

The Mustang Lariat

November 2024
Volume 02

Silver Eagle: CAPT Matthew Arnold

Senior Warrant Officer, Navy (SWON) CW05 Sigfrido "CP" Cruzpena

Head OCM's Corner:

It's a great day to be a Mustang, just like every day, even those tough days! Wherever you may be, take a minute, look around and recognize the work put in by our community members to make our Navy successful. The state of our community remains strong with LDO inventory/OPA at 3288/3513 for 94%, and CWO inventory/OPA at 2083/2250 for 93%.

Our core work for you. *The OCM team here recently submitted the FY-26 LDO/CWO promotion plan for next year's officer promotion boards, and is now wrapping up the FY-26 LDO/CWO accession plan in support of our next in-service procurement board. Super busy, very meaningful work, great team.*

The OCM Team. *CAPT Kenny Allison, Chief of Staff to Chief of Naval Personnel, is my relief and will report FEB/MAR 2025. That's still a minute away, but want to make sure we capture his welcome here in the Lariat as he will arrive between publications. Kenny is absolutely best qualified to take the helm as OCM, and he will no doubt continue to improve on the work we and our predecessors accomplished. Also "new" to the office is Mr. Hector Sandoval, previously referred to as CW05 Hector Sandoval. We welcome his return as he brings a great deal of knowledge and energy to the team. Hector relieved Mr. Parker Dinwiddie, who is still here in BUPERS 31 supporting CHAPS, JAG and CEC OCMs.*

LDO/CWO In-service Procurement Board. *Applications received for this coming board are in the neighborhood of 1500, just as the previous two years. That trend indicates that our leaders are making a good quality cut at the unit level, which results in a higher quality applicant pool. As we release this issue of the Lariat, we are asking for a plus up in accessions over the coming years to get that 93-94% inventory/OPA closer to 100%. If approved, that will increase opportunity for applicants, so it's critical that our CW05s, CDRs and CAPTs continue to lead the appraisal effort.*

On a related note, competitive category BOD members are engaged and have provided some great feedback from the fleet regarding adjustments to the application process, and the OCM team is listening. Look for continued improvements as we have our first revision to OPNAVINST 1420.2 is in the chop chain as I write this article.

Head OCM's Corner Cont:

Parting shots. *As the end of my naval service comes into focus on the surface search and navigation radars, I can't overemphasize how your innovation, resilience, and commitment impact every enterprise across Team Navy. As LDOs/CWOs, we all remember being in a group that called themselves the "backbone of the Navy", whether E-5, Chief's Mess, etc. I don't know about all that, but what I do know is everywhere I've ever been in the Navy, from ET3 to CAPT, there was and is a team of Mustangs carrying a significant load for the team. I'm heartened to see the next group of leaders selected for promotion to CAPT, CDR, CWO5, and on down the line. We truly have some super stars coming up through the ranks. That includes our new accession officers just starting out on their officer careers.*

In closing, I have to acknowledge that in almost four decades, having had the privilege to do some awesome jobs in some of the neatest places, including two tours here in Millington, I've had a front row seat to more than one train wreck, both literally and figuratively. Service to self and avoidance of duty are bad behaviors that are sometimes rewarded by leaders, for whatever reason. We've all seen it. As I stated above, LDOs/CWOs carry a significant part of Team Navy's load. You might be the best shore duty officer ever, but if you're avoiding the tough jobs, then someone is carrying your load. If you can't go do, go home. We need to correct each other as a community when needed. For the doers, movers, shakers, leaders: know your designator, know your competitive category, and when you are called, put like-minded people on your team to ensure the fleeting time we spend at senior grades is time well spent.

Very Respectfully,

CAPT Pat Sutton



CWO OCM Corner:

Greetings from Millington! I hope this finds everyone well and preparing for a great holiday season to close out 2024. The OCM office has been busy with annual promotion planning and the FY26 ISPB accession plan. I am pleased to announce that we have 1519 applications this year, which is very similar to the past few years. Since we are holding steady around the 1520 number, we are confident that 1500 is our new norm.

We had an effective travel/recruiting season. Our visits were a little truncated this year due to RIMPAC and the high operational tempo of the fleet, but we were still able to find time to get out and do some recruiting and mentoring while visiting face-to-face with many great Mustangs.

Our travel schedule for 2025 has yet to be solidified. If you would like to request a visit and can help secure funding for the team, please contact us to start the process. Our resources here are extremely limited, so we must depend on sponsorship to facilitate these visits.

