USS Nevada Visits Guam

(U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Victoria Kinney)

The U.S. Navy ballistic-missile submarine USS Nevada (SSBN 733) arrives at Naval Base Guam, Jan. 15. The port visit strengthens cooperation between the United States and allies in the region, demonstrating U.S. capability, flexibility, readiness, and continuing commitment to Indo-Pacific regional security and stability. USS Nevada, homeported in Naval Base Kitsap, Wash., is an Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarine, an undetectable launch platform for submarine-launched ballistic missiles, providing the United States with its most important survivable leg of the nuclear triad.
FORCE PRIORITIES

Warfighting
Our Force is the most lethal and capable undersea force in the world. Our strategic submarines are the most survivable portion of the nuclear triad and protect our nation by deterring any existential threat. Our attack submarines threaten our adversaries and deny them the ability to operate at sea. Maintaining undersea dominance requires our entire Force to work together as one cohesive unit. Our Force includes multiple organizations and agencies including operating bases, maintenance facilities, acquisition and engineering support elements all the way to submarine groups, squadrons, and ultimately the submarine crews.

Admiral Nimitz reflected on our Force following WWII: “It was to the submarine force that I looked to carry the load until our great industrial activity could produce the weapons we so sorely needed to carry the war to the enemy. It is to the everlasting honor and glory of our submarine personnel that they never failed us in our days of peril.”

Today we face new perils. Every day we hold the line far away from the shores of the United States and if necessary, carry the fight to our enemy. We cannot and will not fail.

Focus on what only you can do to support this great endeavor. Support each other, work together as a team, and improve every day. While it will be individual submarines and their crews that engage our adversaries, it is the entire Force that will decide the outcome.

People
People are our most important asset. It is people who design, repair, and operate our submarines. We need to foster a warfighting culture of excellence that enables every one of us to reach our potential.

We will be ruthlessly efficient and practical. We do not have time for pomp and circumstance. Remove barriers and execute to your full authority. Execute mission command. You have my trust and confidence. Call when you need assistance, otherwise execute.

Our people include our families. We are an all-volunteer force. We can share little if anything of what we do with them. We rely on our families more than any force in the Navy since we purposefully cut ourselves off from the rest of the world for prolonged periods and trust them to carry on. We draw our strength from them and we will prioritize them.

Safety
Safety is foundational to our culture and our operations. It is foundational to both warfighting and people. Our proud heritage and profession of arms demands the highest of personal and professional standards. These standards allow us to operate in an unforgiving environment.

Foundational values
Our values in individual rights and freedoms are the core strength of America. Our founders believed in government of the people, by the people, and for the people. We are a diverse and vibrant group of people who hold our ideals self-evident. We will continue to strive to meet this great nation’s ideals as citizen Sailors and ensure its remains the beacon of hope and leadership for the free world.

APEX PREDATORS!
Fellow Submariners,

Like many decades ago in the early stages of World War II, the Submarine Force will be the best force to project power forward and keep our adversaries at bay. You need to understand what that means – it is not ego, it is truth. If our Force fails, we fail the nation. In order to prevent failure, we MUST be ready; we must maintain our advantage in the undersea domain. It is in this area alone where we continue to dominate. However, past successes are not enough. Each passing day the gap between our capability and that of our adversaries narrows. You need to understand, a large part of the advantage we have over our adversaries is you. You must understand, and believe it. Every day you put your uniform on is another day to be better than you were the day before. This is an easy concept to understand, but extraordinarily difficult to execute day in and day out. Every training session, maintenance item and watch needs to be better than the one before. In order to do this, you need to be tough! But what does that mean? Quite simply – tough means this:

-Take a hit and keep fighting.
That hit can be physical or mental, but get back in and fight. Life is full of triumph and tragedy. When the success comes, celebrate it by fully illuminating how that success was achieved. When failure rears its ugly head – use it as a teaching moment and do better. Keep fighting.

-Perform under pressure.
That pressure can come from a multitude of sources: from time constraints of an obligation - to accomplishing high risk evolutions – to actual combat operations. Performing at your peak performance during these situations can and ultimately will determine the outcome. Win or fail.

