

NAVSEA's Wounded Warrior Program earns 3 Top 50 Awards

NAVY  TOTAL FORCE

Top 50

When NAVSEA received the Disability Matters Workforce Award for the organization's Wounded Warrior recruiting program April 7, the command completed a "hat-trick" of sorts.

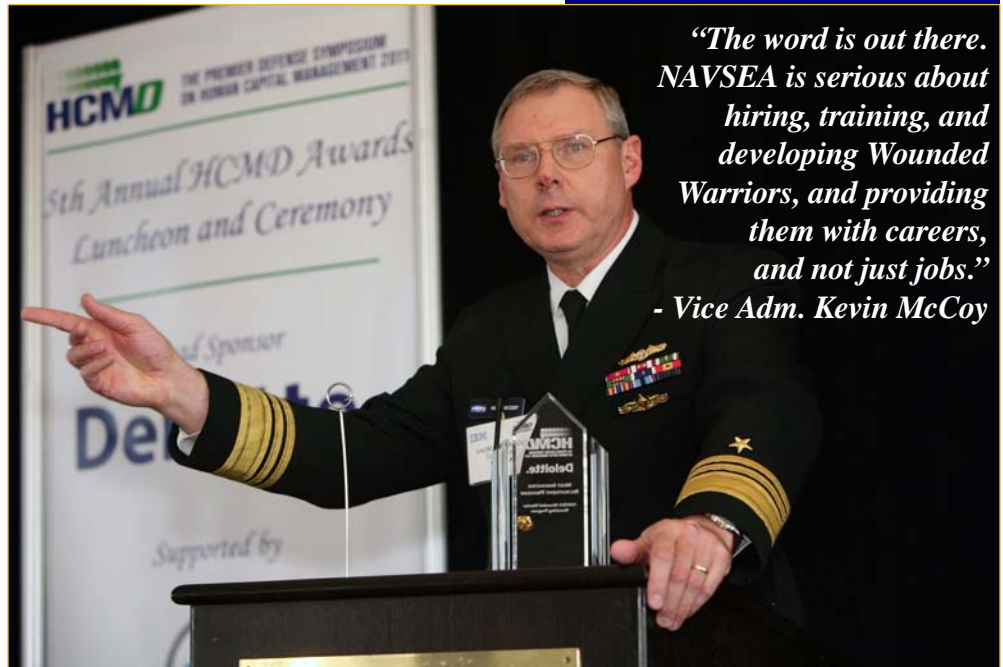
With three employer-of-choice awards in as many months, NAVSEA's has proved that it's serious about meeting the Navy's goal to become a "Top 50" employer—one that values diversity, fosters an inclusive climate, retains talent with competitive benefits, and is recognized as an employer of choice in the United States.

Nowhere is this commitment more evident than in NAVSEA's Wounded Warrior hiring program, recognized as one of the nation's best at recruiting wounded veterans.

In the two years since NAVSEA established its Wounded Warrior program, NAVSEA has successfully developed and executed an enterprise-wide initiative to attract, recruit and retain disabled service members. The Disability Matters award, along with the Human Capital Management for Defense (HCMD) Award received in February, and the ERE Recruiting Excellence Award received in March, are evidence of NAVSEA's commitment to this program.

"Winning three of the top 50 awards not only recognizes the incredible accomplishments our Wounded Warrior program has achieved, it brings the program to the highest possible levels of visibility," said NAVSEA Commander, Vice Adm. Kevin McCoy. "The word is out there. NAVSEA is serious about hiring, training, and developing Wounded Warriors, and providing them with careers, and not just jobs."

When examined separately, the three awards demonstrate NAVSEA's



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- Vice Adm. Kevin McCoy

commitment to Wounded Warriors throughout their careers – from recruitment to retention.

The HCMD award recognizes the most innovative program in attracting top talent, implementing an effective recruitment strategy, and demonstrating improvements in the hiring process.

The National Capital Region Wounded Warrior Hiring and Support Conference, hosted by NAVSEA in February 2010, is one example of how the command set out to improve the recruiting process.

The two-day conference covered strategies to improve the Navy's overall approach and effectiveness in hiring wounded warriors. More than 600 representatives from the military services and federal agencies attended the conference to understand the barriers Wounded Warriors face in seeking post-injury employment, and how to overcome them.

