

The Mustang Lariat

May 2025
Volume 01

Silver Eagle: CAPT Matthew Arnold

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

Head OCM's Corner:

Hello from the Mid-South! I am CAPT Kenny Allison the new LDO/CWO OCM. It is great to be back in Millington and I am humbled and honored to be provided this enormous opportunity to be your Community Manager. I would like to thank CAPT Pat Sutton for his leadership and dedication during his tour. Over the last three years, he stood the watch looking over and taking care of us, and the future of our great community. CAPT Sutton and the team accomplished a lot of great initiatives on his watch. The work he and the team was able to accomplish is impressive, and made us a better and stronger community. Thank you Pat for all that you did for us, best of luck in retirement!

A quick introduction of myself: I am a 6410 (Administration) and just left my Command tour as Chief of Staff for the Chief of Naval Personnel. I have had the privilege of serving three previous tours in Millington. My last tour in Millington was in 2018-2020 as the Branch Head (Detailer) for the Surface LDO/CWO Community.

My philosophy as the Officer Community Manager:

*1. From our mission and vision statement, the role of the LDO/CWO community is to support the Unrestricted Line (URL), Restricted Line (RL) and Staff enterprises with competent and experienced officers in highly specialized career fields. This charge requires our TEAM to maintain a pool of officers and a supporting framework built upon technical leadership, management, and expertise. In order to meet this challenge, **we will focus** on the following guiding principles:*

*a. Profession of Arms. Our work signifies a commitment to fortify and advance battle force readiness, emphasizing leadership, expertise, ethics, and a strong sense of purpose within the U.S. Navy. **We will accomplish** this by developing the career progression pyramids required to remain effective in a constantly evolving naval environment.*

*b. Talent Management. Our strategy involves attracting, engaging, and retaining valuable individuals within the U.S. Navy. **We will identify** those critical skillsets and experience required to select the best, most fully qualified personnel into the LDO/CWO community; while creating community values and promotion opportunities, emphasizing discipline, courage, and a willingness to sacrifice for the greater good.*

*c. Preservation of Legacy. The word legacy comes from the Latin word "legatum," which means "something appointed by last will." As such, our legacy extends beyond documenting the stories and successes that lay meaning and context to our community. **We will build** upon our rich history by campaigning for new opportunities while improving our community health by leading change agency.*

Head OCM's Corner (Cont):

2. We are the LDO/CWO accession and promotion professionals for the Navy. For us to “win” **we must successfully collaborate** with the Board of Directors, Officer Community Managers, Budget Submitting Office, Detailers, and MyNavy HR to achieve common goals, solve problems, and make the best-informed decisions.

3. I am humbly honored to serve as your Head, Officer Community Manager. I look forward to working with you and I am committed to the advancement of the LDO/CWO community now and in the future. It's a great time to be in the Navy.

Received the below message from CDR Josh Bunte discussing the importance of nature and necessity of culture within the ranks of the LDO/CWO Community. This piece resonates with who we are and what we stand for.

Forged in Integrity: The Cultural Backbone of the Navy's Mustang Corps
By CDR Joshua Wm. Bunte, 6180

In the unforgiving environment of maritime operations, culture is not a luxury—it is a necessity. Nowhere is this more evident than within the U.S. Navy's Limited Duty Officer (LDO) and Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) community, often referred to as the "Mustang Corps." Our leaders, drawn from the enlisted ranks, are more than technical and tactical experts—we are the moral compass embedded deep within the Navy's operational core.

At a time when the Navy must maintain its competitive edge in warfighting and lethality, the importance of character-driven leadership cannot be overstated. The foundation of the Mustang ethos is built on timeless virtues: integrity, trust, work ethic, resiliency, and an unwavering commitment to doing the right thing – especially when no one is watching.

These values are not abstract ideals. They manifest daily in high-stakes decisions, technical and tactical supervision, and the mentorship of the junior Sailors and Officers we are responsible to for mentoring. We are the bridge for Commanding Officers between experience and execution, where trust is not given—it is earned, lived, and expected.