-Excel in the day in and day out grind.
Unless you are brand new to Submarining, this is where we eat, sleep and breathe. It is easy to get caught up in the routine. We must do better and take advantage of every opportunity to excel in all that we do. Self-assess with a critical eye, embrace the red and be better the next time.

One can’t help but to be in awe of how much our Force accomplishes daily; that is not lost on me. Don’t think for a second that I don’t understand and appreciate the sacrifice and hard work by most of our Force. I wish I could say all of it, but you and I know not everybody is giving it their all. To the Officers, Chiefs and Deck-Plate Warriors getting it done – Thank you. To our Officers, Chiefs and Deck-Plate Warriors that are missing the mark – get help, it is out there I assure you. Submarining is a team sport and we need each other, just as I am sure we need you. No one person is more important than the other, especially in combat. If one fails, we all fail – failure is just not an option; there is too much at stake.

I cannot express how blessed I am with the opportunity to be our Force Master Chief; to see firsthand the amazing amount of talent that resides within the Submarine Force. I am exceptionally proud of the brave and selfless Sailors across our Force that protect our waterways and defend the greatest country in the world. But my pride will not get you home safe. Your training, standards and dedication will. Take everything to the next level, and you will be triumphant. Sail safe shipmates and happy hunting – Apex Predators!
I wish to have no connection with any ship that does not sail fast; for I intend to go in harm’s way. It seems to be a law of nature, inflexible and inexorable, that those who will not risk cannot win. John Paul Jones, 1778.

Congratulations on achieving the highest honor in the Navy... the opportunity to Command. Your selection is based on proven performance and the Navy’s trust and confidence in your ability to develop and contribute to a winning team in accomplishing your command’s mission.

Above all, Command, whether at sea or ashore, is fundamentally about preparing for and leading in combat. Never lose sight of this - seize absolute ownership of your assigned mission and all that goes into its accomplishment. When called upon to sail into harm’s way, you and your team must be ready. Your command’s mission is absolutely essential to the Navy’s ability to fight and win. Imbue this belief in your team.

Command at times will be challenging. The challenges facing our nation and our Navy are expansive in their complexity and scale. Success demands that you hold true to the timeless elements of Command, while you continuously learn and adapt to keep pace with a rapidly changing world. You must remain accountable for both action and inaction as well as the outcomes and learning that make your team better. You are ultimately responsible for every aspect of your command.

Be relentless in building a culture of the highest character...a tough, resilient team that wins. Our nation needs and expects their Navy to remain above reproach, as a force they can admire and rely upon. Take fierce pride in this obligation. As the Commander, you are the example your team reflects. Embody humility, selflessness, and complete transparency. Acknowledge the value of every Sailor and civilian. Take care of them and their families. Embrace diversity of thought and background. Foster inclusion and connectedness. Always do the right thing, especially when it is hard. In doing these things, keep close watch on your own mental, physical, and emotional health, and the health of those you lead.

To those receiving requests for assistance from subordinate commands, embrace your duty to remove barriers for them. Measure yourself on creating these opportunities.
Your integrity and that of your command is the foundation of your warfighting effectiveness. Generate trust through action, both internal and external to your command, and continually assess the level of trust given to you and that you give to others. In the same way, measure the quality and transparency of your communications over these paths. Seek clarity and understanding. Trust and effective communications—absolute necessities in combat—must be developed and perfected in times of peace.

Upon this foundation, keep professional competency as the starting point of every day. We have no room for complacency. Your command must be ready, from basic fundamentals to the most challenging high-end warfighting maneuvers. Provide our adversaries no vulnerability to exploit.

Lead your team in Get Real, Get Better behavior and problem solving - our self-assessing, self-correcting and learning culture. Strategic competition requires every organization to improve, to thoughtfully experiment, to learn and get better every day. Do not be content with the status quo performance you inherit. Know precisely where you and your team are, identify where you need to be, and then develop and execute a plan and learning path to get there. Identify specific barriers constraining performance improvement or mission accomplishment. Elevate to your chain of command, without undue delay, the barriers you cannot resolve internally or through collaboration with your peers. Clear communication about these barriers is a critical exercise of integrity.

