HGTC’s cybersecurity program and helps develop the foundational skills needed to protect the cyber domain,” Henline said.

“We are proud to be a part of the effort.”

NIWC Atlantic representatives first met with HGTC leaders about a year ago to gauge interest in an educational partnership centered on cybersecurity. Attendees from NIWC Atlantic included Director of Workforce Development Pam Bell, STEM Outreach Manager Shanda Johnson, Engineering Competency Deputy Frank McAlhany, Henline and then-Deputy Executive Director Bill Deligne. Deligne often drove by the HGTC campus on his long weekly commute from Myrtle Beach to North Charleston, which gave him the initial idea of the partnership.

Henline recalls that the entire group from NIWC Atlantic was impressed by the college’s cybersecurity/cyber forensics program. “Their team had a lot of passion for their program, and wanted to improve it to meet our needs. This passion and their focus on understanding our needs is what drew us to view HGTC as a place we could look to for entry-level cybersecurity professionals,” Henline said.

Henline and the NIWC Atlantic team worked with HGTC cybersecurity professor Stan Greenawalt to develop the partnership and associate degree program. “Stan’s passion for educating students in the area of cybersecurity is contagious,” Henline said.

Over the past year, HGTC representatives visited the center to better understand NIWC Atlantic’s needs and tweaked their program to strengthen and align their students’ technical skills to these needs.

Osborne also provided guidance to Greenawalt and the HGTC team preparing an Office of Naval Research grant submittal. The resulting $750,000 grant is being used to equip a new Security Operations Center Cyber Range and Forensics Lab at HGTC. Courses offered in the lab will provide students with hands-on experience tackling complex cyber attacks, and will help them learn to evaluate established risk tolerance, work in a team approach and manage risk consistently throughout an organization.

Osborne, who also participated in the judging of students’ capstone project presentations, serves on the HGTC Computer Technology Advisory Board Committee, drawing on his professional expertise to provide feedback to the faculty about course offerings, subject content and current trends.

The partnership will augment NIWC Atlantic’s cybersecurity workforce by creating a pipeline for HGTC students to work at the center. Morris worked with HGTC to secure candidates and negotiated the hiring process to bring on three entry-level cyber security employees in the mission assurance competency, and one in communications and networks.

“The great benefit for us is that HGTC is focused on understanding our needs for a cybersecurity workforce, so we are looking forward to seeing entry-level hires coming in with a stronger cybersecurity foundation,” Henline said.

For Greenawalt, the education partnership with NIWC Atlantic and the New SOC Cyber Range and Forensics Lab are just the beginning. “My mission is to do everything I can to make our country safer in the realm of cybersecurity,” he said.

- Susan Bullinger, Chronicle Editor
Hacking 4 Defense
Thinking outside the box to solve problems

By Alex Jackson
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

NIWC Atlantic is thinking outside of the box to come up with better solutions to solve today’s problems in order to provide information warfare solutions to the warfighter efficiently.

The Science and Technology (S&T) team at NIWC Atlantic partnered with BMNT, a technology consulting firm under contract with the Office of Naval Research (ONR), to use new strategies and techniques to improve warfighting capabilities.

Based in Palo Alto, California, BMNT helps walk government agencies through the process of identifying pressing problems, then utilize a strategic, step-by-step process that forces participants to understand the root cause of the problem so that the developed innovative product will have a higher probability of success and will actually be used by the beneficiaries.

A team from BMNT held a three-day Hacking 4 Defense (H4D) workshop recently on Joint Base Charleston. Workshop facilitators led participants through a four-step strategy approach that includes an innovation pipeline, problem curation, beneficiary discovery and experimentation to solve the very real technical, procedural and contractual challenges the NIWC Atlantic team faces every day. This training workshop presented a new set of tools and techniques that followed a disciplined, evidence-based, data-driven process for connecting innovation activities into an accountable system that rapidly delivers solutions to hard problems.

A group of 48 NIWC Atlantic scientists, engineers, program managers, finance and contracts staff were divided into six groups of eight. Each of the attendees was tasked beforehand to think of a problem to present and have the teams select one of the problems presented as their topic to focus on for the remainder of the training.

The BMNT team guided participants through the four-step strategy on how to approach the problem and come up with creative solutions. The first two days of training went into sufficient depth to give the participants a good foundation in how this approach can be applied to a variety of problem areas. Each team reported out at the end of the second day their problem area and identified innovative solutions. It was a very hands-on, interactive workshop and everyone had ample opportunities to add their ideas and contribute to the team. On the third day, a smaller group of 12 people was directed to lead themselves and use the new problem-solving tools to address a very specific NIWC Atlantic problem, with BMNT facilitators providing guidance and suggestions as the team worked through the problem. The topic the smaller group selected was a very challenging problem of how to improve resource allocation with regard to personnel and the coordination between the competencies and IPTs across NIWC Atlantic. The diverse team was composed of leadership to new hires from the competencies and departments who aggressively tackled this problem. By the end of the day, they had come up with several unique, actionable approaches.