A moral compass in our Mustang ranks ensures that lethality is tempered by judgment, that effectiveness does not come at the cost of ethics, and that every Sailor knows what they are fighting for—not just who they are fighting against. All eyes are on you!

Culture is not built in instruction manuals; it is passed down and forged through action, example, and relentless accountability. The Mustang community carries this torch. This is our culture, and it is our responsibility to imbue this throughout the Fleet.

As our Navy sails into a contested future, it will need leaders of moral character, forged through service, who will make the decisive difference. This is us...your Mustang Corps.

Head OCM's Corner (Cont):

Thank you Josh for providing this valuable piece of professional literacy. To build on this, we must continue to recruit our reliefs on a daily basis and this is done by communication and action. Playing an integral part into a Sailors life or career will entice them to follow your lead. Sailors want to be heard and inspired, and the Mustang Community has been pounding the deckplates all over the country and even at sea to make this happen. Special shout-out to the following commands for taking the lead and heading the charge in presenting the Recruiting Brief to prospective applicants:

USS GERALD R. FORD
USS CARL VINSON
San Diego Mustang Association
Hampton Roads
CNATTU Jacksonville
NSA Mid-South
National Capitol Region, DC
Pax River, MD

During the annual Board of Directors (BOD) meeting there was a suggestion to have a constant feedback loop with the OCM. In an effort to increase the flow of information, we have created the following Competitive Category call schedule to be facilitated by the OCM office. The first round will be completed in a 3 month period and then at the beginning of the year before the next annual BOD meeting. The paygrade indicated for each competitive category is highly encouraged to call in.

*****All calls will take place on the below date 1300 CENTRAL TIME*****
(TEAMS invites will be sent to email distro groups)

June 17	Surface CWO5
June 19	Surface CAPT
July 8	Sub/Nuke CWO5
July 10	Sub/Nuke CAPT
July 22	Aviation CWO5
July 24	Aviation CAPT
Aug 5	Gen Line/Staff CWO5
Aug 7	Gen Line/Staff CAPT
Aug 19	Information Warfare CWO5

Jan 13	Surface CWO5
Jan 15	Surface CAPT
Jan 20	Sub/Nuke CWO5
Jan 22	Sub/Nuke CAPT
Feb 3	Aviation CWO5
Feb 5	Aviation CAPT
Feb 17	Gen Line/Staff CWO5
Feb 19	Gen Line/Staff CAPT
Mar 3	Information Warfare CWO5

Very Respectfully,

CAPT Kenny Allison

CWO OCM Corner:

Another fantastic Board of Directors meeting has come and gone! Given the engaging discussions we had, it is evident we have an amazing group of leaders. This year's prominent theme was that many of us are at the CRITICAL level when it comes to manning. Most of our control grade levels are being taxed rather heavily; we are doing more with less. Voluntary retirements continue to increase, and we are all feeling the crunch these days. For those staying the course, we thank you; for those choosing to depart for a new future, we salute you and thank you for your time served. In our current environment, we need to increase our mentorship at all levels to help those at this juncture in their careers. Mentorship is vital for both new accessions and anyone who might be on the fence about retirement. If you don't have a mentor, I highly encourage you to find one. Choosing a mentor should be a deliberate decision; find someone willing to tell you the truth and not just what you want to hear. Friends cannot always take the place of an honest mentor.

In addition to manning levels, FY25 has been a difficult year for new accessions accepting their commissions. We lost more this past year than in my previous three years in the OCM office. With many career choices available today, we risk losing new accessions to other options. Please support the community by starting a mentor/mentee relationship with a younger officer. Help mold and grow them professionally. Building relationships will have lasting positive effects on our community.

Next, I would like to provide an update on the SNAPSHOT. Since the previous Lariat, we decided to discontinue its use. The SNAPSHOT has been used for purposes beyond what is intended. Moving forward, we will not send them out. If you need assistance navigating the promotion zone message and cannot use the tools provided via the annual NAVADMIN, please email us so we can assist you with a zone projection. We are happy to provide this information over the phone or via email. Additionally, utilize your mentor to learn how to plot out the zones extracted from the Naval Register. Then you can pass your knowledge of this topic to the next person!

