



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Pacific Region Chief Petty Officer Pinning Ceremony
Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
Admiral Cecil D. Haney
13 September 2013
As Prepared For Delivery**

Good morning and Aloha!

I would like to welcome the leadership on all levels including former Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, retired MCPON Jim Herdt, commanding officers, executive officers, Chiefs, friends and family. I especially would like to welcome our newest Chiefs and their families here today. This is your big day, one that you will recall with fond memories. Today you become a Chief Petty Officer in the United States Navy! What an honor.

For 120 years, 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. Congratulations!

Each of the new chiefs here today have been preparing and are ready to make their important transition. You have learned a lot through Chief Petty Officer 365 training, but don't let the learning stop. As you step into your new role as Chief Petty Officer, it will require you to continue to grow as a leader. Your new role will present you with challenges; it will test your abilities and it will try your patience. It will also be tremendously rewarding.

As a chief, you will have tremendous influence over our Sailors and junior officers in a way that is truly unique to our service. You will help develop their passion for our sea service and develop their experience and skill on the job. You will have a far reaching and meaningful impact on all those you serve with. Everyone respects the chief. From the top to the bottom of the chain of command, they are an essential and integral part of our great Navy team - the backbone. Just think how many times in your career you have heard the quote, "Where's the Chief?" I know from experience how important your role as a Chief Petty Officer will be.

When I was fresh out of the U.S. Naval Academy and pipeline training, I was ready to lead my first division, the Electrical Division. Or so I thought. When I reported on board my first submarine, USS John C. Calhoun, the chief who molded me as a young junior officer was Electricians Mate Master Chief Hubbard. He was my first Leading Chief Petty Officer, and boy was I blessed. I didn't know what I didn't know at the time. But Master Chief Hubbard

did. He immediately went to work in shaping me in so many ways, and I believe that what he taught me was critical to my success throughout my career.

From my perspective he is the gold standard for the chief community. He is the chief I compare all others to, and that is exactly what you will be to your new junior officers and Sailors. So keep that in mind as you train them, teach them, and guide them. The impact you make on their lives is critical to their future success in our Navy.

If you think about it, I worked with Master Chief Hubbard in the early 1980s. There might be some of our new chiefs who weren't even born then. But I still think of Master Chief Hubbard, and his example of passionate and effective leadership, which has shaped my thinking and my approach to this day. So chiefs, just think about that. Your mark on our Navy will influence its course and direction well beyond your tour and your career. What you do as the chief will last for decades, so make sure you are teaching the right things.

Some of the right things that Master Chief Hubbard taught me were that chiefs are leaders, they are subject matter experts, they are team builders, they are communicators, and they value the Sailors. He also taught me that chiefs are the moral and ethical compass of the team.

These are all important today, as we work to build resilient Sailors through a holistic approach, by putting a focus on our physical, mental, social, and spiritual fitness. Making sure that we take care of our people in a positive and proactive way is required to maintain continual combat readiness. I'm counting on the chiefs here to lead the charge in this endeavor and to make sure our Sailors are in the best possible condition to perform their demanding jobs.

When I arrived today I couldn't help notice the Arizona Memorial in the distance. It reminds me of the historic events of December 7th, 1941. We were surprised that day by the terrible attack on our fleet and our country, but the remarkable chiefs of the World War II era helped lead us through that horrific day. They fought with honor, courage and commitment, and ultimately they fought through the Pacific to victory.

Just a few days ago we commemorated the 12th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. I know that memories of that day still linger in each of us. That day we were again surprised and men and women all across the country answered the call to don the cloth of our Nation as we went to war. Our Sailors were among the first to fight and once again they fought with honor, courage and commitment.

There can be little doubt that we still live in an uncertain world, where conflict and crisis can arise at any time. Just consider the current crisis in Syria, where a chemical attack killed

more than 1,400 people and has demanded the attention of nations around the world. We must always be ready to respond to crisis, and I'm proud to say that our Navy is in place in the Mediterranean, right now, and ready. For the most part we were already there with significant maritime capability, forward with credible capability!

In the future you may be called upon to respond to crisis, and I am confident you will be ready to respond and that with your khaki leadership, you will help oversee our success. As the chief, our Sailors will count on you. Our entire Navy and our Nation is counting on you too.

As I conclude, I want to leave you with a quote from a former MCPON. He said these words in 2002, just six months after the 9/11 attacks, and they summarize my message today, perfectly.

He said: "The Navy Chief Petty Officer's mess is the greatest organization of its kind in the world. The leadership required by today's Sailors is found in the chief's mess and today's Sailors are demanding more from their chiefs in terms of professional and personal growth and development."

Thank you MCPON Herdt for that quote. Perhaps you'll continue to expand on that here in a few minutes. I couldn't have said it better myself.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone who helped our new chiefs make it this far in their career, from the chief's mess who have led them to this point, to their families and friends who have offered so much support and encouragement throughout. All of you are important to their success and I thank you.

Once again congratulations to each of you who will soon shed the term 'select' and will be from henceforth called 'the chief'. Enjoy your special day, you have earned it. I look forward to serving with all of you in the fleet.

May God Bless our Nation, our Navy and each of you who serve.

Mahalo Nui Loa.