According to Michael Merriken, manager of Technology Transfer Office, it’s motivated and well-trained people utilizing efficient repeatable, and sustainable processes that are keys to success in any organization.

The H4D program enables the DoD and intelligence community to address critical national security challenges with the next generation of government and intelligence community civilians.

Another option available for government problem sponsors is to partner with BMNT and access some of the nation’s top university students who are studying these problem-solving approaches and will then gain hands-on experience while rapidly creating and deploying solutions with lean business practices for government problem sponsors. Merriken said he is looking forward to implementing techniques learned from the BMNT staff.

To learn more about the H4D workshop, go to the COG page https://wiki.spawar.navy.mil/confluence/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=274041530.
NIWC Atlantic is leveraging the expertise of Senior Scientific Technical Managers (SSTMs) to meet and exceed the highly technical information warfare needs of the Navy. With 15 SSTMs authorized and 13 hired to date, NIWC Atlantic is influencing Navy development on a national level, while reinforcing the center’s stature as a leading edge technical laboratory.

Two additional SSTM positions, Rapid Prototyping SSTM and Test and Evaluation SSTM, were also recently authorized.

SSTM leadership positions NIWC Atlantic to answer the Chief of Naval Operations’ (CNO) call for agility to keep pace with technology and the tactics of adversaries, and enable the command to develop and deliver capabilities that expand our nation’s information warfare advantage.

“These SSTM positions enhance and increase NIWC Atlantic technical leadership in science and engineering capabilities that strengthen our ability to deliver information warfare solutions to our naval forces,” said NIWC Atlantic Executive Director Chris Miller.

SSTMs were authorized under the FY14 and FY16 National Defense Authorization Acts “to engage in research and development in the physical, biological, medical or engineering sciences, or another field closely related to the mission of the Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratory (STRL).” SSTMs are positions which exceed the ND-05 (GS-15) level, with salaries ranging from $126,148 to $189,600 a year.

At NIWC Atlantic, SSTMs provide a continuity of technical leadership and oversight that ensures long-term stewardship of technical capabilities. Typically, applicants for SSTM positions have a graduate degree in a technical field, significant research or development experience and a national or international reputation in his/her field.

NIWC Atlantic’s SSTMs fill leadership positions in critical technical growth areas that align to the needs of the Navy, such as cybersecurity, data science and analytics, cloud computing, enterprise resource tools, autonomy and mobility. NIWC Atlantic’s SSTMs represent more than 300 years of collective technical and government experience and advanced degrees in electrical engineering, computer science, systems engineering, physics and engineering management.

NIWC Atlantic’s first SSTM hire was former Deputy Executive Director Bill Deligne in December 2016, The deputy executive director is responsible for the execution of NIWC Atlantic’s technical work, applying systems engineering and programmatic discipline to deliver information warfare solutions to warfighters. The deputy executive director provides technical stewardship and expert advice to the fleet, resource sponsors and other stakeholders in the cyber warfare and business IT domains. Deligne came to NIWC Atlantic with 31 years of federal service, previously serving as executive director at the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA).

Peter Reddy, recently selected to succeed Deligne as NIWC Atlantic’s deputy executive director, previously served as NIWC Atlantic SSTM Chief Engineer. The former Marine officer brings a wealth of knowledge and technical leadership experience in executing R&D, cyber and IT projects with knowledge of internal and external customers. He holds a Master of Strategic Studies from the Marine Corps War College, Master of Science in systems engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School, a master’s in Business Administration from George Mason University, and a Bachelor of Science in aerospace engineering from the University of Virginia. The SSTM Chief Engineer position vacated by Reddy was announced in February.

Other recent NIWC Atlantic SSTM designations were for department heads for the Expeditionary Warfare, Command, Control, Communications, Computer, Intelligence (C4I)/Fleet Readiness, Shore Command, Control, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C2ISR)/Integration and Enterprise Systems departments.

Kevin Charlow, Expeditionary Warfare SSTM Department Head, provides strategic technical leadership for C4ISR for the Navy, Marine Corps and Special Operations Command. He has more than 30 years of Navy civil service experience, a Bachelor of Science degree in computer engineering from Clemson University and a Master of Business Administration with emphasis in computer and information resources management from Webster University.

Charlie Adams, SSTM Department Head for C4I/Fleet Readiness, is responsible for C4ISR, Networks and Information Assurance programs in support of SPAWAR Program Executive Office for C4I systems and the Fleet Readiness Di-
rectorate. During his 34-year civil service career Adams has held various technical leadership positions. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical and computer engineering from University of South Carolina and holds several certifications.