"The conference was an opportunity for NAVSEA to share our success stories, lessons learned, and examine how to cooperate with other agencies to develop a robust, effective network for Wounded Warrior hiring," said Dennis McLaughlin, NAVSEA Wounded Warrior outreach and Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head technical director.

The ERE Recruiting Excellence Award recognized the program for hiring excellence in recruiting and transitioning military members to the civilian work force.

NAVSEA's Wounded Warrior program includes outreach, education, training and hiring initiatives that begin in military treatment facilities and continue through job placement. Through a partnership with Veterans Individual Training and Assistance Link (VITAL) and Defense Acquisition University (DAU), mentors

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A WOUNDED WARRIOR'S STORY

Mark Tippett

Mark Tippett is currently serving as an HR Specialist managing the Engineering Duty Officer Dolphin Program and the Advancement Management Program within the Engineering Duty Officer Plans & Policies office at NAVSEA. Prior to this position, he served for one year as a Security Manager in Program Executive Office (PEO) Aircraft Carriers.

Mark is a 2001 graduate of Radford University. He was commissioned and served for nearly 10 years.

"I felt compelled to join the Army in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks," said Tippett.

While on patrol in Baghdad, the vehicle he was traveling in was struck by explosively formed projectiles. The vehicle was blown in half.

"I thought I was able to escape serious injury due to my position in the turret, but that turned out to be incorrect," said Tippett. "Several days after the incident, I began having debilitating migraines that severely impacted my quality of life."

After a year of suffering migraines and extreme pain, Mark was diagnosed with a Traumatic Brain Injury. Following the diagnosis, he was medically retired and rejoined civilian life.

Mark earned his MBA during his service, and settled into a sales job. He found the work satisfying, but after nearly a year at that position, he received a call from the Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2). AW2 informed Mark about a position



with NAVSEA at the Washington Navy Yard. Mark decided to accept the position as a security manager for PEO Aircraft Carriers. Mark would later move to his current position after one year with NAVSEA.

"In my current capacity in human resources, I have the opportunity to learn how another part of the Navy works while ensuring officers are up-to-date on their training and continue to make strides [toward career milestones]," said Tippett. "I can also achieve my goal of giving back. I am thankful for the opportunity afforded to me to continue to serve the country in new ways."

History, evolution of the Wounded Warrior Program

More and more Wounded Warriors were coming back from battle, yet few were being given the opportunity to thrive in a civilian career. NAVSEA Commander, Vice Adm. Kevin McCoy knew he wanted to help not only in the interest of NAVSEA but in the nation's interest.

"Wounded Warriors need to find good civilian careers, NAVSEA has those careers and we want to help," said McCoy. "I want to lead the way, to formulate a strategic national vision to shape Wounded Warrior hiring and support."

In 2009 McCoy appointed Dennis McLaughlin to support Wounded Warrior initiatives as a collateral duty at NAVSEA headquarters. As a vision for the future was established, McLaughlin brought in a reservist to handle Wounded Warrior issues full time. Cmdr. Dave McAfee was

assigned to lead NAVSEA's Wounded Warrior office.

"When I was hired my number one priority was establishing the way ahead," said McAfee.

McAfee soon realized that NAVSEA had civilian jobs and needed people to fill these jobs and there would be no one better than a Wounded Warrior. McAfee hired Ladeaner Williams, a former Army staff sergeant and Wounded Warrior. The Wounded Warrior office began going to career fairs, veteran hiring events and collecting resumes.

"NAVSEA staff codes would send us their open positions and we would try to match the resumes we had collected with a job that was available at headquarters," said Williams.

See WW History, page 3



"We, as a nation, have no higher obligation than to care for our wounded warriors who have sacrificed so much to serve our nation."

*- The Honorable Robert O. Work
Undersecretary of the Navy*

WW History, from Page 2

Through a desire to broaden efforts, the first Wounded Warrior Hiring and Support Conference was held in February 2010. The purpose of the conference was two-fold. One purpose was to educate others about NAVSEA's successes and the other was to share lessons learned and to inspire potential partners to form their own Wounded Warrior initiatives. NAVSEA had plenty of people who needed jobs that were not always available but partnerships could lead to expanded job outreach. With more than 600 people in attendance, including representatives from the Navy, Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, other government agencies and private companies, partnerships were created, memorandums of agreement were signed and the Navy solidified its lead as the top Wounded Warrior hiring agency.

