

2020

## President's Forum

Shoshana Chatfield Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy, President, Naval War College  
*The U.S. Naval War College*

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### Recommended Citation

Chatfield, Shoshana Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy, President, Naval War College (2020) "President's Forum," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 73 : No. 1 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol73/iss1/3>

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*Rear Admiral Shoshana Chatfield is the fifty-seventh President of the U.S. Naval War College and a career naval helicopter pilot. A native of Garden Grove, California, she graduated from Boston University in 1987 with a bachelor of arts in international relations and French language and literature. She received her commission through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps in 1988 and earned her wings of gold in 1989. Chatfield was awarded the Navy's Political/Military Scholarship and attended the Kennedy School of Government, receiving a master in public administration from Harvard University in 1997. In 2009, the University of San Diego conferred on her a doctorate of education in leadership studies.*

## PRESIDENT'S FORUM

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### *A Few Months in the Life of the Naval War College*

BY ANY MEASURE, the U.S. Naval War College (NWC) is an absolutely remarkable place. It is remarkable because of the highly talented and dedicated professionals who form the *NWC family*: our faculty, staff, student body, and their families. Our *extended family* includes our friends and supporters from the NWC Foundation; the patriotic citizens of Rhode Island, who are so welcoming and encouraging of everything we do; and our sister services' professional military education colleges and organizations, which share our commitment and passion for preparing the nation's leaders to serve with integrity, creativity, and a sharply focused sense of purpose. In the months since my husband, David, and I joined this multifaceted (and multinational) family, we have been incredibly impressed by the contagious spirit of excellence we have seen at every turn.

My first several months as the fifty-seventh President of the Naval War College have been incredibly busy. Both our external engagements and our on-campus visitor roster have revealed the degree to which our great College is held in high esteem and increasingly is seen as a place for innovative research and scholarship.

Among my first duties as President was to officiate at the Academic Convocation, which took place on August 5, 2019. This time-honored ceremonial event served to open the 2019–20 academic year for the 530 resident students from all the military services, a host of government agencies, and seventy-five partner nations. Studies also commenced for over 1,900 students in our worldwide College of Distance Education programs.

In late August 2019, our International Programs and Alumni Programs offices combined forces to organize the College's Eighteenth Regional Alumni Symposium in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This highly anticipated event, cohosted by

the Argentine Navy, enabled participants to discuss a wide range of topics. The symposium had three primary objectives:

1. To *listen to one another* with respect and open minds
2. To *learn from each other*, since learning is not just a discrete, one-time event but instead is a continuous practice
3. To *renew and refresh friendships* with other alumni and to commit to maintaining these relationships into the future

During the three-day event, more than a hundred international officers, including the heads of eight navies from the region, participated in briefings and engaged with panelists on a number of important regional issues. Some of the topics discussed were maritime control, maritime surveillance, information sharing and interoperability, and the use of the sea's resources to achieve sustainable development. Rear Admiral Donald D. Gabrielson, USN, Commander, U.S. Fourth Fleet / U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command, provided keynote remarks.

Then-Secretary of the Navy the Honorable Richard V. Spencer served as a special guest speaker. He emphasized the importance of teamwork, noting that “[e]very day, our allies and joint partners join us in defending freedom, deterring war, and maintaining the rules which underwrite a free and open international order. We are each other’s force multiplier, and serving together, studying together, and completing exercises together increases our joint operational readiness and helps secure a safer world.”

Our host, Admiral José Luis Villán, Chief of the General Staff of the Argentine Navy, added, “This academic conference gives us an excellent opportunity to strengthen the relationship amongst our navies, and we learn from each. The symposium’s main purpose is to exchange ideas on how regional nations can overcome problems together.”

At the same time that our team was working to promote global maritime-security cooperation in South America, Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Dr. Mark T. Esper journeyed to Newport to speak to our students and faculty, his first address at a military academic institution since taking office. He asserted that, after eighteen years of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Department of Defense must be focused on our near-peer competitors, China and Russia. He noted, “Many of you spent most of your career fighting irregular warfare, but times have changed. We are now in an era of great-power competition. Our strategic competitors are Russia and China.” The question for the Department of Defense, Esper said, is how to address that competition. “I see the greatest challenge that I have, that the department faces, is how do we balance the present versus

the future?" Esper asked, "How do we offset near-term readiness versus future modernization?" He told the Naval War College audience that, as senior military leaders of the future, they must keep this context in mind. "It will affect nearly all aspects of the U.S. armed forces, including training, equipment, and placement of troops around the world." SECDEF noted that the world is only getting more complex, and the challenge before the U.S. armed forces is to be ready.

During his visit, SECDEF also had the opportunity to observe the GLOBAL-11 Joint Operations war game. McCarty Little Hall was operating at full capacity hosting over six hundred participants, including more than eighty flag and general officers and members of the Senior Executive Service. GLOBAL-11 was designed to assess the Navy's roles and responsibilities in leading a joint task force (JTF) and employing joint war-fighting capabilities. Admiral John C. Aquilino, USN, Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, was the game's sponsor. Fundamental to his ability to exercise his role as lead was the presence and participation of high-level representatives of all JTF components: General Charles Brown, USAF, Commander, Pacific Air Forces; Major General John Johnson, USA, representing U.S. Army Pacific; and Lieutenant General Lewis Craparotta, USMC, Commanding General, U.S. Marine Forces, Pacific. The war game sought to identify challenges associated with integrating new technologies and joint war-fighting concepts across the entire spectrum of warfare. In a shift from previous war games, Deputy Chiefs of Naval Operations attended, many for the entire week. Among the senior leaders participating in the distinguished visitors' plenary session were then-Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer; Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael M. Gilday, USN; Commandant of the Marine Corps General David H. Berger, USMC; and Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force General Stephen W. Wilson, USAF.

Rounding out a busy fall, we also celebrated the College's 135th anniversary with a packed ceremony in Spruance Lobby. It was an honor to share the event with four previous NWC Presidents who were on campus participating in the Past Presidents' Colloquium and Strategy Review. Returning "home" for the anniversary were Vice Admiral P. Gardner Howe III, USN, our fifty-fifth President, who served from July 2014 to July 2016; Vice Admiral John N. Christenson, USN (Ret.), our fifty-third President, who served from March 2011 to July 2013; Vice Admiral Rodney P. Rempt, USN (Ret.), our forty-ninth President, who served from August 2001 to July 2003; and Rear Admiral James R. Stark, USN (Ret.), our forty-seventh President, who served from June 1995 to July 1998. The colloquium provided the unparalleled opportunity to receive input and suggestions about the College's future from a group uniquely qualified to render such advice.

As our College embarks on its 136th year of service to our Navy and the nation, I continue to be impressed by the entire U.S. Naval War College family's

contributions to our students, to our academic excellence, and to our Navy and joint force war-fighting readiness in support of our National Defense Strategy. And welcome home to Admiral Howe and his wife, Erin, as they join another part of our NWC extended family: our retired military community here in Newport. Our sincerest congratulations on a remarkable career!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shoshana Chatfield". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "S" and "C".

SHOSHANA S. CHATFIELD

*Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy*

*President, U.S. Naval War College*