Bruce Carter, SSTM Department Head for Shore C2ISR/Integration, cultivates and leverages partnerships with engineering communities in other Department of Defense (DoD) and Navy organizations including Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, warfare centers, CNO, Office of Naval Research and Fleet Cyber Command. Prior to his government tenure, Carter was an engineer with General Electric and also served in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserves. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from Clemson University.

Patrick Fitzgerald, SSTM Department Head for Enterprise Systems, leads the delivery of acquisition, architecture and engineering services in support of the Naval Enterprise Networks acquisition life cycle. Fitzgerald has more than 20 years of government service. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering from University of Delaware and a Master of Business Administration and a Master of Science, Technology Management (specializing in information systems and services) from the University of Maryland.

Ann Rideout, NIWC Atlantic SSTM for Communication and Networks, provides technical leadership for the development, integration and deployment of Communications and Networks capabilities from concept through fielding. She has more than 23 years of federal service and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical and computer engineering from Clarkson University, and a Master of Business Administration degree from American University. Rideout has completed all requirements but the dissertation toward a doctorate in systems engineering at the University of Alabama, Huntsville.

Dr. Suzanne Huerth is the SSTM Chief Technology Officer and Science and Technology Competency Lead for NIWC Atlantic, directing rapid prototyping and technology transitions and managing laboratory-directed science and technology stewardship programs to include science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and Naval Innovative Science and Engineering (NISE) activities. Dr. Huerth has 20 years of federal service and received Bachelor of Science degrees in mathematics and physics from North Carolina State University and Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in physics from North Carolina State University. She also earned a Master of Engineering in electrical engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School’s distance learning program.

David Smoak is NIWC Atlantic SSTM for System of Systems Engineering, guiding the development, test and evaluation, acquisition and deployment of integrated C4ISR, space and cyber systems and technologies. He leads the execution of a holistic plan for promulgating patterns and best practices across the processes, solutions and technologies employed by NIWC Atlantic for all of its customers. Smoak has served as a federal civil servant for more than 27 years and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from Clemson University and a Master of Management from University of Phoenix.

Robert Keisler is SSTM Competency Lead for Data Science and Analytics at NIWC Atlantic. He provides technical strategic leadership and direction for the architecture, development, integration and deployment of data-intensive digital capabilities, including the Internet of Things, machine and deep learning, and artificial intelligence.
USS Charleston joins fleet

By MC2 Natalia Murillo
LCS Squadron 1

As clouds passed overhead, shipboard alarms echoed across the Cooper River and the crew of USS Charleston (LCS 18) ran aboard their ship and brought her to life. More than 5,000 guests gathered at the Columbus Street Terminal in the ship’s namesake city, officially welcoming the U.S. Navy’s newest littoral combat ship into the fleet.

LCS 18 is the 16th littoral combat ship to enter the fleet and the ninth of the Independence variant. The ship is the sixth to be named after Charleston, South Carolina, to honor a long history, from the decades of work at the Charleston Naval Shipyard to Charleston Marine Container, Inc., building mission modules for the littoral combat ship program today.

Charleston Mayor John T. Tecklenburg welcomed the audience to the commissioning of what he identified as a symbol of the city of Charleston. Tecklenburg added that since the founding of Charleston almost 350 years ago, the sea has been part of the Holy’s City’s economy and culture.

“The sea is history,” said Tecklenburg. “Nowhere will you find a people who understand those words more fully than the people of Charleston.”

In honoring the state of its namesake city, LCS 18 adopted South Carolina’s motto – As I Breathe, I Hope – and made it its own adding a combative twist – As We Breathe, We Fight!

Rear Adm. John Neagley, program executive officer for unmanned and small ships, spoke of the fighting power of LCS 18, the final ship commissioning Neagley will oversee as a Navy officer.

“If called upon, she’ll be ready to fight and win,” said Neagley. “She is a lethal ship.”

Adm. James Foggo III, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa and commander, Allied Joint Force Command Naples, Italy, shared his admiration for littoral combat ships like LCS 18 saying that “we need more like her.”

But he saved his greatest charge for Charleston’s crew.

“This ship was made to defend America,” said Foggo. “Take care of her, so you in turn can take care of all of us.”

Secretary of the Navy, Richard V. Spencer, reflected on the importance of the ship to the Navy mission and the changes ahead. He said USS Charleston contributes to giving the American people “the Navy the nation needs.”

Spencer added that cooperation with industry and production were two key elements to deliver the changes needed in the Navy, such as more powerful ships like LCS 18.

He recognized South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott for his contributions as a fellow leader in the ship’s commissioning, and as an impactful representative for the state.