"The Wounded Warrior program was growing and we were making connections outside of NAVSEA, it was time to share our lessons learned and help others with Wounded Warrior outreach," said McAfee.

2010 continued to signal a colossal shift in NAVSEA's Wounded Warrior hiring efforts. McCoy launched an ambitious enterprise-wide outreach initiative. NAVSEA had a hiring goal and each major activity would have a full-time Wounded Warrior hiring officer. Goals were to show



Vice Adm. Kevin McCoy (right) and Army Brig. Gen. Gary Cheek, commanding general, U.S. Army's Warrior Transition Command, sign a memorandum of agreement Jan. 13, 2010 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center to increase opportunities for meaningful internships and employment for Wounded Warriors with the Navy's largest system command.

active involvement in the community and keep leadership apprised of progress, a program initiative unique to NAVSEA. As a result of these new mandates, NAVSEA crushed the hiring goal by 210 percent.

NAVSEA continued to receive resumes of Wounded Warriors. However, there was not always a good job fit at NAVSEA. The Wounded Warrior program took the initiative to find jobs. To do that, NAVSEA led a vast network of people committed to Wounded Warriors that could give the resources needed so no Wounded Warrior would be turned away.

"At times there is a skills and education gap that needs to be addressed with our hires," said McAfee. "NAVSEA has the resources to eliminate these gaps and get

Wounded Warriors into fulfilling career paths."

Wounded Warriors who need skills and educational support are also finding help through Career Learning and Employment Centers (CLEC). Started in Crane, Ind. and now strategically located across the United States, these centers offer individualized attention and resources to assist Wounded Warriors with education and employment needs after they have been released from the hospital. NAVSEA has also teamed with Veterans Individual Training Assistance Link (VITAL) and Defense Acquisition University to create a contracting career pipeline in military hospitals. An individual development plan is crafted for each Wounded Warrior to receive assistance in training and classes while recovering but prior to gaining employment. They have someone to assist them every step of the way to prepare them for a future career. NAVSEA provides tutors to help assist the Wounded Warriors while they delve into coursework and prepare for the next steps.

For 2011, McCoy has set the goal that NAVSEA will hire 365 Wounded Warriors, one for every day of the calendar year.

"Every day this year, a Wounded Warrior will get a career at NAVSEA," said McCoy. "They will be able to translate their battlefield experience into our work which is supporting the warfighter, a job they know well. It is an honor to have them support the NAVSEA mission."



"That to me is indicative of not just a headquarters or command initiative, but of the entire organization seeing the value of having these great young men and women coming aboard and being part of a truly great enterprise."

***- Adm. Gary Roughead
Chief of Naval Operations***

A WOUNDED WARRIOR'S STORY

Ladeaner Williams

As one of the first Wounded Warriors hired during the current push, Ladeaner Williams has served three offices and continues to find new challenges at NAVSEA.

Williams, a former U.S. Army staff sergeant served for more than 10 years as an HR specialist. Her duties included two tours in Iraq before medically retiring in May 2009. After retirement Williams took the initiative to send resumes to different agencies hoping to find a civilian career. In 2009, NAVSEA was just beginning Wounded Warrior hiring efforts and called Williams right away.

"NAVSEA welcomed me into the workplace and continues to give me the opportunity to learn and the potential to grow personally and professionally," said Williams.

As an HR specialist in the Army, Williams supported work dealing with mortuary affairs, discharge paperwork, personnel matters and career development. At NAVSEA, she parlayed these skills into her first job as an executive assistant in the office of the executive director. This job provided her with confidence and served as a stepping stone to helping other Wounded Warriors.

As the Wounded Warrior program office became more robust, it became clear that it was in need of greater support and what better way to expand then through the help of a Wounded Warrior, Williams was the perfect fit.

"When I first came to the Wounded Warrior office my job was to review resumes and to represent NAVSEA at career fairs and



conferences," said Williams. "Over time my role really became about matching Wounded Warriors and their skill sets to jobs available at NAVSEA, to make a connection between the work they had done as a warfighter and the work they could do as a civilian."