Finally, the good stuff! It is applicant season, and the new OPNAVINST 1420.2A is available with a few minor tweaks and corrections. Please review the changes and let us know if you have any questions. After several months of work by several 06/W5s, we have developed our own Interview Appraisal Sheet (NAVPERS 1420/6). We are hopeful this will be an improvement to the process. Please follow the instructions on page 2 of the form. Enclosure (1) of the OPNAVINST 1420.2A was also updated. We should all be aware of the eligibility rules and refrain from applying for non-eligible designators. Refer to enclosure (1) as the guiding document for designator applicability.

Your OCM office is standing by to help answer questions or address concerns you may have this applicant season. Please help us by following the written guidance. Let's have a successful recruiting season!

Very respectfully,

CWO5 John Cowan

Words from the Silver Eagle!

It is difficult to believe that we are more than a third of the way through 2025 already. It has been a very busy year filled with many challenges. We find our Navy again engaged in combat operations in the CENTCOM AOR. The members of our LDO/CWO community are directly contributing to our Navy's performance in the face of enemy action. Please keep them and all of our service deployed service members in your thoughts and prayers. We continue our important task of supporting our Unrestricted Line brothers and sisters in executing the Navy's mission. These operations have driven rapid changes in tactics and procedures and serve to reinforce the need for us to apply the Great Real, Get Better principles to everything we do. We need to learn from our experiences and seek to improve the warfighting capabilities of our Navy each and every day. We must seek to prepare ourselves and our personnel to win decisively in combat while executing everyday tasks.

While mentorship should be part of our daily battle rhythm it is especially important during this time of the year. First, now that the FY-26 In-Service Procurement Board results have been released it is time for us to provide mentorship to both those who were selected as well as those who were not selected. Our mentorship of those who were selected will serve to assist them in their transition. They must understand what to expect in the coming months and years. It is also our chance to reinforce our expectations for them. Those who were not selected this time need our help in understanding where their records may have fallen short and what actions they should take to make themselves more competitive for next year's selection process. Please ensure that you provide accurate and actionable guidance. Secondly, now that promotion board results are being released, we need to provide mentorship to both those selected for promotion and those who were not. Your work in helping the community to complete these vital tasks is greatly appreciated and will provide dividends for program in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Officer Community Manager, CAPT Kenny Allison. I have served with CAPT Allison in the past and the depth and breadth of knowledge that he brings to the table is impressive. We could not be in better hands with CAPT Allison and CWO5 Cowan, our stalwart old-timer, serving in the LDO/CWO OCM shop. The LDO/CWO Board of Directors recently met in Millington to discuss our program and to identify challenges and opportunities for improvement. Overall, our program is in pretty good shape but there are challenges, both short-term and long-term, that need to be addressed. Each of us needs to look for ways to improve our program and communicate them to our respective community leaders for action. Preparation for next year's In-Service Procurement and Statutory Promotion boards has already begun. The respective communities are working to refine the Career Progression and Community Values products. These products, and others, will assist the board members in ensuring they select the best and fully qualified to join and lead our communities.

Words from the Silver Eagle!(cont)

This will be my final submission to the Lariat as the Silver Eagle. Retirement is quickly approaching, and it will be my honor to pass the title of the Silver Eagle to CAPT Mark Nowalk at my retirement ceremony on 18 July 2025. It has been my great honor and privilege to have serve as the Silver Eagle and I ask that you provide CAPT Nowalk the same level of support that you have provided me. My final request from each member of the community is that you continue to execute your duties professionally while taking care of our most precious resource, our Sailors, and that you work every single day for the betterment of our community and our Navy. That is what our Navy needs from us and it is what we owe to our service members, our Navy, and our country. It has been my greatest honor to have served our country for 38 years and now I pass the torch to each and every one of you knowing that our Navy is in your skilled and capable hands. 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 well and as proud as I am to be part of such a dedicated and accomplished community. This new year has been busy and full of changes, but most importantly, it has been productive. The Mustang spirit is alive and well.