Scott delivered the commissioning ceremony’s principal address for the ship named after the state’s oldest and largest city.

“There is a reason more than 40 ships have been named for South Carolina, whether it’s our places or our people,” said Scott. “It’s because so many South Carolinians have been dedicated to making sure that America remains the safest nation on Earth.”

Scott spoke about the magnitude of LCS 18 referring to it as a “freak of nature added to the Navy” referring the ship’s frightful strength and agility.

“USS Charleston has the ability to tackle asymmetrical threats like mines, quiet diesel submarines, and at the same time, fast surface ships,” said Scott. “We have been blessed to have our Charleston defending this nation.”

Soon after these words from South Carolina’s Senator and the setting of the ship’s commissioning by Spencer,
Cmdr. Christopher K. Busca, USS Charleston’s commanding officer, gave Cmdr. James H. Hoey, the ship’s executive officer, orders to hoist the ship’s colors and commissioning pennant. His orders to command the ship followed.

Next, the traditional setting of the first watch was ordered by former Charleston mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. After 10 consecutive terms leading the Holy City, Riley is one of the longest serving mayors in the United States. He and his wife Charlotte, who serves as the ship’s sponsor, maintain strong ties in the Lowcountry.

Mrs. Riley christened the future USS Charleston on Aug. 26, 2017, during a ceremony at the Austal shipbuilding facility in Mobile, Alabama. She was also in her hometown of Charleston for this ceremony to give the order to “man our ship and bring her to life!”

Since her christening, Charleston demonstrated a culture of excellence when she completed her New Construction Light Off Assessment (LOA) in three-and-a-half days, half the time allotted for the visit. LOA is an assessment which ensures the ship is able to safely light-off and operate its engineering plant both in port and at sea. The ship accomplished more than 70 percent of her material checks in the two weeks leading up to the LOA, which greatly facilitated that early completion.

Recent revisions to the Surface Force Training and Readiness Manual now permit ships’ crews to certify early when they demonstrate full proficiency during Certification Events (CEs). Charleston is one of three surface ships to satisfy certification requirements under these changes, which increases commanding officer’s discretionary crew training time.

Busca recognized his success as a leader is predicated on the foundation of support, vision and teamwork built with his crew as they worked toward this milestone. He said the crew seemed to never lose their positive attitude. They strived for excellence in all assessments and chose to prove that excellence in all areas, even when it meant staying late to do so.

“It didn’t take long to know that there was something special. They had an infectious attitude that seemed to never end,” said Busca. “I am a proud captain.”

Falling in line with his pride as their leader, Busca added a surprise element to the commissioning ceremony calling one of his crew to the stage. Electronics Technician 1st Class Jeremiah Hughey, from Biloxi, Mississippi, was meritoriously promoted to the rank of first class petty officer during the ceremony.

Busca did not hold back on calling out the contributions his multifaceted crew makes to the success of the ship.

The 74 Sailors aboard come from places like Jamaica, Costa Rica, Mexico, China, Haiti and the Philippines, just to name a few. The education on deck included the ship’s chief engineer with a doctorate and a chief quartermaster with a Master’s degree from Harvard. Busca pointed out that this diversity makes them special and the solidarity as one team under the same flag is what makes the crew of LCS 18 so powerful against any threat.

In closing, he had these words for any threat contemplating hostile action.

“I will bring up all four engines online, come to full power, and steam right at you with that gun blazing and my eventual missiles launching. Charleston will not turn and run. We will not run because while we breathe, we fight!”

After the ceremony, the ship will transit to join Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 1 and ten other littoral combat ships currently homeported at Naval Base San Diego.

The littoral combat ship is a fast, agile, mission-focused platform designed to operate in near-shore environments, while capable of open-ocean tasking and winning against 21st-century coastal threats such as submarines, mines, and swarming small craft. They are capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control and deterrence.
SSTMs

Continued from page 29

intelligence. Keisler has more than 13 years in technical leadership roles at NIWC Atlantic. He earned a Bachelor of Science in computer engineering from Clemson University and a Master of Science in computer science from The Citadel and the College of Charleston.

Kathryn S. Murphy serves as the SSTM Competency Manager for Software Engineering, responsible for successful coordination across all aspects of software and computer engineering to provide the right solutions to Navy, Marine Corps, DoD and other federal customers. She has more than 28 years of extensive management and technical experience in government and private industry positions, including 23 years at NIWC Atlantic and its predecessor activities. She graduated from the University of Virginia with a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering. (See story below.)

Erick Fry is SSTM for Cybersecurity, Test and Evaluation (Mission Assurance) Competency Lead. In this role, he leads the development of the Mission Assurance workforce and directs activities within Mission Assurance spanning both functional and security domains to ensure the capabilities delivered to customers are secure by design, secure in development, and secure in operations. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from Brigham Young University and a Master of Science in engineering management (with a minor in systems engineering) at the University of Alabama, Huntsville.