We just finished edits to the OPNAVINST 1420.2A and placed it in routing. By the time the new NAVADMIN for the FY27 ISPB is released, we should have the edits in hard copy. After reviewing our applicants (NOT ELIGIBLE (NE)) list, it is apparent that everyone did not review and follow the new 1420.2. In general, we need to more effectively ensure our applicants understand the language and processes published in the OPNAV 1420.2.

As 2025 soon arrives, we will be saying “Fair Winds and Following Seas” to CAPT Pat Sutton. CAPT Sutton has been a quintessential professional in making sure the viability of the LDO/CWO community stays intact. After 38 years of loyal and devoted service, he has decided to retire and enjoy some time for himself and his family. CAPT, thank you for daily striving to support this community and improving it for the future.

Finally, we have an amazing reputation among most FLAG Officers. Our goal is to ensure that all FLAG officers have the same mindset. Each of us needs to do our best every single day. We are on display and need to be mindful of our actions at all times. Support your fellow Mustangs, grow the Junior Officers, and lead from the front.

Lineal Numbers: *A Navy officer's lineal number is an eight-digit number that indicates their relative seniority on the Active Duty List (ADL). A lineal number remains unchanged unless an officer: Promotes, Transfers to the Naval Reserve, or is court-martialed and loses seniority. But lineal numbers do often change because PERS 8 runs of numbers and they do a re-shuffle. When they do this re-shuffle everyone in that paygrade will be assigned a new number, not just one single body. We often get calls, emails with this concern and they are most of the time thinking they are going to miss a promotion opportunity, which is the furthest thing from the truth. We as the OCM office will ensure the right flow and opportunity for each category is upheld and no officer is disadvantaged. If your lineal number changes, rest assured, it's for an administrative reason and you will stay in the proper order for promotion.*

CWO OCM Corner (cont):

SNAPSHOT: *The SNAPSHOT is a worksheet that is meant to help people understand how they flow into zone based off FLOW POINTS. Everyone needs to know what the flow points are for their upcoming paygrade and do some basic calculation on time. The SNAPSHOT database does not reset at the first of every month, it's not going to change your FLOW POINT to the next paygrade, that's going to stay the same. We have had several members in the last year promote on the 1st of the month and then email us on the 15th of the same month asking for a new snapshot. Well folks, if you just promoted then you can do the basic math on your own to figure out your flow point, DO NOT expect that getting a new SNAPSHOT is going to magically show your time when you'll be in zone for the next paygrade, it will only show you your flow points. If you are getting within a year of being below zone, that's probably about the right time to ask for a SNAPSHOT and start watching the annual December promotion zone message. Additionally, we are having folks that are in paygrades that promoted AFQ to the next paygrade asking for a SNAPSHOT. You won't need a SNAPSHOT until you are competing for control grade promotions. You don't need a SNAPSHOT every year, every 6 months, you should only be using a SNAPSHOT to help when you are getting close to your BZ look.*

Very respectfully,

CWO5 John Cowan

Words from the Silver Eagle!

It is hard to believe that we are in the last months of 2024. It has been a very busy year. The community has experienced many victories and accomplished much. As the year winds down and we prepare to celebrate the holidays I would ask that each of you reflect on your performance throughout the last year and develop realistic goals for the upcoming year. Just as our Navy has applied the Get Real, Get Better principles to improve every facet of its operation, we can apply those same principles to the development of specific plans to enhance both our personal and professional lives. Once those plans are developed then we must execute them to gain the benefits from our effort.

The FY-26 In-Service Procurement board season is in full swing. Your work in helping the community to complete the appraisal boards for the candidates is greatly appreciated. Thank you for continuing to hold the standard and ensuring that only those who are fully qualified are recommended for selection. Hopefully, as part of the board process, you took the time to provide mentorship and guidance to all of the applicants. It especially important for us to provide feedback to those who are not yet competitive for selection so that they can focus their efforts on addressing their deficiencies. In order for us to effectively serve as mentors we must be knowledgeable concerning our program. The OPNAVIINST 1420.2 included significant changes to our process and each one of us needs to understand the new requirements and procedures. We, as a community, cannot afford to rely on “tribal knowledge” when interacting with candidates. We must provide them correct information each and every time. They trust us to guide them and we cannot, in good conscience, betray that trust.

