



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Pacific Region Chief Petty Officer Pinning Ceremony
Admiral Cecil Haney
Friday, 14 September 2012
Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
As Prepared For Delivery**

Good morning and Aloha!

I would like to welcome the leadership on all levels here today, Commanding Officers, Executive Officers, Chiefs, and families and friends. But most of all I would like to welcome our Chief Petty Officer Selects here today. Today is a special day that you will recall with fond memories for the rest of your lives. This is the day you become a Chief Petty Officer in the United States Navy!

This ceremony is the culmination of years of your hard work and your proven and sustained superior performance. It is an endorsement from your leadership that you have what it takes to lead as a Chief Petty Officer. For 119 yrs, since the grade of Chief Petty Officer was created, only the most talented and capable Sailors have been selected to wear the golden anchors and to have the honor of being called 'Chief'. Here you are, moments away from becoming part of this very respected and exclusive community as a Chief Petty Officer. Congratulations!

Over the last few weeks, the Chief community has been busy preparing you for the transition from E-6 to E-7 and I know that each of you is ready. I also know that this transition will be unlike any other you have had in your career so far. As you step into your new role as Chief, it will require you to continue to grow as a leader. It will present you with challenges; it will test your abilities and it will try your patience. It will also be tremendously rewarding.

As you look out over the waterway behind me, you can see the Arizona memorial. It not only stands as a monument to the gallant men who lost their lives during the attack on Pearl Harbor, but as a reminder to always be ready. As a Chief, you will lead through things that you can't imagine right now. I can assure you, that on that peaceful Sunday morning, almost 71 years ago, the Chiefs waking up in their ships at anchor along Battleship row were not expecting the attack that was imminent. So today, I expect each of you to always be ready, ready to avoid surprise in whatever form it may present itself in. But also, that if we are surprised, that you rise to the occasion and respond accordingly. Because we'll all be counting on you-as the Chief.

As a Chief, you play an important role in not just working with, but shaping the passion for our sea service and developing the experience of our more junior enlisted Sailors and Junior Officers in a way that is truly unique to our service. You will have a far reaching and meaningful impact on all those who you serve with. Everyone respects the chief, from the top to the bottom of the Chain of Command; they are the essential and integral part of our great Navy team - the backbone.

A frequent question asked by Commanding Officers, when faced with challenges, continues to be today "What does the Chief believe is the right course of action or way ahead?". The United States Navy Memorial Foundation recognizes this and has designated 2012 as 'The Year of the Chief' to honor the Navy's Chief Petty Officers Mess. It is an honor that is well deserved.

Before you become ‘the Chief’ just a few short minutes from now, I want to take a moment to talk about a Chief who I served with, who molded me as I reported aboard my first submarine as a Junior Officers on USS JOHN C. CALHOUN.

Yes, fresh out of the United States Navy and pipeline training I was ready and stoked to lead my first division, the Electrical Division. Or so I thought.

At the time, we did not have the Chief Petty Officer’s presence we have today at the United States Naval Academy. EMCM Hubbard was my first Leading Chief Petty Officer and boy was I blessed. I did not know what I did not know at the time. But EMCM Hubbard did and he immediately went to work in shaping me in so many ways. From my perspective he was the gold standard for the chief community. He is the Chief I compare all others to.

Through his words and his actions he set the example for others to follow. Whether it was the Junior Enlisted Sailors, other Chiefs or the officers, MC Hubbard always led by example. His example of passionate and effective leadership has shaped my thinking and my approach to this day. So soon-to-be Chiefs, just think about that. Your mark on the younger population of our Navy will influence its course and direction well beyond your tour and your career.

What MC Hubbard taught me has played a significant role in making me the officer I am today and I want to share some of that with you. He taught me, by words and by actions, these things:

- The Chief is a leader. The Chief is out front, setting the pace of the task and ensuring the quality and completeness of the work. Set high expectations for your team and ensure that they are met. If you ever settle for less, then you are setting the new, lower standard.
- Chiefs must be the undisputed Subject Matter Experts in their field of expertise in order to train, develop and mentor their Junior Sailors. Always work to stay at the top of your technical field.
- Chiefs are team builders. He or she knows it takes integrated teamwork in order to get the job done. You must develop and train your entire team to be as effective as possible, so that together the mission can be accomplished.
- Chiefs are communicators. The flow of info up and down the Chain of Command is vital and you are the most important conduit for the flow of info between the Officers and Enlisted Sailors. Master Chief Hubbard was outstanding at getting me to understand the intricacies of some critical repair he and the team needed to conduct, the conditions required to conduct the repairs and how I needed to have the conversation with the Engineer and in some cases the Engineer and Captain. Of course he also helped shape conversation that I would have with them.

- Chiefs are always training their replacement. You must be working to groom the next generation of Chiefs, in order to ensure those who follow you are ready to carry on that legacy that today you will become a part of.
- A Chief must continue to develop and nurture a questioning attitude. If something doesn't make sense, seems unsafe or is inefficient, ask the hard questions and get the necessary attention put on the problem.
- As a Chief Petty Officer, know that you set the moral/ethical compass of your team. When it comes to integrity, honor, and character building, the Sailors will watch and emulate your attitude and your commitment.
- And of course, Chief Petty Officers are responsible for the education and training of Junior Officers. It's an important collateral duty that can affect the leadership style of an officer for the duration of their career. I'm thankful that Master Chief Hubbard took the time to invest in me.

To this day, as I go aboard ships or submarines or visit airwings or squadrons, I frequently sit down with the Chief Petty Officers of that unit and ask for their opinions, concerns, and what they need the Navy to do to keep us on course for the uncertain future we have to be ready for. I cherish those opportunities to listen to the Chiefs today, just as I cherished the opportunities to listen to MC Hubbard during my first tour.

As I conclude my remarks I ask that you once again look across the waterway and look upon the Arizona Memorial.

Now look to the left at the great ship floating further to the left.

As the Arizona memorial represents a surprise attack on our Navy and our Nation, the Battleship Missouri represents our response.

It was on her deck, during a formal and crowded ceremony, that the Japanese surrendered and World War II was brought to a close. I can assure you that the Chief Petty Officer's mess was well represented on that ship during the ceremony. The Chiefs were indeed ready and their leaderships, expertise, and passion played a crucial role in the success of the response that got us to that ceremony.

Today, you enter an entirely new level of leadership and it will be among the most rewarding aspects of your career. It is your turn to be the Chief, to wear the golden anchors and the khaki uniform, to shoulder the responsibility and burdens of leadership, to always be ready to answer the call and to carry on the highest traditions of the United States Navy. Seize that opportunity and fulfill it to the best of your abilities.

As the Chief, I expect you to fulfill your legacy and live up to the expectations of those chiefs from the past, who have fought, bled and sacrificed to establish and maintain the proud heritage you carry on today.

I wish each of you the very best in your new role as Chief Petty Officer.

Mahalo and God bless our Navy and all those who serve.