Andrew Tash is NIWC Atlantic SSTM for the Program Executive Office for Enterprise Information Systems (PEO EIS) Technical Director. As the senior technical leader for enterprise networks, business and fleet support IT for the Navy, he develops technical strategies for PEO EIS and ensures alignment across the full PEO EIS portfolio to ensure all products and services address Navy needs. Tash brings more than 15 years of knowledge and experience to the position, and received his Bachelor of Science degree in computer engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology and a Master of Science in systems engineering from Southern Methodist University.

“These approved high level technical positions for our command are directly reflective of the remarkable engineering talent of our workforce and of the impressive solutions the NIWC Atlantic team delivers every day,” Miller added. “These senior positions will enable us to retain the top talent in our workforce and to establish a technical career track to the highest leadership levels at NIWC Atlantic and in the Navy.”

- Susan Bullinger, Chronicle Editor

Murphy named WID Palmetto Chapter Female Executive of Year leadership.

By Michaela Judge, NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

A NIWC Atlantic leader recently received recognition as the 2019 Women in Defense Palmetto Chapter’s “Female Executive of the Year” during a ceremony in Charleston.

Kathryn Murphy, Senior Scientific Technical Manager for software engineering, earned accolades at the event for her work at NIWC Atlantic and her impact to the Navy, greater Department of Defense community and the warfighter.

“We are extremely proud of Kathryn and her recognition as Female Executive of the Year,” said Chris Miller, NIWC Atlantic executive director. “Kathryn embodies the guiding principles of our command. She champions service, fosters teamwork across the organization and beyond and empowers the workforce. We are grateful for her contributions to our team, as well as the incredible impact she is making to the warfighter.”

This year’s “Salute to the Fighting Ladies” ceremony marked WID Palmetto Chapter’s 9th annual event and honored military and civilian women for their contributions in the areas of national security, education, volunteerism and department of Defense community and the warfighter. Kathryn Murphy, Senior Scientific Technical Manager for software engineering, earned accolades at the event for her work at NIWC Atlantic and her impact to the Navy, greater Department of Defense community and the warfighter.

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“I am absolutely honored to be recognized by Women in Defense’s Palmetto Chapter,” said Murphy. “WID is an arm of the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA), and the local chapter is comprised of some of the most influential and productive people in the Charleston defense industry. To be recognized by such an outstanding group is really a special achievement for me, and a highlight in my career.”

This award, Miller said, is one of many avenues demonstrating NIWC Atlantic’s active efforts to develop and retain and highly credentialed workforce dedicated to tackling information warfare solutions for the warfighter.

“Our work spans both tactical and business applications and systems for the Navy, Marine Corps and federal sector,” said Murphy. “The systems our folks support have a direct impact on fleet readiness, from both a material and personnel aspect. Their work ensures our Sailors get paid, aviation platforms are maintained and decision makers have the information they need when they need it.”

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- Susan Bullinger, Chronicle Editor
NOLA breast cancer awareness

By Holly Carey
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs


More than 35 attendees, including those in New Orleans and on video teleconference in Charleston and Hampton Roads, attended the event, which was comprised of survivors and health professionals educating the command on breast cancer awareness.

“The NOLA WOW contingency set out to accomplish three goals with the event,” said Monica Broaden-Weber, NOLA WOW chair. “Our goals were to educate by providing valuable information about breast cancer; communicate by promoting an interactive exchange with the guest speakers and event attendees; and acknowledge by honoring cancer survivors and caretakers.”

Three speakers, Sandra Singleton, Gaynell Searcy and Dr. Tonja Washington-Raphael — all breast cancer survivors — educated attendees on lifestyle choices, self-examination measures and insights into their journeys. The interactive dialogue allowed speakers to reflect on their journeys from diagnosis to recovery, and audience members to ask specific questions relevant to the speakers’ experiences.

“The speakers encompassed diversity — various ages, backgrounds, and experiences — thus promoting a culture of inclusion which allowed all participants to comfortably engage,” said Debroah Wilson, NOLA WOW co-chair.

Singleton, a NIWC Atlantic system administrator information technology specialist with the New Orleans Data Center, is a three-year breast cancer survivor.

“Breast cancer is not just a woman’s illness; therefore, men should increase their awareness on the causes and preventative measures,” said Singleton. “Breast cancer is a treatable illness; however, early detection is key.”

Searcy is a 23-year breast cancer survivor with a passion for encouraging and supporting others in dealing with the disease.