We are also quickly approaching the beginning of the FY-26 promotion board season. Now is the time to verify that your record is up-to-date and contains all of the required documents. Additionally, please ensure that your record does not contain information from another officer that might negatively impact your selection for advancement. It is essential to the selection process that your record accurately reflects your performance. The proper maintenance of your record is absolutely your responsibility. Please place the proper importance on updating and maintaining your record. Additionally, it is importance for each of us to have and maintain mentors to help guide us through our careers. The importance of having well informed, strong and competent mentors cannot be overstated. I would recommend that you have mentors both inside and outside of your designator. Not only do we need to have mentors but we need to be well prepared to serve as mentors to other service members. We can prepare ourselves to serve in that capacity by maintaining our currency both inside our respective fields of expertise and with general Navy policies.

We, as a community, are experiencing an issue with personnel seeking to retire before they report to and complete their milestone tours. We are also having trouble maintaining an inventory of Commanders and Captains sufficient to fill our O5 and O6 billets. LDO/CWO accession and promotion planning is based upon specific attrition planning factors and we are exceeding those numbers. The expectation is that most LDOs and CWOs will serve until they reach their High Year Tenure but that is not what we are seeing and it is having a significant impact on our manning. I understand that life happens, but we need to arrest this trend. This expectation needs to be clearly communicated to our candidates and repeatedly restated to our community members. We are also seeing a trend involving our officers accepting promotion then failing their operational duty screening prior to reporting to their sea duty billet. It is our responsibility to utilize our shore duty assignment to ensure we are physically and mentally prepared to return to sea and support the Navy's mission.

Words from the Silver Eagle!(cont)

It is my honor and pleasure to serve as the Silver Eagle and I look forward to continuing to work for the betterment of our community and our Navy. Thank you for all of your work in support of our community. Our community is getting stronger but there is much work that remains to be done. Sail and Fly Safe.

*Very Respectfully,
CAPT Matt Arnold*



Words from the SWON!

Fellow Mustangs,

I hope this edition of the Lariat finds you all well and as proud as I am to be part of such a selective and accomplished community. We can all feel it, and this has been a busy but very productive year.

Thanks to the efforts of our community managers and your support, our community continues to do great things to enhance our community and our Navy. Our OCM Team is money, from tracking deliverables from BOD initiatives to fine-tuning Discrete Requirements for selection criteria (scratching the surface), they have their thumb on the pulse of our community. Often, they may not receive the gratitude they deserve, so I thank you for all you do!

Congratulations to all my fellow Chief Warrant Officers who were selected by the FY-25 W-3, W-4, and W-5 promotion board, job well done. As a reminder, the key to promotion for our community is "sustained superior performance in a variety of challenging assignments". Therefore, our records must accurately reflect our performance and highlight our accomplishments, or it never happened. We, as officers, are responsible for managing our records and there is plenty of guidance at MyNavy HR on record keeping and selection board training. Do not hesitate to contact your detailer, mentor, or one of us if you have any questions.

Kudos to everyone involved in the FY-26 LDO/CWO ISPB recruiting season. By the word of CWO5 John Cowan, the number of applicants met expectations, and I am sure the quality of applicants will as well. I had the opportunity to meet with 27 candidates this season, review their records, and interview them. The majority were not ready just yet, but I had the pleasure of providing some career development advice that will hopefully guide them on the right path for accession. On the other side of the coin, I am starting to see a trend of fellow Mustangs who choose to leave way earlier than their statutory date, turning down pinnacle tours and or even promotions. While there may be many reasons for their decision, I wonder if there is anything we could have done better to retain some of that talent and corporate knowledge. I firmly believe that we have some of the brightest and hardest working Sailors our Navy has to offer. We cannot afford to continue losing this talent to the civilian sector, especially as we attempt to maintain an advantage over any of our Nation's possible foes.

There is always an appetite for lifelong learning, as there should be. In my opinion, our primary continuous learning plan should be related to our job scope, duties, and responsibilities. For example, as technological advances are made in weapon systems employed by the DOD, technical experts must continue learning to stay abreast of new repair capabilities, applications, etc. Most people agree that knowledge is power only when used, shared, or beneficial to our organization.

Words from the SWON (cont):

Now, for those of you who find yourselves in an all-complete, "fully and best qualified" status and are still thirsty for additional knowledge, there are plenty of opportunities within our Navy. For example, the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) offers graduate programs, masters, and PhDs, both on and off campus, and Distance Learning, and they happen to be a Chief Warrant Officer friendly organization. One of our own, CWO5 Randy Jackson, recently completed a Master of Science in Systems Analytics and earned a Certification in Systems Analysis from Naval Postgraduate School.