Now a program analyst at NAVSEA's Military Personnel Office, Williams is working on developing a database for the office. "The skills, terminology and program analysis I learned working with Army reservists play an important role in the work I do now," noted Williams.

"It continues to be my honor to support the warfighter, to relate to them and let them know that there is someone on the other side who understands what they are going through."

NAVSEA reaches out early to provide opportunities to Wounded Warriors

NAVSEA is in the business of supporting America's warfighters, and that support doesn't end on the front lines. Through the enterprise's aggressive Wounded Warrior efforts early on in the Military Treatment Facilities (MTF), NAVSEA's

support to service members continues after the fight as well.

Reaching out to recovering service members during medical treatment is one of the reasons NAVSEA has received national recognition, and is looked to by other government agencies as an example of a successful program.

"To the twenty-year-old who's lost a limb or has other significant injuries, this is a major issue in their life," said Cmdr. Dave McAfee. "Most aren't able to continue in their career the way they had envisioned, perhaps their spouse leaves, or they could even be facing financial issues. Having a lot of time on their hands as they're waiting for treatments can be dangerous. It's important to get these men and women paired with a mentor early on, set them up with an individual development plan, provide internships, and keep them focused on working towards that career goal."

For its part, NAVSEA's provided internships, developed a contracting specialist pipeline, encouraged career-specific volunteer tutors, and establish productive collaborations with

See Reaching Out, page 5



*"Our challenge is to harness the power of our warriors."
- Vice Adm. Kevin McCoy
Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command*

Reaching Out, *from Page 4*

other agencies and organizations — all intended to ultimately provide Wounded Warriors with meaningful, permanent employment.

Internships are authorized through the Department of Defense's Operation Warfighter program which was designed to provide meaningful activity outside of the hospital environment and to be a transition vehicle to the civilian workforce. Internships are open to all wounded, ill, and injured service members assigned to a service wounded warrior program. To participate, service member must be medically cleared, and the internship may not interfere with the participant's medical profile, nor adversely affect his or her well-being and recuperation.

The contracting specialist pipeline was developed by NAVSEA's Contracting Directorate (SEA 02). SEA 02 also has a number of volunteers, such as Tia Belton, who tutors students in the pipeline in the evenings at the MTFs.

"We sit down with the students in the program, walk them through the classes they will be taking through Defense Acquisition University (DAU) to get their Level I certification for contracting, explain different types of contracting, and answer their questions," explained Belton. "Because this is a second career field for most, we give them a contracting boot camp that gives them a broad overview of contracting — similar to what we do for our regular interns.

"We have one Wounded Warrior who has completed his Level I DAU online courses," Belton continued. "He came here to headquarters in February to do a shadowing with four of us volunteer tutors. It was great because we were able to take the information we went over with him at the treatment facility, and show him the applications. He's still working with us part time through an internship. Once he's completed his medical treatment and returns home to Jacksonville, Fla., hopefully, he'll be able to put those skills



to use at our Regional Maintenance Center there."

Traditionally, DAU acquisition courses, such as contracting, can be difficult to find placement. However, NAVSEA worked with DAU to accredit the contracting pipeline and to ensure priority placement for Wounded Warrior students.

The contracting pipeline course developed by SEA 02 has been so successful that other agencies are using it as an example for other career fields, such as information technology and medical.

Of course, NAVSEA can only offer a piece of the pie when it comes to Wounded Warrior support. Sharing lessons learned and forming smart, productive partnerships are equally important.

In addition to leveraging potential training pipeline information, NAVSEA signed memorandum of agreements in 2010 with the U.S. Army's Warrior Transition Command and the U.S. Marine Corps Wounded Warriors to support permanent employment opportunities and increased hiring goals.

These agreements established roles and responsibilities for the coordination of OWF as well as permanent employment opportunities for warriors in transition, Army Wounded Warrior veterans, and their spouses or caregivers, as eligible for various federal direct-hiring authorities.

"It's the level of collaboration across agencies, and how these partnerships are

helping to improve transition services across the board for our Wounded Warriors that are so impressive," McAfee concluded. "Everyone wants to do the right thing, and that's what's most exciting about this program."



A WOUNDED WARRIOR'S STORY

Ian Lejeune

Without a strong Wounded Warrior program, even the most highly trained veterans can fall through the cracks of the hiring process.