“I have never stated that my cancer is in remission, yet, I inform others that my body has been healed of cancer ... The word ‘remission’ is utilized when one thinks that cancer could return, and I am passionate that it will not return.”

- Gaynell Searcy

Washington-Raphael, an Army National Guard veteran and pharmacist for more than 20 years, is a one-year breast cancer survivor. She is a strong advocate for women having breast cancer susceptibility gene testing, and she recommends researching cancer insurance policies.

“In conjunction with the WOW mission and National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we wanted to provide an educational forum for all genders to discuss and understand the effects of breast cancer through the eyes of actual warriors within the professional industry,” said Wilson.

Broader-Weber said they plan to make the WOW Breast Cancer Awareness and Education brown bag an annual event.

“WOW’s mission is to provide a forum for personal and professional growth, and serve as a catalyst for the success of women and men,” said Broaden-Weber. “WOW is a win-win program that promotes empowerment, leadership, networking and mentorship. I encourage all SPAWARRIORS to support the WOW events held at their command.”
By Maison Piedfort, NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

NIWC Atlantic’s New Professionals (NPs) recently toured the Naval Consolidated Brig Charleston (NCBC), a medium security corrections facility, located among NIWC Atlantic buildings at Joint Base Charleston.

New Professionals — recent college graduates in a NIWC Atlantic program centered around professional development and networking — learned more about their base neighbors and how they serve the community and the military by rehабilitating prisoners.

“It didn’t feel like a prison,” said software developer Brian Bartholf. “It was often difficult to distinguish staff member from prisoner because they are treated with dignity and are offered many ways to build a future for themselves while still incarcerated.”

The brig’s core mission is to ensure the security, good order, discipline and safety of pretrial and post-trial prisoners; retrain and restore the maximum number of personnel to honorable service; and prepare prisoners for return to civilian life as productive citizens.

Vocational training programs at the brig include culinary, baking, welding, woodworking, upholstery, embroidery, barbering and graphic design. Prisoners can take classes on business and life skills, like entrepreneurship, grant writing and non-profit development, assertive communication, relationship building, public speaking and credit sense. Additionally, they may attend college courses through the brig’s partnership with Thomas Edison State University in Trenton, New Jersey.

“We’ve had prisoners leave here with bachelor’s degrees or even master’s degrees. Everyone has the opportunity to take these classes,” said the brig’s Shared Services Officer Daryl Greenway.

Vocational and rehabilitation programs like these help the prisoners have full, productive days.

“Breakfast, work right after, recreational time, and attending their educational programs; it’s a pretty full day,” said Greenway.

“My favorite part of the tour was seeing the different jobs that are offered,” said software developer Marcus Schultz, a New Professional who helped coordinate the NPs’ tour of the brig. “It was cool to hear about the things they made for NIWC Atlantic, like signs and plaques from the sign shop or emblems in the embroidery shop.”

Continued on page 36
NPs help build the community through Habitat

By Maison Piedfort
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

NIWC Atlantic’s newest professionals spent a recent Saturday volunteering to help build a house for Habitat for Humanity in North Charleston.

Approximately 20 New Professionals (NPs), newly graduated professionals recently hired at NIWC Atlantic, and other NIWC Atlantic employees attended the event to help their neighbors and establish cohesiveness within the NP community.

“It’s the first community service-oriented event we’ve had,” said scientist Georgianna Campbell, events coordinator for the New Professional Council Atlantic. “People were really enthusiastic to get involved with their community and give back.”

NPs were given the option to sign up for a morning four-hour shift or an afternoon four-hour shift.

“I spent my Saturday morning volunteering with New Professionals because I love getting to do manual labor and working with my hands to serve others,” said NP Cody Tharpe, an engineer at NIWC Atlantic. “Both my fiancée and I volunteered. There’s no better way to start off the weekend than getting your hands a little dirty for a great cause.”

Another NP, computer engineer Kaitlyn Bub, enjoyed the social aspects of volunteering. “I had never worked with Habitat for Humanity before and heard great things about their volunteer efforts,” said Bub. “I thought it’d be a great way to meet and work with coworkers outside the office.”

NPs spent the day moving large rocks from the back yard so the future owners could mow their lawn safely. They also helped lay down cement blocks for the foundation on another house.

When asked whether they would recommend their colleagues come out and join the next build, both Tharpe and Bub said they would.

“I would absolutely recommend volunteering. I enjoyed the build and had a great time meeting other NIWC Atlantic employees,” said Tharpe.

“Even though we were all covered in mud after volunteering, it is a great way to give to the community and meet people within NIWC Atlantic,” said Bub.

This is the first time NIWC Atlantic NPs have partnered with Charleston Habitat for Humanity, but Campbell hopes it won’t be the last.