Lastly, I would like to thank you all for the leadership by example you display every day, paying attention to the small details and fostering a culture of diligence and precision. The cumulative effect of our community's actions will continue to improve the Navy's efficiency and will produce substantial productivity gains over time. As a key element of the World's best and most capable Navy, the LDO and CWO community is famous for mustering up highly experienced, knowledgeable, and capable technical experts. I am proud to be a member of this group.

*Very respectfully,
CWO5 Sigfrido (CP) Cruzpena*

78XX Note:

It was a productive and rewarding CY-24! Below is a recap of topics worth revisiting and carry over into CY-25.

Appraisal Boards

BZ on a successful completion of the Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) appraisal board season! It's great to see the focus on selecting highly capable senior enlisted personnel who are ready to step into key roles and make a difference. The upcoming In-Service Procurement Board is scheduled to kick off in Millington, TN on January 13, 2025, will surely continue that momentum to select the best of the best.

Billet Conversion

The conversion of technical billets from 1820 to 7821 reflects a strategic shift toward emphasizing technical expertise and leadership skills. By aligning these billets with leaders who are prepared to take charge on Day 1, you're setting up commands for greater operational effectiveness and creating pathways for personnel to make impactful contributions right from the start. Congratulations on these advancements—initiatives like these make a lasting impact on mission readiness and unit cohesion!

Mentorship

As CY-24 draws to a close, it's the perfect time to emphasize the importance of mentoring within and outside our Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) community. Our community relies on a steady pipeline of skilled and motivated officers to support the Navy's mission, and mentoring plays a critical role in cultivating these future leaders. We are all tasked with ensuring that the next generation of CWOs lives up to the standards and values of the Mustang Community, and mentorship is key to achieving this.

Mentoring is a reciprocal, collaborative relationship that supports the growth, learning, and career development of the mentee. It goes beyond simply providing advice—mentoring means guiding someone, helping set realistic expectations, sharing experiences, and shaping long-term professional growth. A good mentor acts as a trusted advisor, one who is candid and offers the constructive feedback that a mentee needs to hear rather than what they might want to hear. This honest guidance is essential for developing resilient, adaptable, and competent leaders who can excel in the Navy's demanding environment.

While there are numerous tools and resources available to support career and community standards, nothing quite matches the value of face-to-face feedback. Each of us has a responsibility to "pay it forward," guiding others to succeed and carry forward the standards of our community. To broaden one's perspectives, it's beneficial for mentees to seek guidance from more than one mentor—both within and outside their specific community.

As mentors, we are called to lead by example, as part of our commitment to the Navy's readiness and warfighting capability. If you haven't already, I encourage everyone to review the CNO's Navigation Plan 2024. This document aligns with our mission by setting a clear direction for the Navy's operational and strategic priorities, reinforcing the importance of leadership and mentorship in maintaining our force's effectiveness and preparedness. Let's commit to building a future that upholds our core values and strengthens our community for years to come.

78XX Note (cont):

The Air Force has brought back the Warrant officer grade, more specifically into the Cyber role. The Army has been working with them to get this off the ground, and the Air Force requested Navy senior CWOs in the field involved to mentor, discuss and guide. You may be asked, especially those in the joint community to provide some insight on how Navy CWOs conduct our mission/functions/tasks. The only stipulation provided by the CWO Community Manager is that we don't provide community management type of information/products/instructions/directives.

The NAVADMIN message with the subject "Notice of Convening FY-26 Active-Duty Navy Promotion Selection Boards" setting the "promotion zone" will be released soon. For In-Zone determination:

If your active-duty lineal number is lower than the number of the junior in-zone on the NAVADMIN message, you will be considered "in-zone" by the promotion board. If your lineal/precedence number is lower than the senior in-zone officer, then you will be considered "above-zone" by the promotion board. If not selected for promotion, above-zone officers continue to be considered for promotion by subsequent boards until discharged or retired.

For active-duty officers, if your number is higher than the junior in-zone but lower the junior eligible you will be viewed as "below-zone" by the upcoming board. Active-duty boards are allowed to select up to ten percent of the officers selected for promotion from below-zone eligible. A below-zone consideration for promotion is a "free" look since non-selection will not incur a failure of selection (or FOS). Depending on varying officer community needs, officers may receive one, two, or occasionally three below zone looks.

IP Officer Listing (IPOL)

Found on milBook (<https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/navy-information-professionals>). Please contact Mr. Joe Sullivan at joseph.c.sullivan.civ@us.navy.mil to update your duty station, PRD, e-mail address, and mentor.