Although we are a zero-tolerance Navy on key issues, we are not a zero-defect Navy. My expectation is that you will spend your time in Command doing your absolute best and inspiring other to do the same. Be disciplined in execution and deliberate in assessing and managing risk. Embrace thoughtful risk-taking and experimentation to learn and improve. Value effort-based mistakes as an opportunity to improve, providing both subordinates and subordinate Commanders the latitude to make and learn from their decisions. All Commanders must be ready to think and lead with boldness when the communications cord is cut and they have nothing to rely on but Commander’s Intent, themselves, their equipment, and their team.

You represent our very best and have earned my full faith and confidence. Embrace and enjoy the opportunity before you. Press forward with great passion and conviction. Our collective leadership and actions will set the maritime balance of power for the rest of the century.
The Battle "E" award recognizes a command's outstanding performance and overall readiness to carry out its assigned wartime task. Bravo Zulu on a job well done!
MAJOR COMMAND RESULTS

THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS WERE SELECTED

SUBMARINE MAJOR COMMAND:

JASON D ANDERSON
ALEXANDER T BAERG
BENNETT M CHRISTMAN
MICHAEL R DOLBEC
WILLIAM M DULL
DAVID W FASSEL
ROGER C FERGUSON
MICHAEL D FISHER
ROBERT J GARIS
DAVID W GROGAN
CHRISTOPHER A HEDRICK
GEORGE A HOWELL
ERIC A HUNTER
HEATH E JOHNMeyer
STERLING S JORDAN
KRISTOPHER A LANCASTER
JAMES L LEMBO
NATHAN D LUTHER
JEREMY A MILLER
THOMAS J NIEBEL
MICHAEL A PAISANT
DAVID L PAYNE JR
BENJAMIN C POLLOCK
RANDY R REID (LDO)
RICHARD D SALAZAR
DOUGLAS R SATTLER JR

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR FUTURE SUBMARINE FORCE LEADERS!

APEX PREDATORS!
5 Tips for Tackling Your Quals and Getting Your Dolphins as a JO

Checking in as a junior officer for your first tour aboard a Navy submarine can be daunting, and qualifying to get your dolphins – your Submarine Warfare device – can seem like an impossible challenge when you’re first handed a stack of qualification cards.

I have been extremely fortunate to have been mentored by some great senior officers and enlisted experts, and with their guidance, I was able to apply some best practices to my own qualification process. In this forum, I’d like to share some of those lessons learned with more JOs across the Submarine Force. I hope it helps you tackle your qual cards efficiently – and thoroughly – and get your dolphins.

1. Understand the process.

To qualify submarines, you’ll need subject matter experts to sign off on qualification cards indicating you’ve learned the information necessary to serve different roles onboard. You’ll have to complete the basic officer qualification and, within six months of your arrival at the command, you’ll need to have qualified Engineering Officer of the Watch and then Engineering Duty Officer. Once you’ve qualified Engineering Officer of the Watch and Engineering Duty Officer, you can be added to the watch bill and start contributing to the watch rotation both in-port and at-sea.

In addition to the basic officer and engineering officer qualifications, you’ll also need to qualify Surfaced and Submerged Contact Manager, Surfaced Officer of the Deck, Ship’s Duty Officer and Submerged Officer of the Deck in order to earn your warfare device. It can seem like a lot, but it’s good to understand the whole process, so you can look for opportunities to make progress in different places.

2. Set manageable goals.

On your first day, you’ll see all of those qual cards – and the hundreds of signatures you’ll need to complete them – and it’s easy to become overwhelmed. Not only are you looking at your qual cards, but you are probably also taking over a division that you know nothing about. Break it down into manageable chunks. Set goals for the
day, the week and the month. The idea of getting hundreds of signatures may be overwhelming, but the idea of getting a half page of signatures tomorrow might be manageable. Think about what you can handle in the short term and try to include at least a little bit of qual progress into your daily battle rhythm. Before you realize it, you’ll have knocked out big chunks of your qualifications.

