

## LGBT Pride Month Celebrated at Washington Navy Yard

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By Ed Wright, Navy Installations Command

A multi-command event for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride month, hosted by Navy Installations Command (NIC), was held at the Washington Navy Yard on June 18.

Employees from tenant commands aboard the Washington Navy Yard, including Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Naval Sea Systems Command, Office of Judge Advocate General and Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling gathered at the NIC headquarters to listen to remarks by Chaplain (Capt.) Jon Cutler, a Rabbi, the guest speaker for the event.



Capt. Jon Cutler, Command Chaplain, Naval Sea Systems Command gives a speech during a multi-command event for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride month, hosted by Navy Installations Command.

“What the military has done by allowing LGB people and hopefully transgender people to serve openly will ensure that succeeding generations of service members will be able to serve and live honest and authentic lives,” said Cutler. “They will never live in fear, isolation, and shame, and most importantly, never have to be dishonest about who they are. The Navy core values of honor, courage and commitment can finally apply to all.”

Cutler spoke about his experience in the military as a gay man and said that he had hoped to see a time when he and many others would be judged by their merits and not who they loved. He emphasized several points recently made by Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, during an LGBT ceremony held at the Pentagon on June 9, which focused on the progress made by the defense department to recognize contributions by all who serve their country.

In his Pentagon remarks Carter said, “Four years after the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” – following years and years of gay and lesbian service members having to hide who they are – today we take pride in how they’re free to serve their country openly. Because we believe in getting to a place where no one serves in silence, and where we treat all our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines with the dignity, and the respect, that they deserve.”

Calling the changes to the law a miracle, Cutler said that after 30 years he is able to declare, without any shame, who he is. Speaking of the crafting of the Declaration of Independence 239 years ago in the city of his birth, Philadelphia, Cutler said, “The miracle that the founding fathers created was a process to root out injustices and elevate human worth and dignity...Freedom, fairness, diversity and inclusion are, indeed, part of our national character.”

The LGBT celebration marked the first event hosted by NIC headquarters which included guests from all tenant commands located at the historic Washington Navy Yard.

Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) is responsible for 70 installations under 11 regions with more than 52,000 military and civilian personnel to sustain the fleet, enable the fighter, and support Navy families worldwide. For more information about CNIC, visit [www.cnic.navy.mil](http://www.cnic.navy.mil).