As we continue to serve, we should remind ourselves of our commitment to supporting and defending the Constitution of the United States, bearing true faith and allegiance. We swore to discharge our duties faithfully and to execute the orders and regulations entrusted to us without hesitation or evasion. This commitment to duty is fundamental to our roles as officers and leaders. We chose to serve, and choice is one of the most important virtues we possess. So, let's reflect on our commitment to service, professionalism, and leadership by example.

Change is inevitable, particularly within the military. I mean, we all have experienced change throughout our careers. For example, I wish I had a slideshow for all the uniform changes I have experienced since I raised my hand and chose to receive the oath of enlistment nearly 33 years ago. As Mustangs, we are responsible for supporting and implementing policy changes with minimal ripples left behind. Our ability to support and effectively implement these changes will ensure the success of our units and the Navy. We must remain flexible, embrace new policies, adapt to shifting priorities, and adjust to evolving missions. When flexibility becomes challenging, we must learn to approach our tasks fluidly. Rigidity can hinder our mission, and we must be prepared to overcome resistance and evolve as necessary. By doing so, we build a Team that can confidently face any challenge with trust and cohesion.

Speaking of change, I am unsure if this is a systemic issue, but the normalization of deviance seems to be a common theme in our society. Whether it is deviation from regulations, directives, mandates, or standard operating procedures, it is evident that we have a cultural problem. I know times change, but I have yet to read the NAVADMIN or ALNAV stating that we can pick and choose what regulations we will comply with. We all know Sailors will be Sailors, but I believe they are thirsty for mentorship. Connecting with our people is extremely important, even when correcting deficiencies. It is okay to be direct and blunt and leave nothing open to interpretation. Maintaining good order and discipline fosters an environment where everyone is accountable, expectations are clear, and the mission is always the priority. So, let's ensure we are up to date on regulations, squared away, and leading by example.

*Equally important is the commitment to excellence in everything we do. That's why I start every day with the Chief Warrant Officer prayer. I look in the mirror and say: **Shipmate, try not to suck as much today as you did yesterday!** This is my version of continuous process improvement. Learning from everyone I meet and every situation I experience fuels my GAS tank. We know effectiveness heavily depends on our GAS factor, so I want to keep my tank topped off. The rest is about mastering our duties and responsibilities. I often ask myself, **am I as good as I can be, or as good as I am willing to be?** One of my old Warrants used to say: **"If we are not working ourselves out of the job, then we are not doing our job."** It did not make sense in the early 1990s, but it does now.*

Words from the SWON (cont):

To the FY-26 LDO/CWO ISPB selectees, congratulations! Your selection reflects your sustained superior performance and the qualifications that will help lead the Mustang community into the future. As you assume your new role, know that you are joining a Team committed to excellence in leadership, program management, and technical expertise. When you have some free time, read about the “**Dunning-Kruger effect.**” We are the total opposite of that! I look forward to serving with you! For those of you who plan to apply for the FY-27 LDO/CWO ISPB, ensure you are “**worldwide assignable**”, committed to the program and service, and **willing to take any job we need you to do, wherever that may take you.** If unsure, do not apply.

While many applicants cannot wait to join our team, there is a systemic trend of fellow Mustangs leaving earlier than their statutory date, declining pinnacle tours, and even promotions. I understand that balancing our Navy and personal lives is challenging, to say the least. I also understand that our Mustangs are extremely skilled, experienced, and qualified, making them highly marketable to the civilian sector with attractive compensation packages, without moves, deployments, etc. I know; the idea crossed my mind a few years back. We all must follow the best path for each of us. Sometimes, we must weigh the pros and cons and choose the best option based on the answer to the question: “**What is in it for me?**” Once upon a time, when patriotism was at its highest, the answer was easy as Sailors continued to serve, to fulfill their sense of duty, to defend our country and our values. Nevertheless, I firmly believe 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.

Lastly, I want to express my sincere appreciation for the leadership you all demonstrate daily. Your attention to detail and commitment to fostering a culture of precision, accountability, and discipline continue to enhance our Navy's efficiency. The collective efforts of the LDO and CWO communities drive the productivity that makes our Navy the best in the world.

Let's continue to lead by example, supporting the changes ahead and upholding the orders, regulations, and professional conduct that define us as leaders.