One such veteran is former Marine Staff Sergeant Ian Lejeune, a trained telecommunications technician who was injured one month into his second combat tour in Iraq — the third combat tour of his career.

While stationed at Al Takatam airfield, roughly seven miles from Fallujah, Lejeune was seriously injured when a 9-foot, 122mm rocket shot through the roof of his plywood living quarters.

“I was in my [living quarters], and I was dead asleep,” Lejeune recalled. “The round cut right through my roof, impacted about 15 feet away from me and disintegrated the building. My friend Bill was in there, too. Luckily, he managed to just get out with just a couple pieces of shrapnel in his arm. I had to get dragged out.”

The attack left Lejeune with significant injuries. Open fractures on his right and left legs, a severed Achilles tendon, 2nd and 3rd degree burns on 20 percent of his body, too many cuts and lacerations to count. He would eventually receive 13 surgeries to repair the damage, and spend nearly three months in a burn ward at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. It would take even longer to learn to walk again. Due to his injuries, Lejeune was medically retired from the Marine Corp in May 29, 2006 after serving for eight years.

Relying on his eight years of military telecommunications experience, Lejeune took a private sector job in New Hampshire



to be close to his family, all the while focusing on his ultimate goal, to rejoin the Defense Department as a civilian employee — a goal that took him a staggering six years to accomplish.

“I had been applying for federal employment since six months before I was medically retired” said Lejeune. “There so many are things people don’t know about working through the HR process. Even though I claimed a purple heart, I would have been better off submitting a VA rating letter. And that was something I didn’t know that until I was contacted by the Wounded Warrior office.”

Lejeune was originally contacted by the Wounded Warrior office at the Naval Air Systems Command. Though Lejeune says he would have taken any Defense Department job offered to him, he strongly wished to stay in New Hampshire to avoid having to relocate his wife and four young children.

Because NAVAIR didn’t have any openings in New Hampshire, they put Lejeune in touch with NAVSEA’s Wounded Warrior Program lead, Cmdr. Dave McAfee.

“Those guys took really good care of me,” said Lejeune. “They put me in touch with the local Wounded Warrior rep. at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. It was pretty rapid turnaround from when I started talking to them to when I reported to work, six to eight weeks at most. I think that’s a testament to how seriously they take this program.”

Because of his 12 years of experience, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard hired Lejeune into the IT Policy and Admin Department on March 28, where he now works maintaining and ordering computer equipment for the command.

“The military gave me some incredible IT experience. It may not align 100 percent, but being savvy in that area, it was easy for me to pick things up when I started working here.”

Because of NAVSEA’s strong commitment to Wounded Warrior hiring, Lejeune has been able to finally do something he’s never been able to do before — see his kids get home from school.

“I love my job. I couldn’t be happier,” he said. “In my previous civilian jobs, I just wasn’t happy to wake up in the morning and go to work. But now, I get up at 4:30 in the morning to get here, and I get to leave and see my kids get off the bus. I couldn’t do that before. I’ve never been able to do that before.”



“The key to what we want to achieve, to successfully hire wounded warriors, is to create solid partnerships and have hard measurable goals.”

***- The Honorable Juan M. Garcia, III
Assistant Secretary of the Navy
(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)***

Career Learning and Employment Centers provide key support to WW transitions

In November 2010, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) Juan Garcia recognized NAVSEA for its commitment to providing meaningful employment to disabled service members returning to civilian life. The award acknowledged NAVSEA's success in hiring 287 disabled veterans and Wounded Warriors in fiscal year 2010. For many, this would not have been possible without the help of Career Learning and Employment Centers (CLECs).

Career Learning and Employment Centers help disabled separated service members get the resources (counseling, education, employment services, training) needed so they can become employable and self-supporting. The centers are the result of a partnership with federal, state, private, and philanthropic entities. The contributions from these organizations, coupled with NAVSEA employment opportunities provide comprehensive job assistance to veterans.

NAVSEA's NSWC Crane, is the site of the first CLEC, now known as the Career Learning and Employment Center – Heartland Center for veterans with disabilities.

"We're caseworkers on steroids. When



we get a candidate from a CLEC we do an assessment we perform a review on a servicemember's background, training, expectations, and what do they want to do," said Jim Schonberger, executive director of Career Learning and Employment Center – Heartland Center for veterans with disabilities. Then we knit together available veterans, DoD, and state programs to lay out a plan and help get

them to their desired end state."

