



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet  
Recruit Training Command Graduation  
Naval Station Great Lakes  
Admiral Cecil Haney  
23 August 2013  
As prepared for delivery**

Good morning and thank you Captain John Dye for that introduction.

It is a tremendous honor to be here and to welcome these Sailors into the United States Navy, the finest Navy in the world. It's great to see so many here, including Rear Admiral Dee Newbourne, the commander of Naval Service Training Command and Rear Admiral Doug Morton, the commander of Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Atlantic.

For more than 100 years, Naval Station Great Lakes has been doing the important work of transforming civilians into Sailors. Millions of recruits have been trained here, so I am thankful to have Sailors like you, volunteering to join the Navy and to serve in the Fleet.

Forty years ago last month our country implemented one of the most consequential and far-reaching changes in the history of our Armed Forces, by establishing the All-Volunteer Force. As the Commander of the Pacific Fleet, that is something I don't take for granted, especially if you consider that only 25 percent of our Nation's 17-24 year olds are even eligible to enter the Armed Services. Of the 315 million people in our country, only 1 percent are willing to take on the responsibility of defending our nation by volunteering to serve. Each of you graduating today are part of that very special 1 percent. You are among the very best we have and you have so much to be proud of. Thank you for volunteering.

I would also like to thank the families and friends of today's graduates. Each of you played an important role in shaping these graduates into the patriotic Americans who would consider serving in our Sea Service. Thank you for being here to recognize their significant achievement today and for helping raise such great Americans.

Today our Navy is out and about, in some pretty interesting neighborhoods to ensure stability and security around the globe. Sailors like you are maintaining freedom of the seas, operating forward, ensuring our trade routes are secure so that our Nation's exports can reach foreign markets and our imports remain affordable given our global economy.

While postured to deter conflict, we remain ready to respond to address National security issues if deterrence fails while postured to respond to natural disaster in order to protect life, maintain security and preserve stability.

The Sailors graduating here will enter the fleet to protect our Nation and to preserve our democratic way of life in ways that are hard to imagine today. They will be operating the most sophisticated equipment in the world, from the ocean depths, all the way in to outer space.

My advice to each of you is to continue to take care of each other in the fleet, just as you did here. Being a shipmate means helping each other. Take your profession seriously and keep your reputation as a Sailor who can be trusted.

Be ready to turn to, work hard and grow to the maximum extent. Become committed to lifelong learning. In the Navy you have to keep studying, thinking and learning, especially given the advanced technology you will be operating and the incredible missions you will be conducting. Challenge yourself to become the best in your rate and to grow to become leaders. That's what we have to have in today's high tech Navy. Who knows, maybe someone from this class will become a future Fleet Master Chief, like mine, Fleet Marco Ramirez, who is here with me. Your possibilities are endless.

This morning I saw the conclusion of Battle Station 21 and the remarkable performance from that class. I know the outstanding instructors here have worked hard to prepare you for a wide range of challenges, including how to respond in crisis. Although I frequently travel throughout the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, my home and headquarters is at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Given the historical reminders that exist in Pearl Harbor, I'm reminded daily of the historic events of December 7th, 1941, a day that will live in infamy.

We were surprised that day by the terrible attack on our Pacific Fleet, but the remarkable Sailors of the World War II era fought with honor, courage and commitment, and we were ultimately victorious. Some of you may one day be faced with the unthinkable, but I am confident you too are ready and your honor, courage and commitment will oversee the success of our Navy and our democratic way of life. So when you get to the fleet, don't let your guard down, remember what you were taught and stay ready. I'm counting on you; our entire Nation is counting on you too.

So, as I conclude, I once again want to thank you for volunteering to serve and meeting all the requirements to become a Sailor! I look forward to seeing each of you in the fleet.

Congratulations on a job well done and may God Bless our Nation, our Navy and each of you who serve.