CWO5s and CWO5 (Sel) Contact Information

*CWO5 Bryant Walker, NCTP, bryant.o.walker.mil@us.navy.mil
CWO5 Derek Jefferson, CIWT PCOLA, derek.l.jefferson.mil@us.navy.mil
CWO5 Garcia Gaither, NIOC HI., Garcia.p.gaither.mil@us.navy.mil
CWO5 Roderrick McPhaul, NCTL, roderrick.j.mcphaul.mil@us.navy.mil
CWO5 Jimmy Thompson, NNWC, jimmy.n.thompson.mil@us.navy.mil
CWO5 Dustin Knauff, NSWG1 MCT, dustin.knauff@socom.mil
CWO5 (Sel) Ryan Courton, CNATT PCOLA, ryan.e.courton.mil@us.navy.mil*

Staff 7521 Note:

The standard and expectation is to complete your second sea tour before being fully qualified for CWO5 selection. If you have not met this established criterion by this point in your career recommend communicating the “Why” to the selection board before screening for CWO5. This will inform those charged with selecting the best and fully qualified, an opportunity to consider the provided input. Review the community career progression chart as it is well written and provides guidance that will keep you on track throughout your Food Service Warrant career. Lastly, talk to your mentors to ensure you are tracking with all expectations.

Billets in the Spotlight

Two billets that need to be highlighted in the 7521 community are Navy Support Facility Diego Garcia and Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. Both are unaccompanied, nevertheless extremely important and career enhancing billets. Reach out to CWO5 Jeff Walker, Supply Corps ENS/LDO/CWO Detailer to see if either of these billets can fit into your career path. Great opportunity to discuss how you can grow as an FSO in each billet and discuss follow on opportunities available due to taking a challenging tour.

Recruitment

We have numerous high performing Culinary Specialists in the Food Service community. Continue to tap into the talent pool and bring the most deserving and qualified into the FSO community. Each of you are recruiters and advocates for retention continue to encourage the CSs to reach their maximum potential.

Lifelong Learning

When the opportunity exists to better yourself by learning something meaningful. Seize the opportunity! Ensure you afford this same opportunity to your subordinates. Also provide them learning opportunities to enhance job performance, skills and personal growth to the maximum extent possible. To be the best we must implant continuous learning behaviors in ourselves and everyone that we come across. Learning, innovation, personal and professional development will make your great operations and great Sailors even greater. To conclude, highly recommend pursuing your college degree up to the Master's level if the opportunity exists. Earning a degree(s) will contribute to learning new skills and knowledge to make you more proficient in your role as a Naval Officer. Moreover, the knowledge gained can only improve your marketability when you transition to the civilian job market.

Looking Forward

As we close out 2024, reflect on all the great things that you have accomplished in the past year. Do your part in 2025 to make the community even greater. Keep up the great work! Reach out to myself or your mentor if you have any questions.

*Very Respectfully,
CWO5 Harrison Wright, III*

Staff 6530 Note:

We have instituted a robust mentorship program, which has proved to be a success in preparing our Officers for a successful career. It all starts with our new selectees. Upon notification of their selection into our 653X community, our new selectees, both AC and RC, undergo a 12-month program designed to cover the key topics (operations, doctrine, administration...) to prepare them for their new Naval Officer roles. Additionally, each selectee is assigned two sponsors who assist the selectees with their enlisted close-out, pre-commissioning requirement, and uniform upgrades.

We continue the mentoring continuum with our Junior Officers to prepare them for more challenging positions of leadership and responsibility while offering career advice. For our junior and mid-grade Officers, we are implementing a new mentoring program, which will be led by our four senior Officers. Under this new program, each Senior Officer will routinely engage with 12 Officers, O1 through O4, to help guide/support our Officers throughout their career and help them navigate any personal or professional challenges.

Our 7531 CEC CWOs are in a multi-year plan to sundown the designator; there are two officers remaining, and we anticipate the last two CWOs are anticipated to retire in FY28.

Our efforts to align Officers into LDO/CWO coded billets have been successful. We are on track to reach a 90 percent fill rate, 90 percent for FY25, an increase from 74 percent a few years ago.

We are thrilled to that in FY25, six of our Officers (over 10 percent of the 6530 community) will be in Command leadership positions as either CO, CSOs, or XOs. This is the most 6530 LDOs that we have had in key leadership positions in our history. The achievement of these officers speaks volumes to the trust, confidence, and value the Navy and the Civil Engineer Corps place in the LDO community.