If a program can't help a service member, endowment dollars supplement needed support. Also, because of their injuries, some veterans can't navigate the bureaucracy to get the needed help, Schonberger added.

"We use several venues from career fairs to Wounded Warrior battalions at military bases to reaching out to local veterans and disabled veterans employment representatives that also help veterans with employment as sources for most referrals," said Schonberger.

After a CLEC caseworker identifies a veteran, they use standards established by the Department of Veterans Affairs to screen the veteran's application. Representatives from a CLEC then meet one-on-one with potential candidates to assess several criteria, including: aspirations family situation, interest in re-location, financial situation, spousal employment support, and on a case-by-case basis financial grants. The goal is to get the veteran self-sufficient as soon as possible.



"We have many organizations represented here and many talented people. But we need more than talent - we need to create a system that allows each and every warrior access to our programs and offer them the opportunity to choose to continue to pursue a career of service."

- Vice Adm. Kevin McCoy, Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command

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A WOUNDED WARRIOR'S STORY

Cherri Gaugler

For Cherri Gaugler, the Career Learning and Employment Center (CLEC) – Heartland, in Crane, Ind. was a “gift from God.”

Ten years after retiring from the U. S. Air Force with a 10 percent permanent disability rating, she needed help. “I was not exactly helpless, but sometimes you can feel overwhelmed when you’re dealing with something new or different,” she said. “And they made me feel like I was worth it.”

Helpless certainly does not describe Gaugler. She spent 20 years maintaining hydraulics and electronics systems for the C-130 Hercules turboprop transport aircraft.

During her military career in Alaska, she sustained a lateral bone break in her right leg. Unfortunately, she was unable to get immediate and proper medical attention, resulting in her foot permanently moving out of position.

But she did not let her disability hold her back from successfully returning to civilian life.

After working at Lowe’s and an automotive plant, she decided to work a seasonal job at H&R Block. She really enjoyed doing taxes and found the work intellectually interesting, and gratifying because she was helping people.

Her positive experience led her to study accounting at Ivy Tech Junior College, where she regularly made the dean’s list.

By the time she graduated, however, the recession made starting a new career difficult.

She got a glimmer of hope when she heard about CLEC at church from a friend who said it would give her the best chance at getting a job. Her military disability qualified her to get assistance from CLEC.



“I can do anything I set my mind to,” she said. “I just need a job.”

CLEC was a gift from God according to Gaugler because “they helped me with everything,” she said. “They seemed to have all the answers and knew who to talk to.”

After providing information, CLEC case workers began by helping her to writing an effective resume that highlighted her skills and experience. CLEC helped her secure a position at NSWC Crane’s finance department. Case workers then followed up with her to ensure her new career and living situation was doing well.

“They are very conscientious,” she said. “They didn’t say, ‘Well there she goes, hope she makes it.’ I felt they cared for me.”

CLEC, *from Page 7*

The CLECs also work with military treatment facilities before a service member separates from active duty.

“We’re looking to them to identify potential candidates on active duty for our program with student trainee positions or line them up with a position back-home,” said Schonberger.

Since 2007, CLEC-Heartland has provided the service of matching separated service members to available resources. By the end of the two-year pilot, 40 people found jobs or now serve as student trainees. In 2010, the initiative expanded to include other tenant activities, contractors supporting NSWC Crane, an office in

Indianapolis to be more accessible to people in an urban area, and to lay the foundation to clone CLECs across the country.

“We realize that we needed to expand our reach to better support service members,” said Schonberger.

NAVSEA is now working to expand the CLEC model to other strategic locations throughout America. While the centers started as a Navy initiative, they will transition to a current DoD program called the Education and Employment Initiative (E2i) for Wounded Warriors. With DoD sponsorship and funding, the CLEC centers will become E2i Centers. The centers will be located near military concentration areas so they can reach as many former service members as possible. The long term-vision is for the centers to

become public-private 501 c3 non-profit organizations like CLEC-Heartland, providing a wider range of resources to support veterans.

“We’re working with the Office of Secretary of Defense to expand the CLEC model to six key regions across the nation by the end of fiscal year 2011. In fiscal year 2012, we hope to expand to additional strategic sites,” said Gretchen Lizza, NAVSEA national manager for E2i expansion.