3. Ask for help, be humble.

Your reputation matters. When you first arrive onboard as a junior officer, you’re not expected to know it all, and you don’t. So one of the worst things you can do is act like you’re already an expert, that you’re entitled to special treatment, or that your time is more valuable than the time of the qualified petty officers onboard.

Until you start completing qualifications and can contribute to the watches, you’re ballast. Learn who is qualified to sign which qual cards, schedule appointments to meet with them in advance, and be respectful of their time. Show them that you put effort into trying to understand the subject matter before you ask for their signatures. Do your homework – read the manuals and references ahead of time – and show that you put in the effort to learn the material.

If you blow people off or show up expecting them to read and explain the material to you line-by-line, you can develop a reputation as entitled, and make others onboard hesitant to help you in the weeks ahead. It’s OK if you don’t fully understand something. Get the basics down, and the person giving you the check-out will probably help you close the gaps.

4. Don’t get tunnel vision on a single qual card.

It’s easy to fall into the trap of getting tunnel vision on a single qual card, and ignoring all the others until you get that one qual card complete. But if you do that, you might miss out on convenient opportunities to chip away at other qual cards in the meantime.

You’ll need prac fac – practical factor – signatures from experience getting the ship underway, mooring and man-overboard drills, for instance. But if you’re focused on a different qual card and are not tracking that you’ll need signatures from some of those less-frequent evolutions, you could miss those opportunities and get stuck waiting for them to come around again in the future.

When you first arrive as a junior officer, you may not immediately know what happens frequently or infrequently on the boat, so it’s worth sitting down with a more senior officer and asking what prac fac signatures might be hardest to come by. That way, you can keep an eye out for those evolutions and knock them out when they do happen.

The same can be said for knowledge factors. If the qualified petty officers in engineering aren’t free to meet with you tomorrow, maybe you can go forward and get contact manager signatures instead. That way, you’re making the best use of your time and you’ll already have some signatures in the bag on your next qual cards when you’re done qualifying Engineering Officer of the Watch.

5. The learning doesn’t stop once you’ve qualified.

Once you’re qualified, there’s still a ton of learning to do. You continue to gain valuable experience by standing the watches and talking to senior officers and enlisted about their experiences. And you’re going to make mistakes. But don’t make a mistake because you’re afraid to ask for advice or because you’re afraid to admit you don’t know something.

When you do make a mistake, it’s important how you handle it, how you take ownership, how you learn from it and how you get better.

Then, when the next junior officer checks onboard and wants to know how best to tackle that huge stack of qual cards, you’ll be able to share your experiences and help them be successful.

Lt. Molly Krysil is the Assistant Operations Officer for Commander, Submarine Squadron 12, located at Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, Connecticut. She is a 2016 U.S. Naval Academy graduate and qualified submarines in about seven months aboard USS John Warner (SSN 785), homeported in Norfolk, Virginia.
“It feels great to be home. I really enjoyed the camaraderie building on this deployment, but it has been a long time away from the family, and I’m glad to be back.”

Sailors assigned to the Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarine USS Wyoming (SSBN 742) track an unarmed Trident II D5LE missile during Demonstration and Shakedown Operation (DASO) 31. The primary objective of DASO is to evaluate and demonstrate the readiness of the SSBN’s Strategic Weapon System (SWS) and crew before operational deployment following the submarine’s engineered refueling overhaul. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Aaron Lau/Released)
THE OMBUDSMAN
An Ombudsman is an official representative of the Commanding Officer and plays a vital role in establishing and maintaining current and accurate communication between the command and its family members. This overview will explain the history of the program and discuss the roles of Ombudsmen.

FAQs

What is the Ombudsman Program?
• The Ombudsman Program is a command-operated program, intended to improve communication between the command and a Sailor’s family members. Navy Family Ombudsmen are communication links, information and referral resources, and advocates for command family members.

What are the functions of an Ombudsman?
• An Ombudsman communicates regularly with command families, provides information and outreach to command families, provides appropriate referral resources and acts as an advocate for command families.