“It took a lot of planning and work behind the scenes, Continued on page 37
When asked the purpose of offering tours to organizations like NIWC Atlantic, Greenway explained how inviting the community to tour the brig helps give some perspective. “We’re hoping to provide the community and our neighbors here on Joint Base Charleston some insight on the rehabilitation work we do here,” said Greenway. “We’re helping to bring productive citizens back into society.”

Communicating openly with the community facilitates local partnerships like the one between the brig and SSC Atlantic.

“One cool part of the tour was finding out that NIWC Atlantic partnered with the brig on a portion of its security system,” said Information Systems Technician 2nd class Curtis Neal, who accompanied NPs on the tour.

That afternoon, the team toured USS John Warner (SSN 785) where ship’s company personnel gave an introduction to the submarine and her crew and allowed NPs to walk through spaces such as main control, the crews’ mess, and the torpedo room.

On April 3, the group received a tour of Naval Station Norfolk highlighting many of the station’s tenant commands, which included aviation squadrons, ships, the fleet readiness center and the Air Mobility Command terminal. The group finished up the day with a tour and briefing of USS Dwight D. Eisenhower’s (CVN 69) flight deck and the ship’s bridge.

SHOTs continues to provide tours to NPs and other interested command personnel, with the next event tentatively scheduled for early July 2019.

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**Brig tour**

*Continued from page 34*

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Staff at the brig support reentry into society through services like mental health programs, job search systems, and assistance with finding housing. Support through these services, along with vocational and educational programs, could be the reason the brig retains a low recidivism rate.

“Our recidivism rate is low compared to the national standard,” said Greenway. “We don’t have a lot of prisoners return back to us.”

“They’ve just made a mistake. Every one of them deserves a second chance,” said Greenway. “Our services here at the brig help them make the most of that second chance.”

The brig houses prisoners from all U.S. armed services, containing 400 cells and is rated for 215 prisoners. It was commissioned in 1989 and accepted its first prisoners in January of 1990.
Self defense class promotes resiliency in the workforce

By Maison Piedfort
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

More than 30 NIWC Atlantic employees gathered for a workshop recently to receive hands-on training in self-defense.

Instructors from the University of South Carolina Police Department (USCPD) discussed personal safety techniques that can be used to fend off assailants without weapons.

“Training like this promotes resiliency in the workforce,” said Karen Abernathy, NIWC Atlantic Federal Women’s Special Program Team chair. “I would love for it to be part of our mandatory training, similar to the active shooter training. It was so valuable.”

Abernathy, an integrated product support manager at NIWC Atlantic, organized the event after an employee attended a panel discussion on women in the workplace and expressed her concern that she might be passed over for promotional opportunities because of her fear of traveling alone.

“She didn’t want to come out and say, ‘I’m afraid to travel by myself,’ so she would decline travel opportunities and as a result, didn’t feel like a team player,” said Abernathy.

Participants learned techniques for breaking out of wrist grabs, attacking vulnerable body parts and using their voices to assert dominance.

“I loved practicing the moves and seeing that they actually worked,” said Junior Financial Audit Analyst Jessica Kesler. “I showed my 14-year-old daughter some of the moves.”

Contracting Officer Sherelle Lockhart said USCPD instructors created a safe space for participants to talk about their experiences with assault and unsafe environments.

“The instructors provided a fun, safe environment without losing the seriousness of the topic,” said Lockhart. “It’s important for women to know how to defend themselves against predators, and I feel more confident doing so having attended the workshop.”

Abernathy said her favorite part of the workshop was how caring the instructors were. “The off-duty USC police officers gave up their free time to do this, to empower us to protect ourselves. I could tell they really cared and that they want us to go out into the world and not be a victim.”

When asked if the self-defense workshop will be a training offered regularly in the future, Abernathy said that she would have to gauge employee interest, but that she hoped so.

“Training that reaffirms everyone’s value and reminds us that we have a right to be safe in our own homes, our places of business and wherever we travel can make all the difference,” said Abernathy. “It builds a more empowered workforce.”

Photo by Joe Bullinger

Instructors from the University of South Carolina Police Department show more than 30 NIWC Atlantic employees defensive techniques.

NPs support Habitat for Humanity

Continued from page 35

but I’m hoping this is something we can do at least once a year,” said Campbell.

Campbell, who started planning events for NPs around a year ago, said her original goal was to get NPs meeting each other out of the office.

“It’s easier to get to know someone outside of work rather than in the office,” said Campbell. “There’s definitely a networking aspect to these events.”

Just in the past year, Campbell has coordinated happy hours, bowling nights, trivia nights, Charleston Riverdogs games and other social events for NPs.

Many NPs contacted Campbell after the volunteer day to express their enthusiasm at being given the chance to volunteer and meet other NPs.