Despite our success, we also have some challenges. Recently, we have seen more officers retire at their service obligation, which has contributed to a gap at the O4 level. However, this will afford great opportunities for some of our senior LTs who will potentially fill LCDR billets over the next couple of years. This will also contribute to great O4 promotion opportunities over the next two/three promotion cycles.

Lastly, we have seen a significant increase in applicants for the upcoming ISPB. Our full-court press from everyone in the community to find their relief has paid off, with an over 100 percent increase in applicants from last year...and the most applicants that we have had in approximately 10 years.

It's a great time to serve in our U.S. Navy, it's even a better time to serve as a 653X LDO! Thank you and your families for what you are doing for our community, our Navy, and our country.

*Very Respectfully,
CAPT Javi Lopez-Martinez*

NSW Note:

Naval Special Warfare (NSW) would like to extend its appreciation to CDR Blickens and his staff at the Limited Duty Officer/Chief Warrant Officer (LDO/CWO) Academy for hosting the NSW CWO Talent Management Panel (TMP) in September 2024. Special recognition goes to CWO5 Jody Olson and CWO4 Herman Fuentez for their exceptional support.

The TMP, a bi-annual gathering of senior NSW CWOs, serves as a forum to address community concerns and manage CWO assignments. Conducting this year's fall panel at the Academy provided a unique and valuable opportunity for NSW representatives to engage with the CWO Community Manager, CWO5 John Cowan and current students, fostering valuable professional development and knowledge sharing between experienced operators and the Navy's emerging leaders. Additionally, this opportunity provided exposure between Naval communities that do not have the occasion to interact on a regular basis. This visit to the Academy was instrumental in building connections and was an excellent experience for the NSW CWO community. Thank you.

*Humbly,
The NSW CWO Council*



Schoolhouse News!



Greetings from the Mustang Academy team in Newport, RI! We would like to begin this Lariat with a bittersweet farewell to two of our finest instructors CWO5 Paul Adams, and CWO4 Herman Fuentes. Paul is retiring after 33 years of service. During his tour, he was selected as the FY-22 NETC, NSTC & OTCN Officer Instructor of the Year and spent his last year as the Director of Officer Candidate School. Herm is retiring after 30 years of service. During his tour, he was selected at the FY-23 NSTC & OTCN Officer Instructor of the Year, and led the Academy through a comprehensive overhaul and pilot of our new curriculum as the former Deputy. Our Mustang Community sincerely thanks you for your incredible contributions!!!

Giving Back to the LDO/CWO/WO Community

The Mustang Academy would like to thank all of our sponsors and drop-in visitors for providing mentorship and leadership this fiscal year to our new accessions. A big shout out to: CAPT H. Hensy, CDR J. Hinkley, CWO5 J. Delamar, CWO5 K. Graham, CWO5 J. Scott, and CWO5 A. Castro. If you are interested in sponsoring a class or stopping by, please contact our Deputy Director, LT Jared Chieco for scheduling.

Outstanding Mustang Students

Bravo Zulu to the following Mustangs that consistently set the example for their peers: CWO2 A. Hill (24070), CWO2 S. Faenza (24080), ENS J. Scott (24090), ENS C. Fie (24100), and CWO2 N. Blankshine (25010) on their selection as the Outstanding Mustang!

This past year, our staff has gathered recommendations for a leadership-reading list tailored for the LDO/CWO/WO community. Thank you to all who recommended over 100 books. The finalized reading list has been approved by Commander, Naval Education and Training Command, RADM Czerewko our Flag Sponsor. They align with the Navy's Core Values, Officer Professional Core Competencies, current LDO/CWO/WO Academy curriculum, and the unique challenges of our communities. The list will be posted and updated as required on the schoolhouse webpage.

LCD/CWO/WO Academy Reading List

1. It's Your Ship, by Michael Abrashoff
2. Managing Transitions, by William and Susan Bridges
3. Creativity Inc., by Ed Catmull and Amy Wallace
4. Good to Great, by Jim C. Collins
5. Emotional Intelligence, by Daniel Goldman
6. What Got You Here Won't Get You There, by Marshall Goldsmith
7. Rules of the Game: Jutland and British Naval Command, by Andrew Gordon
8. Be Quick, But Don't Hurry, by Andrew Hill
9. The Obstacle is the Way, by Ryan Holiday
10. The Five Dysfunctions of a Team, by Patrick Lencioni
11. Call Sign Chaos, by Jim Mattis and Bing West
12. You're Not Listening, by Kate Murphy
13. Lincoln on Leadership, by Donald T. Phillips
14. Start with Why, by Simon Sinek

Future Students

The OTCN website is the definitive source of information:

<https://www.netc.navy.mil/Commands/Naval-Service-Training-Command/OTCN/LDO/>

Please review all information including our Director's Letter. We're consistently updating the website as conditions change. Feel free to network with other selectees on the FY24 & FY25 LDO/CWO Selectees Facebook Group.

