MCPON visits *USS George Washington* Sailors

By MC3 Kaitlyn R. Breitkreutz, USS George Washington Public Affairs

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Rick D. West spoke with more than 3,000 Sailors during an all-hands call aboard the Japan-based Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) April 18.

West is spending time touring the Pacific fleet to meet with Sailors of all ranks and rates to discuss concerns and future goals.

"We have a lot of things in the air right now, but I really do think that the 21st century Sailor and Marine is about the unit, it's about the team and it's about giving you and all the leaders the knowledge, the skills, the ability and the opportunity to serve in our Navy – that's what it all really bores down to," said West.

The MCPON covered a wide variety of topics that included the U.S. Navy's policy on alcohol, Early Retention Boards (ERB), Perform-to-Serve (PTS) and the Defense of Marriage Act.

"It was nice to see that the MCPON is a normal everyday person and to have someone visit and talk to us directly means a lot," said Personnel Specialist 3rd Class Kendall Kershaw from Chicago.

"He answered a lot of the questions I had and I'm happy that I got the chance to meet him and shake his hand and hear what he has to say," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Stephen Sobolinksi from Cleveland. "Everyone doesn't get this opportunity."

West's visit to Japan could mark his last time there in uniform. The MCPON will retire from the Navy at the end of 2012.

For some in attendance, the departure of the popular senior enlisted master chief is a disappointment, so the visit to George Washington was a welcomed opportunity.

"I was really looking forward to the visit and am thankful I got the chance. He was a very happy go-lucky person, honest and motivated. I'm glad I had the chance to meet him," said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Derikisha Hubbard, who is from Jackson, Miss.

West took time in the hanger bay to pose for hundreds of photos with the crew and then before departing from the pier, presented coins to the top performers from each of George Washington's 18 departments who have made the ship's 2012 ship's restricted availability (SRA) a success.

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Rick D. West gives a Sailor a personalized impact coin on the pier next to the Japan-based Nimitz-class aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) after holding an all-hands call aboard the ship April 18. West took questions from Sailors and spoke about his expectations of the forward-deployed naval forces.

U.S. Navy photo by MCSA Brian H. Abel

New equal opportunity database helps track complaints better

By Ensign Amber Lynn Daniel, Diversity and Inclusion Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – As announced by Navy Administrative Message (NAVADMIN) 137/12, the Navy Equal Opportunity (EO) Office has worked with Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) to release the first centralized database within the Navy to track military Equal Opportunity formal and informal complaints, including sexual harassment and discrimination complaints.

The Military Equal Opportunity Network (MEONet) is a standalone online web-based program that standardizes, tracks and reports administrative actions associated with the primary duties of Equal Opportunity advisors and Command Managed Equal Opportunity Program managers.

The MEONet also serves as a valuable tool for Navy command leadership to assess command climate.

The centralized database provides leadership the ability to identify complaint trends and implement corrective actions.

"MEONet is a valuable resource for commanders to use when conducting command climate assessments, allowing them to establish and maintain a climate of inclusion," said George Bradshaw, director of Navy Equal Opportunity. "Establishing a climate of inclusion is a key component of the Navy's Equal Opportunity Program, and the MEONet will go a long way in assisting commanders in meeting this mission requirement."

The MEONet allows users to track formal and informal EO complaints from initiation to resolution. Additionally, it offers features for users to track general assistance provided to military members. It can also generate standardized, printable Memorandum for the Record (MFR).

Graphic courtesy of Navy.mil

The MEONet augments the current EO data collection process to include tracking of all general assistance provided to Sailors by Equal Opportunity advisors and Command Managed Equal Opportunity Program managers. The MEONet can also generate general status reports, including reports broken down by type of complaint, and demographic data of alleged offenders and demographic data of complainants.

The MEONet training for Equal Opportunity advisors will debut in April 2012. Equal Opportunity advisors will be required to train their respective Command Managed Equal Opportunity Program managers by Sept. 28. Official release of the MEONet will begin Oct. 1.

For more information about Navy Equal Opportunity, visit: http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/equal_opportunity/Pages/default.aspx.