Very respectfully,
CWO5 Sigfrido (CP) Cruzpena

78XX Note:

Drawing from "Get Real, Get Better" principles, recent FRTP/OFRP training events reveal a critical deficiency: Khaki technical mentorship and Sailor performance in Information Warfare (IW) are not meeting required standards. This has directly contributed to ships failing specific IW portions of C2X. We require a more proactive and comprehensive approach – one that fosters a culture where technical proficiency is the minimum standard, and every Sailor is empowered to become a Technical Expert. This demands a collective effort, extending beyond the IW community, to cultivate a team of technically superior Sailors ready for any challenge.

Addressing Shortfalls: Resources and Strategies for Improvement

The Challenge: *Our current training and mentorship programs are not consistently producing Sailors who are technically proficient and capable of decisive action in high-pressure situations. This deficiency poses a significant risk to mission success in a contested environment.*

The Solution: *A multi-faceted approach focusing on enhanced mentorship, robust training, a culture of continuous learning, and a commitment to utilizing available resources.*

Actionable Steps:

1. Leverage Local WTI/SME Expertise:

- **Engage Training Commands:** *Training commands are rich with WTI/SME talent eager to contribute. Actively seek their support. Their experience and expertise can significantly accelerate your team's development and provide critical insights.*
- **Proactive Reviews:** *Invite WTIs/SMEs to conduct thorough reviews of your programs and processes. Embrace a culture of humility and be receptive to constructive feedback.*

2. Khaki Leadership: Hands-On Mentorship and Training:

- **Lead from the Front:** *Move beyond delegation. Senior leadership must actively participate in training, demonstrating its importance and reinforcing its relevance to mission success. Your Sailors will value the time and attention, and it reinforces the importance of the training.*
- **Develop Comprehensive In-House Training:** *Recognize that FRTP/OFRP provides a foundation, not a complete solution. Implement a robust, tailored in-house training program to address specific skill gaps and operational requirements. The most successful teams consistently demonstrate a commitment to continuous in-house training.*
- **Embrace Continuous Learning:** *Regardless of rank or experience, remain open to new ideas and perspectives, especially from junior Sailors. Encourage innovative solutions to overcome resource constraints and emerging challenges.*

78XX Note (cont):

- **Provide Honest and Constructive Feedback:** Deliver feedback to both senior and junior personnel that is direct, honest, and addresses specific issues. A willingness to change is essential for improvement. Use tact and diplomacy to foster a receptive environment for growth.
- **Utilize Available Guidance:** Doctrine, OPTASKS, and other guidance documents exist to set standards and processes. Ensure your team actively reads and understands these documents well before F RTP. Integrate them into your training plan; don't let them languish on a shared drive.

3. Foster a Culture of Accountability and Excellence:

- **Challenge Assumptions:** Regularly assess your team's confidence and competence. Ask them directly: "Are you proficient enough to make critical decisions under pressure, when lives are on the line?" A "no" answer is a call to action, authorizing immediate and intensive training.
- **Emphasize the Stakes:** While Fifth Fleet deployed ships have successfully defended against unsophisticated attacks, a high-end fight in Seventh Fleet demands a higher level of technical proficiency. The training, mentorship, and culture you cultivate directly impact the outcome of every engagement.

Conclusion:

The deficiencies identified in recent training events demand immediate and decisive action. We need a culture shift and a sense of urgency to put our ships in the best possible position for success. By prioritizing technical proficiency, fostering a culture of continuous learning, actively engaging in hands-on mentorship, and utilizing available guidance, we can equip our Sailors with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in today's complex and evolving operational environment. The future of our mission depends on it.

Warfare Tactics Instructor Program

IW Warriors, the technical expertise of our CWOs, is vital to the future of our warfare area. Currently, 42 out of 393 CWOs are qualified as WTIs, representing approximately 11% of eligible personnel. As the newest warfare area, a robust cadre of WTI instructors is critical, and CWOs, as our technical SMEs and leaders, are uniquely positioned to lead the way. If you meet the eligibility requirements, we strongly encourage you to apply to become a WTI and shape the future of IW!