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SUB/NUC Power/Diving Officer CC Note:

6200: Nuclear Power (Input from the Nuclear Power OCM, LCDR Michael Kenneday)

It is hard to believe that 2024 is almost over. I have learned a great deal in my first year as the Nuclear OCM. Congratulations to all our FY25 CAPT, CDR, and LCDR selects, and best of luck to those going into the zone for the upcoming FY26 promotion boards. Please contact the PERS-422/NI33E team if you want us to review your record. We will be happy to assist you in any way we can.

We concluded our recruiting efforts for FY26's In-Service Procurement Board, and I want to thank those of you who recruited our reliefs. As opportunities for our Sailors evolve in the Navy and the civilian sector, we must evolve how we sell ourselves to our future community members. I'm looking forward to a great ISPB in February! It is time to start recruiting efforts for the FY27 ISPB now that FY26 is in the rearview. I have sent emails to senior LDO(N)s in all our fleet concentrated areas with a list of names of potential applicants. Those lists are subject to change for our POIs once they determine whether they are CPO board-eligible. We have also reached out to our nuclear recruiters via Microsoft Teams. Participation was pleasant, and a huge appreciation goes out to the NTAG leadership for supporting this inaugural effort. Please ensure that POI with at least 1-year TIG submit a request chit soonest to support taking the CPO exam for LDO purposes if they are not eligible for Chief yet.

Congrats to the following who completed their command and submarine qualifications in 2024!
LDO Command: CDR Alan Young, LCDR Chad Blankenship, LCDR Michael Maynard, LCDR Jeremiah Nelson, LCDR William Ruthart, LCDR John Slattery, LT Alexander Bezaitis
Gold Dolphins (SV2): LTJG Robert Burns, LTJG Robert Byrne, LTJG Nicholas Carriger, LT Michael Ervin, LT Stefan James (2nd prior surface Sailor to qualify), LT Randall Miller, LT Samuel Nigel Sim (3rd prior surface Sailor to qualify).

6230: Submarine Engineering (Input from Designator Leader, CAPT Kurtis Krug)

We continue to support various war-fighting communities, Surface, Submarine, Naval Special Warfare, CNIC, etc., for the readiness of our Naval Forces through leadership, technical proficiency, and experience; keep up the good work! Our designator will see some growth as billets come online to support new submersible and unmanned underwater vehicle programs.

I ask that every one of you mentor at least one or more candidates this year. It is our duty to go and find our reliefs. Mentoring and Counseling happens 7 days a week and 365 days a year. You must be honest, sincere, and to the point with those you mentor. We will undoubtedly fail our shipmates if we say what they want to hear versus what is realistic. Provide them with a path forward to be successful if needed.

When should you review your record? The easy answer is continually after something changes in your career...FITREP, awards, or a change of station. If you don't see the changes reflected promptly, take action, don't wait for a board to try and correct issues. The bottom line is that your record needs to be current, and it's your responsibility.

Pick a senior mentor for career advice. You need to be current on our billets and career paths. Remember, what was a normal path to make Captain five years ago is not the same today. Lastly, use the Detailer as they are a wealth of knowledge in your transition either to your next tour, next promotion, or eventually to retirement.

SUB/NUC Power/Diving Officer CC Note (cont):

6260/7261: Submarine Ordnance/Ordnance Technician (Input from Competitive Category Lead, CAPT Mark Nowalk)

In July, CAPT Price, CAPT Kupyar, and I met with the LCDR Gainey (current Detailer) and LCDR See (outgoing Detailer) to review our entire 6260/7260 Slate. Our focus was to ensure the suitable grades were aligned with the BSC duties and responsibilities of both designators. During the review, we had a secondary goal to see where some LDO billets could be shifted to the 7261 slate to have one more accession at future ISPBs. This work is still in progress as we must ensure we do not negatively impact the quotes for both designators or the future promotion opportunities for our control grades. We will update you on the progress of this review in our routine designator communications (Newsletters). During this review, we also discovered that LDOs are filling CWO billets, which is normal, but it was more alarming to us that many of our CWO billets are currently filled by an LDO. Moving forward, the Detailer will ensure that CWOs fill our CWO billets.