Who is the Ombudsman’s point of contact at the command?
• Ombudsmen work for the commanding officer (CO) at a command. Generally, the CO appoints the command master chief (CMC) to be the point of contact (POC) for the ombudsmen. Most COs will meet with their ombudsmen periodically, even if the CMC is the POC.

Who can use Ombudsman services?
• The ombudsman is a vital link between the command and Navy families. In broader terms, the Navy family is made up of all active-duty and selected reserve Navy members, including single and married service members, their family members, the service member’s parents, siblings, and others at the discretion of the commanding officer.

How can families locate or contact their Ombudsmen at their next duty station before their arrival?
• There is a Contact Your Ombudsman feature on the Ombudsman Registry. Click on the location of the global maps where the command is located, then click on the installation name and select your command from the list of commands on that installation. A request form will appear for that command allowing you to fill in your information and questions or comments. You will then be contacted within 24-48 hours.
• If the command you are looking for does not have an ombudsman assigned, or is not listed in the database, you will be contacted by the Ombudsman Registry Administrator, who will provide you with assistance in contacting your command ombudsman. A spouse may also call the local Fleet and Family Support Center and ask the Ombudsman Coordinator to give them the name of the ombudsmen they are seeking.

What is the Ombudsman’s role with the command in a crisis or disaster situation?
• Commanding officers should discuss the ombudsman’s role in crisis response, per OPNAVINST 1750.1G. This should include possible scenarios dealing with the possibility of power outages, cell phone outages and evacuations.

Will you explain what it means about Ombudsmen having no hierarchy?
• The Commanding Officer is responsible for the implementation of the Ombudsman Program at his or her command. They will usually appoint a command POC to work directly with the ombudsman on the day-to-day issues, but will maintain oversight and responsibility. All ombudsmen are to report to their CO (or designee) – not another ombudsman. A larger command may have more than one ombudsman, but they all have equal status regardless of their experience level or time of service and one is not to be appointed as lead or head over another.

What is the procedure for addressing issues that may occur amongst fellow Ombudsmen at the command or within the assembly?
• One of the Ombudsman Code of Ethics is to work within the chain of command. This means that if you identify a situation that you believe needs to be addressed, you should first go to your command POC or CO. You also have the Ombudsman Coordinator as a resource. If you are dissatisfied with the responses you have received, you can go to the Regional Ombudsman Coordinator. The next step would be to ask to have the topic placed on the agenda for the next Regional Advisory Board (ROAB) meeting. From there, if resolution cannot be found, the issue is sent to CNIC HQ for review by the Ombudsman Program Advisory Group (OPAG). This would be a great question to discuss with your CO at your initial interview or meeting so that everyone is clear on procedure.
Machinist's Mate (Nuclear) 2nd Class Enrique Denkfranco reunites with a loved one during the return of the Seawolf-class fast-attack submarine USS Connecticut (SSN 22) to its homeport in Bremerton, Washington, Dec. 21, following a scheduled deployment in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Sophia H. Brooks)

Chief Sonar Technician (Submarine) William Wade reunites with loved ones during the return of the Seawolf-class fast-attack submarine USS Connecticut (SSN 22) to its homeport in Bremerton, Washington, Dec. 21, following a scheduled deployment in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Sophia H. Brooks)

Santa waves to friends and family of the Los Angeles class submarine USS San Juan (SSN 751) as it returns to Submarine Base New London in Groton, Connecticut Friday, Dec. 17, 2021 following normal operations. San Juan is the third United States ship to be named San Juan and was commissioned on Aug. 6, 1988. (U.S. Navy Photo by John Narewski)
SUBMARINE FORCE
Community Survey

To participate in the force-wide community survey, please scan the QR code above or go to: go.max.gov/dod/submarine

Survey ends March 15, 2022
NAVY RESOURCES

NAVY-MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY

QUICK ASSIST LOANS

Active Duty Sailors and Marines may be eligible for a Quick Assist Loan® (QAL) for an unexpected financial situation. There’s no application fee and no appointment required - however please call ahead to verify your eligibility.

