

2012

President's Forum

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PRESIDENT'S FORUM



All things are ready, if our minds be so.

SHAKESPEARE, *HENRY V*, ACT 4, SCENE 3

I HAVE BEEN THE PRESIDENT FOR A FULL YEAR NOW, and what a wonderful year it has been.

They say the best time for war colleges is after wars have ended and when budgets are headed downward. It certainly feels true in Newport.

There is an urgency to innovate. Under the leadership of Fleet Forces Command, the Navy and Marine Corps “got the band back together” and executed an ambitious amphibious exercise, BOLD ALLIGATOR. The last issue of the *Naval War College Review* had a superb article by our Professor Don Chisholm entitled “A Remarkable Military Feat: The Hungnam Redeployment, December 1950.”

The Navy Warfare Development Command, now completely relocated from Newport to Norfolk and in an amazing new building, has not only maintained its natural relationship with Newport but has begun to build strong relationships around the world in the fleets. Our War Gaming Department maintains a full calendar in Newport but is a frequent collaborator in Norfolk.

There is an emphasis on history. Not only did the War of 1812 give us our national anthem, but in it our Navy was reborn. Everywhere you read, you see the Navy remembering that amazing struggle. Our Professor Kevin McCranie’s recently published *Utmost Gallantry: The U.S. and Royal Navies at Sea in the War of 1812* tells the story well.

There is a commitment to education. Despite the significant fiscal challenges, the Navy remains committed to education. The Advanced Education Review Board meets frequently in Washington; the Naval War College here in Newport, the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, and the Naval Academy in Annapolis have visibility and support at the very highest level of leadership in our Navy.

There is a realization that our military must never let up in its effort to be the most professional military in the world. Also in the last issue of the *Review* were two outstanding articles on civil-military relations. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, recently told our students very sincerely how important the profession of arms was to him. In fact, in May it will be my great honor to spend two days at Duke University studying that very topic with some of our nation's best. In this election year we are all reminded of our obligation to be an example.

And the Navy has asked the War College to develop a Leadership Continuum. Long held up as an example of how to develop independent, courageous, victorious leaders, the Navy nevertheless wants to be even better. That our College of Operational and Strategic Leadership has such an important direct role to play in that assignment has energized faculty and students alike.

I want to thank all the people in Newport and around our Navy who have made this the best job in the world. To all our neighbors over the past thirty years my family and I say thank you for making this the best career we could ever dream of. We have come into your lives and quickly gone away again, wherever we have served, but you have always made us proud to serve you and call you friends.

JOHN N. CHRISTENSON

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