Information Warfare Weapons Tactics Instructor (WTI)

The Mustang Community has the unique opportunity to port over their technical expertise to tactical application with integration and holistic knowledge across all IW mission areas

Eligibility Requirements

- USN Active / Reserve. Other services on case-by-case basis
- IW officer O1E, O2-O5, CWO2-CWO4
- IW Senior Enlisted E7-E9
- Information Warfare Officer (IWO) / Enlisted Information Warfare Specialist (EIWS) Qualified

Fully Qualified

- Sustained superior performance
- Briefing and instructing experience
- Traits of WTI ethos

Best Qualified

- Minimum of one tactical tour afloat, or community/service equivalent, with documented skill application
- Holistic understanding and application of IW with tangible results
- Understanding of IW TTP and/or doctrine

WHY WTI?

- 283** CYBERNET GLOBAL CADRE
- 100%** EXTEND FLEET PRESENCE
- 340** OPTIMIZED PRODUCTION
- 300** JOINT PROGRAM

APPLY TODAY!
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR OPPORTUNITY

IW Warfare Tactics Instructor - Apply For IW WTI
NIWAWS Roadshow 2025 Wide Slide Design.pdf

https://intelshare.intelink.gov/sites/NIWDC-Doctrine-CIE/IW_WTI/SitePages/Apply%20For%20IW%20WTI.aspx

Staff 7521 Note:

Strengthening Our 7521 Community and Developing Future Leaders

To ensure the ongoing success of our 7521 community, it's essential that we actively recruit, mentor, and retain the next generation of Chief Warrant Officers (CWOs). Our community's strength relies on attracting a pool of highly qualified candidates to fill the competitive and limited spots available. Achieving this requires a proactive recruitment approach. Rather than waiting for potential Food Service Officers (FSOs) to come to us, we must actively seek out these candidates. Understanding the motivations of today's candidates is crucial, and in this competitive environment, we must refine our strategies to highlight the unique value and distinct advantages of joining our community.

CWO Appraisals

CWO appraisals must be fair, transparent, and specific—avoiding vague assessments. If a candidate is not yet ready for selection, it's crucial to provide clear, actionable feedback and specific steps for improvement. Appraisals should provide an honest and comprehensive review of a candidate's entire service record. Evaluate their history against established standards and ensure the appraisal is written in accordance with those guidelines. It is important to verify that the candidate meets all necessary discrete requirements for the 7521 designator and conduct a thorough review of their PSR and ESR. When preparing for the appraisal board, focus on the candidate's technical expertise, leadership, and understanding of the 7521 designator. While the candidate's appearance and responses during the board matter, the overall evaluation should focus on their complete record and performance.

Supply Corps ENS/LDO/CWO/SUBS Detailer's Corner

There are several new billets currently available within our community, including:

- *COMNAVREG JAPAN – Food Service/Galley Regional Program Director*
- *COMNAVAIRPAC – Food Service Officer*
- *ACU 5 Shore Comp – Food Service*
- *ACU 4 Shore Det – Food Service*
- *Deputy Director, President Food Service – Previously NAVSUPFAC THURMT*

If any of these roles interest you, contact CWO5 Jeff Walker, the Supply Corps ENS/LDO/CWO Detailer, to discuss how these positions align with your career aspirations. Additionally, two key billets in the 7521 community are available at Navy Support Facility Diego Garcia and Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. These are unaccompanied assignments, but they offer significant career development opportunities. If these positions align with your goals, reach out to CWO5 Jeff Walker to explore how they can help you grow as an FSO and open doors to future opportunities.

If you haven't recently visited the LDO & CWO Detailer website, now is a great time to check it out. The site has been updated with important details on the detailing process, including the Mustang Business Rules, which ensure fairness and transparency. A reminder: all new accessions will attend Navy Supply Corps School and Mustang Academy in FY26.

FY25 OP Road Show

The schedule for the FY25 OP Road Show has been released. Take full advantage of this opportunity to engage with OP and gain valuable insights into the future of our community.

Let's continue to support, develop, and grow together as we advance the 7521 community into the future.