“My favorite part of volunteering was hanging out with the other New Professionals,” said Bub. “I have been to some of the events before so I recognized a few faces.”

The Charleston chapter of Habitat for Humanity established itself in 1989 when it joined the affordable housing effort to help rebuild the community after category five Hurricane Hugo.
Local military comptrollers host Fillion

By Diane Owens
NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs

The monthly professional development session of the American Society of Military Comptrollers (ASMC) Charlestowne Chapter was held March 11 at NIWC Atlantic. The session featured a briefing by Rear Adm. Daniel Fillion, Director, Manpower Account Transition Office/Bureau of Naval Personnel Comptroller (OPNAV N10/BUPERS-7).

Naval Consolidated Brig Charleston Comptroller Peggy Crowder, vice-president at large of the local chapter, introduced Fillion, who is a native of Goose Creek, South Carolina.

Fillion thanked audience members for what they do and emphasized the importance of military finance personnel, stating, “Every good idea in the Pentagon is only an idea until you put some money behind it.”

He distributed copies of the book “Lincoln on Leadership: Executive Strategies for Tough Times” by Donald T. Phillips, encouraged attendees to read it and emphasized, “Being a leader means you’ve got to work at it every single day.” He related an anecdote about how his father, a Navy chief, suggested he read the book earlier in his career and while carrying it on the job at the Pentagon one day, Fillion dropped it on the floor. When he reached down to pick it up, he saw shiny shoes and arose to find Gen. Colin Powell, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and U.S. Secretary of State, directly before him. Powell asked him what he was reading and commented that it was a great book.

Fillion urged audience members not to be afraid to say “I don’t know,” to build a great team and rely on team members, and not to be afraid to lead or to fail. “It’s a privilege to lead,” he emphasized.

Fillion closed by briefly reviewing each point of the OPNAV N10/PERS 7 leadership philosophy he developed; a card with the philosophy was distributed to each attendee.

NIWC Atlantic Comptroller Virginia Pitts, president of the Charlestowne Chapter, thanked Fillion for taking time out of his busy Navy Week schedule to share his message.

Pitts briefly discussed the local ASMC chapter and explained the nonprofit organization holds monthly meetings at which speakers present information about financial management-related topics, and members also participate in professional development events and community service activities.

To learn more, see the ASMC National website at https://asmconline.org/ or contact Virginia Pitts, Charlestowne Chapter president or Mel Willis, vice-president.
NAVSEA Commander visits

Vice Adm. Thomas Moore, commander of Naval Sea Systems Command, is flanked by a sea of bicycles bound for Toys for Tots as he speaks to the NIWC Atlantic workforce during a visit Dec. 17. While in Charleston the admiral received a command overview, had a working lunch with NIWC Atlantic New Professionals, toured the Multi-Reconfigurable Training System (MRTS) and learned about the center’s new ship construction and modernization initiatives.

Hermosilla visits, tours NIWC Atlantic

Manuel Hermosilla, SES, Executive Director/Chief Information Officer for U.S. Fleet Cyber Command/U.S. Tenth Fleet (FLTCYBERCOM/C10F), at right, is welcomed on the NIWC Atlantic quarterdeck by NIWC Atlantic Executive Director Chris Miller, left, and Evan Thornton, SPAWAR liaison officer to FLTCYBERCOM/C10F, March 6. Hermosilla was briefed on the Information Warfare Research Project, NIWC Atlantic big data analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning efforts and other initiatives, and toured the data center.
**Rugged Maniacs**

NIWC Atlantic employees showed how teamwork pays off inside and outside the office as they worked together through more than 20 Rugged Maniac obstacles that featured strength, agility and lots of mud. More than 15 NIWC Atlantic employees representing Finance, Logistics and Lifecycle Engineering, Engineering and Program Management took part in the obstacle course March 16, along with family members and friends. The team made it through the course together, helping each other out along the way. “It was a very motivating and emotional day,” said Matt Lane of 62400. “Many of us stayed together throughout. Matt (Rutherford of 63500) really made the day much more special,” he said, adding that he believes Rutherford was the first wheelchair participant in the Charleston event.
The Chronicle Photo Contest

Thank you to all who submitted!

And the winner is...

Icelandic Dogs
December 2018

Jessi Staats
Code 54150

Hit us with your best shot

We are now soliciting submissions from SSC Atlantic employees for next issue’s contest.

Send your best shot to susan.bullinger@navy.mil.
U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina shakes hands with NIWC Atlantic Commanding Officer Capt. Wesley Sanders during the commissioning ceremony for USS Charleston (LCS 18) March 12. Scott delivered the commissioning ceremony’s principal address. More than 5,000 guests gathered to witness the crew of the U.S. Navy’s newest littoral combat ship run aboard their ship and bring her to life. See story on page 30.