Columbia Class Weapons Officer Update: *LT Gregory Bowman's achievements and selection to be the first Weapons Officer for this new SSBN Class is a testament to our high standards. He will be assigned to the District of Columbia (SSBN-826) after he graduates from the rigorous Submarine Officer Advance Course of instruction. The Columbia Class Weapons Officer billet will be one of our most prestigious assignments, and the screening will be competitive. I urge Ohio Class SSBN AWEPS to continue excelling in your current assignments, as your performance will be critical to your screening for a future Columbia Class Weapons Officer (Department Head) assignment, as well as your success of your follow-on tours if you do not screen for this assignment.*

6280: Submarine Electronics (Input from Designator Leader, CAPT Kirby Hallas)

The issue of losing many LCDRs and CDRs is a Navy-wide problem. The Navy is short, with around 2500 LCDR, CDR, and CAPTs. We took it upon ourselves to provide a survey for us to take and determine possible concerns. Thank all of you who participated in our survey. All the senior 6280 officers will review your input. We will dive into the data and see if we can correct any common issues. We intend to review them and verify them utilizing the 6280 group on Teams. Once we believe to have the solutions, we will bring in PERS. Its complexity will probably need their involvement.

Our community is expanding more into UUVs as our Navy shifts to flex for China. We may be the tip of the spear in providing maintenance and operation solutions in this domain. I see significant growth here due to the cost of a UUV versus a submarine. It is a large-scale problem that will open new billet locations that might provide a solution for our retention problem. We as a community need to open the dialogue amongst ourselves. Do not be shy in talking to one of the senior officers. We will make time to have the discussion. If you are looking at orders, reach out and talk out your ideas. Plan your career two or three tours out. Do not start looking for the next billet one year from your PRD. We want to plan your career based on what you want to achieve.

6290: Submarine Communications (Designator Leader, CDR Ray Cureton)

Inputs from Community leadership noted that applicants waited to set up their boards until late Aug/Sept for the upcoming ISPB and were unprepared for the officer interviews. CDR Cureton is the senior leader in this designator. After a discussion with him, he is pushing for applicants to submit in June/July and have a 6290 mentor to help with packages and board preparations to succeed during the appraisal board.

SUB/NUC Power/Diving Officer CC Note (cont):

NAVADMIN 210/24 "OFF-RAMP GUIDANCE FOR ACTIVE COMPONENT SUBMARINE COMMUNICATIONS DESIGNATOR 6290 LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS" was released in early October. The bottom line, beginning Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 (1 October 2025) 6290 officers in year groups FY16 and later (i.e. 1 October 2015 and later) will not be considered for control grade promotion (O4-O6) and must complete requirements for re-designation into their parent Restricted Line designator, Information Professional (IP)(1820). Contact CDR Cureton or LCDR Gainey with any 6290 designator-specific questions.

7201: Diving Officer (Input from Competitive Category Lead CWO5 Dertilis and CWO5 Potts)

Fresh off the annual recruiting thrust, Diving Officer leadership developed a Diving Program Flyer in collaboration with U.S. Fleet Forces Command's Graphics Support Office to optimize engagement throughout their sole accession source, the Navy Diver rating. Other initiatives recently completed within the 7201 designator include comprehensive refinement of their billet rank structure, a career playbook revision, AQD application as a means of enhancing professional development, and direct support to the OPNAV-chartered Diving and Salvage Executive Steering Committees. In the new calendar year, our Diving Warrants and the Diving CWO Advisory Team and their senior officers are looking forward to updating the 7201 MILPERSMAN article and career ladder, all while leading the Navy Diving Program at every level of the chain of command. Contact CWO5 Dertilis, CWO5 Potts, and other Diving Officer leadership for more information on the Diving Officer Program Flyer.

U.S.C. Title 10 Section 623:

The Secretary concerned shall determine the number of officers in the promotion zone for officers serving in any grade and competitive category from among officers who are eligible for promotion in that grade and competitive category.

CAPT Pat Sutton
Head LDO and CWO Community Manager

CWO5 John Cowan
CWO Community Manager

LCDR Ryan Peter
Asst LDO and CWO Community Manager

Mr. Hector Sandoval
Asst LDO and CWO Community Manager

Our Group Email address: ldocwoocm.fct@navy.mil

Community News and Forums: Stay Connected!

MyNavy HR Website:

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Career-Management/Community-Management/Officer/Active-OCM/LDO-CWO/>



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/10150114349755436>