Very Respectfully
CWO5 Harrison Wright, III

Staff 6530 Note:

*During April, we kicked off our yearly LDO-Selectee Training and Mentoring Program (TMP). BZ to our 6530 and *6535 Sailors that will participate in our 12-month program:*

Coleman, Joshua R.	Blair, Shane A.	Evenson, Christopher A.	Gernier, Josue
Kearns, Travis R.	Obenga, Nana Y.	Roberts, Sadeke R	Taylor, Austin D.

Bravo Zulu to LCDR Calderon for volunteering to lead our TMP. Also, a BIG Shout-Out to our Subject Matter Experts (SME) who will volunteer their time during the next 12 months to invest into the future of our 6530/6535 Community:

Administration/Record Prep	Training:	Equipment/Maint.:
CAPT Lopez-Martinez	CDR Trumper	LCDR Brown
LT Meyer	LTJG Williams	LT Harris, Jeremy

Operations/OPORDs:	Doctrine:	Leadership:
LT Dean	LCDR Lamb	CDR Walton
LT Reneker	LT Spear	LCDR Calderon

In addition to our TMP SMEs, our newly-selected LDOs will also benefit from the assistance of our Sponsors. Our Sponsors will address any/all questions (enlisted record close out, commissioning physical, commissioning ceremony, Newport training...) our Selectees may have between now and arrival to their first officer assignment. BZ to our Sponsors:

LTJG Marler	LT Salzman	LTJG Chastain
LT Graddon	LTJG Godinez	LTJG Payne
LTJG Dunlop	LTJG Moradeyo	

Via our recurring 6530 Professional Development Synchs (Teams), we have some very exciting topics over the next three months (BZ to LT Nickman for coordinating):

- **May:** We are partnering with two Non-Profit Organizations, American Corporate Partners (providing Military transition support via mentors for Veterans and spouses) and PGA HOPE (promotes veteran mental health and resiliency). Our goal is to continue adding tools to our toolbox to better lead and support our Sailors.
- **July:** Rear Adm. Dean VanderLey, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, will address our LDOs before his retirement. After 34-plus years of service, the Admiral would like to address our group one final time before he transitions.

Staff 6530 Note (cont):

- **Aug:** We are coordinating with FORCM Richard Straney, Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, and FORCM Kevin Nolan, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, to address our LDOs. They will discuss their distinct roles in supporting the Naval Construction Force – Seabees!

We are well underway with our 2025 Recruiting Season - walking the deck-plates looking for our next LDOs! Last year, we increased our applicants by over 140%. This year, we are focused on having the best recruiting season in the past 15-plus years. BZ to CDR Walton for leading this effort!

As we look to the end of the Fiscal Year, we are also working to execute the first 653X Leadership Symposium in over 10 years. At this event, we look forward to bringing all 653X LDOs together to discuss everything that contributes to the development, effectiveness, and sustainment of our Community well into the future! BZ to CDR Trumper for leading this effort!

In closing, I challenge all 653Xs to embrace an "Unlimited" mindset! Never allow the "L" in LDO to define your potential. Continue to push yourselves to develop, evolve, and become the exceptional leaders our Sailors, commands, and Navy expect!

#NECC #NavalConstructionForce #FromBoots2Bars

With Much Respect,

CAPT Javi Lopez-Martinez

Schoolhouse News!



We would like to begin this Lariat with a bittersweet farewell to our Director, CDR Jason Blickens, and instructor CWO3 Raechel Pope. The schoolhouse has gone through many positive changes under CDR Blickens' charge to include a comprehensive overhaul and pilot of our new curriculum and establishing the first LDO/CWO/WO Professional reading list! The Mustang Academy continues the legacy of outstanding professional leadership! Raechel is retiring after 23 years of service. During her tour, she impressively led seven staff members in the delivery of more than 5,720 hours of training during 31 classes. Additionally, she won the 2024 CAPT Joy Bright Hancock Leadership Award in the Limited Duty Officer and Chief Warrant Officer Category. 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 M. Yates, CAPT C. Hamm, CWO5 T. Reid, and CWO5 D. Swann. 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: ENS Loveasia Vann (25020), CWO2 Katherine Newquist (25030), and ENS Cody Sutherland (25040), on their selection as the Outstanding Mustang!