You must apply in person and the process takes about 20 minutes. If eligible, you may receive a check for an interest-free loan up to $500.

www.mcrs.org

NAVY-MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY

You’re not supposed to have all the answers. We can help.

If your finances feel out of control, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society can provide assistance with the following:

- Rent or mortgage, utilities, home repairs
- Auto payments, insurance, registration, tolls
- Essential auto repairs
- Disaster Relief
- Budget for Baby® & Breastfeeding workshops
- Visiting Nurses
- Funeral Expenses
- Establishing a new residence, including deposits
- Emergency Travel
- Quick Assist Loans®
- Financial education and Budget preparation
- Medical Expenses
- Military pay shortages and delayed entitlements
- Education Assistance

NMCRS Education Assistance

Applications for the 2022-2023 Academic School Year are now open!

- The NMCRS Education Program offers grants and interest-free loans for undergraduate or master’s degrees at an accredited 2 or 4 year post-secondary, technical or vocational institution in the United States.
- Available for children and spouses of active duty, retired, deceased Sailors and Marines as well as active duty Sailors and Marines enrolled in MECEP or MECAP programs.
- Applications must be submitted by June 3rd, 2022.

Seeking help is a sign of strength, and help is always available.

For confidential, 24/7 support, contact the Military Crisis Line at 800-273-TALK or visit www.veteranscrisisline.net.

Service members have the right to report any suspected privacy violations regarding unauthorized questioning pertaining to psychological health care to the Defense Department Inspector General Hotline at 800-424-9098.

For more information, visit the Defense Suicide Prevention Office at www.suicideoutreach.org.

A product of Navy Suicide Prevention Branch, OPNAV N171. Visit www.suicide.navy.mil for additional Navy Suicide Prevention resources.

For more information, scan the QR code or contact education@nmcrs.org.

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<th>Month</th>
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| **February** | • Black History Month  
               • President’s Day  
               • 15 - O2 FITREP/EVAL |
| **March**   | • Women’s History Month  
               • 3 - Navy Reserve Birthday  
               • 15 - W3-W5, E5 FITREP/EVAL  
               • 25 - Medal of Honor Day  
               • 29 - Vietnam War Veterans Day |
| **April**   | • Sexual Assault Prevention Month  
               • Month of the Military Child  
               • 1 - CPO Birthday  
               • 11 - Submarine Force Birthday  
               • 15 - O5, E9 FITREP/EVAL |
| **May**     | • Military Appreciation Month  
               • Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month  
               • 6 - Spouse Appreciation Day  
               • 8 - Mother’s Day  
               • 15 - O1 FITREP/EVAL  
               • 30 - Memorial Day |
| **June**    | • 4 - Battle of Midway  
               • 14 - Flag Day  
               • 15 - E4 FITREP/EVAL  
               • 19 - Juneteenth/Father’s Day |
| **July**    | • 4 - Independence Day  
               • 15 - O6, E1-E3 FITREP/EVAL  
               • 22 - Korean War Veterans Armistice Day |
| **August**  | • 7 - Purple Heart Day  
               • 10 - DoD Birthday  
               • 26 - Women’s Equality Day |
| **September** | • Suicide Prevention Month  
               • Hispanic Heritage Month  
               • 11 - Patriot’s Day  
               • 14 - Ombudsman Appreciation Day  
               • 15 - W2, E7-E8 FITREP/EVAL  
               • 16 - POW/MIA Recognition Day  
               • 25 - Gold Star Mother’s and Family Day |
| **October** | • Disability Employment Awareness Month  
               • 13 - Navy Birthday  
               • 15 - O4 FITREP/EVAL |
| **November** | • Military Family Month  
               • Warrior Care Month  
               • Native American Heritage Month  
               • 11 - Veterans Day  
               • 15 - E6 FITREP/EVAL |
| **December** | • 7 - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day |

This newsletter is a collection of inputs from around the Submarine Force. If you have suggestions for articles, please contact the Submarine Force Atlantic Public Affairs Office:

COMSUBLANT_NFLT_PAO@navy.mil  
www.sublant.usff.navy.mil