With NAVSEA support, the vision of a few pioneers in Crane, Ind., is paving the way for a national program to support and employ our nation’s Wounded Warriors,” said Cmdr. David R. McAfee, NAVSEA Wounded Warrior enterprise program manager.

NAVSEA benefits from Wounded Warriors' experience



With the addition of more than 280 wounded veterans across the NAVSEA enterprise in 2010, this command has made a commitment to those who have served our nation in uniform.

And that commitment is already reaping huge dividends. These wounded warriors are leveraging their unique skills, insight and experiences to provide critical — sometimes lifesaving — support to those still serving.

One such NAVSEA wounded warrior is using his battlefield experience to improve the quality of technical support provided to deployed troops.

Ross Stadskev, a former Army infantry officer, joined Naval Surface

Warfare Center Dahlgren after recovering from injuries received from an improvised explosive device. Now a senior field support representative for Dahlgren's irregular warfare office, Stadskev has deployed overseas three times — voluntarily — to directly support warfighters operating with NAVSEA-developed systems.

“That’s ultimately where the fight is at,” said Stadskev. “I think it’s important to have people who go over to support the various technologies we work on to ensure the war fighter is getting all they can out of those technologies.”

Another wounded warrior is helping NAVSEA in a different, though no less important way. Former U.S. Marine Armando Ontiveros, now a security

specialist at Naval Surface Warfare Center Port Hueneme, voluntarily led an initiative to reduce excess IT equipment at the command; an initiative that will save the Navy approximately \$20,000 per year.

“People had been piling up unused computers and IT equipment next to my cubicle. They were assets that no one was using, but we were still paying for,” said Ontiveros, who was injured during a suicide bomb attack during his second combat tour to Iraq. “So I took the initiative to round those up, along with all the other equipment people weren’t using, and returned them to IT.”

Ontiveros’ supervisor said that this is exactly the type of initiative he’s come to expect from wounded warriors like Ontiveros.

“From a wounded warrior, it really doesn’t surprise me,” said NSWC Port Hueneme Security and Safety Manager David Haugland. “Wounded Warriors are overachievers from the start. It’s part of that military mindset. If they have a job to do, they’re like a pitbull hanging from a tire.”



“[During] my last visit to the NAVSEA headquarters, I had the opportunity to meet some of the Wounded Warriors who have been hired, and the passion that they have, the sense of belonging that exists and the sense that they are a vital contributing key member of the team are just overwhelming.”

- Adm. Gary Roughead, Chief of Naval Operations



A WOUNDED WARRIOR'S STORY

Ross Stadskev

One of hundreds of wounded veterans currently working for the Naval Sea Systems Command, former U.S. Army Capt. Ross Stadskev has already distinguished himself since joining the Asymmetric Defense Systems Department at Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren in March 2009.

Stadskev, a Dahlgren field support representative, has already voluntarily deployed three times in his short NAVSEA career, each time in support of combat operations in Afghanistan.

“To me, it’s just doing a very small part,” said Stadskev. “Those guys are the ones sacrificing, putting themselves in harm’s way. So, to be able to go over and provide just a little extra support to them is well worth it.”

This type of service is nothing new to Stadskev, who enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve in 1998 before eventually transferring to the Minnesota National Guard after two years. Following his Guard service, Stadskev was commissioned a second lieutenant through the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at North Dakota State University.

As an Army infantry officer, Stadskev deployed to Iraq where he led more than 50 combat operations in Baghdad, leading tactical human intelligence teams, psychological operations teams, Air Force Security Forces, and Iraqi Security Forces. It was during this tour when Stadskev was injured by a remote-detonated IED, leading to his medical retirement from the Army.

“When I medically retired from the Army, I felt it was a little premature,” said Stadskev. “I wanted to stay in and retire after



doing 20 years. Medical retirement wasn’t exactly what I had planned on.”

Fortunately, while recovering from his injuries, Dahlgren recruited Stadskev through Operation Warfighter, a temporary assignment program developed by the Department of Defense for service members who are convalescing at military treatment facilities.

“I wasn’t even aware that my resume was sent to Dahlgren,” recalls Stadskev. “I got a call from them saying that they had received it and were interested in setting up an interview. It really came as a surprise.”