Did you know?

Birth of the Limited Duty Officer

Once WWII ended, there was no path for War Appointed Officers to make their temporary appointments permanent. Creating a new breed of Officer, the Limited Duty Officer, was proposed. Public Law 381 (80th Congress), Circ. Ltr. 174-47 (NDB, 15 Sep) officially established the Limited Duty Officer, effective CY 1948. Current Officers, temporary and permanent, could laterally transfer to LDO and keep current rank (O-1 to O-5). New accessions promoted to Ensign starting 7 Aug 1949. Law allowed for 1,040 LDO appointments in CY 1948.

Some "Chief" Warrant Officer History

Up until 1954, since the creation of CWOs in 1899, CWO stood for "Commissioned Warrant Officer." Also during this time, the title of "Chief" was given to the Officer's specialty in order to differentiate Warrant Officers from Commissioned Warrant Officer.

Examples:

- Warrant Officer – Gunner
- Commissioned Warrant Officer - Chief Gunner

Due to its confusing nature, Sailors often referred to CWOs as Chief Warrant Officers instead of Commissioned Warrant Officers. The CWO community tolerated this difference and it soon became common. In 1954, 83rd Congress passed new career law that officially changed the meaning of CWO from "Commissioned Warrant Officer" to "Chief Warrant Officer." In addition, the title of "Chief" was removed from the Officer's specialty.

Examples:

- Warrant Officer - Gunner

ACADEMY STAFF

CDR Jason Blickens, Director
jason.l.blickens.mil@us.navy.mil

LT Jared Chieco,
Deputy Director
jared.j.chieco.mil@us.navy.mil

LT Andrew Mixon
elberton.a.mixon2.mil@us.navy.mil

CWO5 Jody Olson
jody.a.olson4.mil@us.navy.mil

CWO4 Rafael "Raffy" Azcona
rafael.a.azconasanchez.mil@us.navy.mil

CWO3 Raechel Pope
raechel.n.pope.mil@us.navy.mil

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.

SUB/NUC Power/Diving Officer CC Note:

The Annual LDO/CWO Board of Directors meeting in April was productive for all CC leads. We gave CAPT Allison and CWO5 Cowan a holistic overview of each designator's current goals and initiatives. We also stressed that our Submarine LDO/CWO community faces a critical need for highly qualified officers in each designator, with future programs that are in the process of coming online and others that are planned to be implemented soon. Across the fleet, our URL leadership consistently recognizes Mustangs' invaluable contributions to the wardroom due to your technical ability, command involvement, and, most of all, your wardroom leadership and mentorship to URL Junior Officers.

The bottom line is that increased demand for our specialized skills, combined with planned billet growth and a record high of selected officers in our CC for control grade promotions but not accepting the next higher rank, has created personnel gaps.

While our current inventory stands at 97% for LDOs and 80% for CWOs (as of the April 2025 LDO/CWO Board of Directors meeting), and the OCM is actively increasing accessions to address future needs, recruiting top-tier candidates remains a top priority. Expect to see additional accession billets for the next three years, so we ask each of you to recruit the absolute best talent for our CC; these future officers will lead the next generation of undersea warriors in critical missions, ensuring the Navy maintains its undersea dominance.

With recruiting season fully underway, we encourage you to familiarize yourself with the revised OPNAVINST 1420.2A (dated 16 April 2025), including the new LDO/CWO Interviewer's Appraisal Sheet (Enclosure 2). Additional white space was requested, since the previous revisions were made to an appraisal sheet required by all officer candidate programs. Now that we have an LDO/CWO appraisal sheet where interviewing members can write more about what they saw during the interview and a full review of the candidate's record, the ISPB can glean from your input the officer's final select ability for our program.

Thank you and your families for your continued service and dedication. Please actively seek out and encourage the best and most qualified candidates to join our ranks.

Very respectfully,

*CAPT Mark Nowalk
CWO5 Jim Dertilis*

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 Kenny Allison
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>