It was a surprise that has already benefitted both Stadskev and those still deployed overseas.

“I’ve really enjoyed NAVESA,” he said. “They’ve given me phenomenal opportunities to continue to support the war fighter. Being able to continue to be in this environment and continue to support the war fighter is what I was looking for. I’m very grateful and I feel very fortunate for the opportunities NAVSEA has provided.”



“Thank you [NAVSEA] for blowing through expectations, for setting the bar for the rest of America, and for doing the heavy-lifting of true patriotism.”

*- The Honorable Juan M. Garcia, III
Assistant Secretary of the Navy
(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)*

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work with wounded service members during their recuperation and rehabilitation to provide education and training for specific career paths. NAVSEA's work with Learning and Employment Centers to provide these same resources to those service members already separated from service.

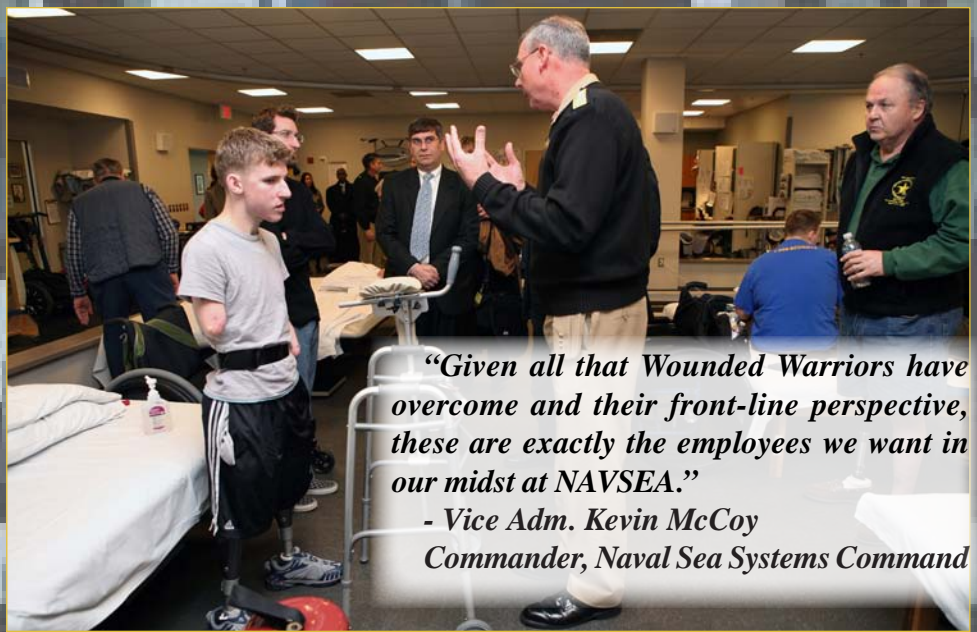
"The LECs and our VITAL/DAU partnership are great opportunities for both NAVSEA and wounded veterans," said Cmdr. Dave McAfee, NAVSEA Wounded Warrior program manager. "With NAVSEA's job diversity and geographic reach, veterans have employment opportunities with a wide variety of skills and careers, while NAVSEA grows its work force. It's a win-win situation."

The most recent honor, the Disability Matters Workforce award, recognized NAVSEA for its innovation in workforce management, learning and development, diversity, and work/life balance initiatives that support disabled employees.

"Given all that Wounded Warriors have overcome and their front-line perspective, these are exactly the employees we want in our midst at NAVSEA," said McCoy. "Our goal is to ensure Wounded Warriors have every opportunity and all the support they need to transition from military service to civilian service."

In 2010, NAVSEA embarked on an ambitious outreach effort, assigning hiring goals for each of its major activities, along with full time Wounded Warrior hiring officers. The command exceeded its hiring goals by 210 percent. The goal for 2011 is to hire 365 Wounded Warriors — one for every day of the year. As of the publication date of this issue NAVSEA has reached 35 percent of that goal, and shows no sign of slowing down.

For more information on the Navy's Top 50 initiative visit <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/organization/bupers/Top50/Pages/default.aspx>.



"Given all that Wounded Warriors have overcome and their front-line perspective, these are exactly the employees we want in our midst at NAVSEA."

*- Vice Adm. Kevin McCoy
Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command*

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