USS George Washington gears up for CART II

By MCSN Tatiana Avery,
***USS George Washington* Public Affairs**

PACIFIC OCEAN – U.S. Navy's forward-deployed aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) Sailors began undergoing the Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART) II Aug. 26.

CART II is an assessment and opportunity to train both the aircraft carrier's training teams and watchstanders in all required primary warfare areas, and to maximize effectiveness of the crew in leveraging Fleet operations and exercises in carrying out 7th Fleet mission.

"It's a baseline assessment of our training and our ability to respond to casualties," said Senior Chief Damage Controlman Gary Wise, from Clearwater, Fla., a senior member of *George Washington*'s Damage Control Training Team (DCTT).

According to Master Chief Engineman Mike Piazza, from Haskell, N.J., a senior Engineering Casualty Control Training Team (ECCTT) member, the CART II inspection also serves as a vital opportunity to re-train all Sailors in their "Zebra" setting skills, as well as provides training to new Sailors.

All *George Washington* Sailors play instrumental roles in maintaining the conditional readiness of the ship. Special groups such as the "Flying Squad" conduct fire, flood and toxic gas leaks drill scenarios responding.

The rest of the crew has been preparing for CART II by training in their repair lockers during general quarters drills; the training includes fire-fighting, shoring, pipe patching, first aid and other tasks to respond to actual casualties.

"The training can become repetitive after a while," said Hull Maintenance Technician 3rd Class Sarah Torp, "but it's important for all of the Sailors and the flying squad to be familiar with handling any scenario; especially when there's an actual casualty because you never know what to expect. Sometimes it can be even worse than what you think."

HM1 John Espeleta, from Batan, Philippines, prepares to receive a simulated casualty during a General Quarters drill on the flight deck of the U.S. Navy's forward deployed aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) Aug. 27. General Quarters drills are held regularly to prepare Sailors for emergency situations that may occur while deployed. *George Washington* departed Fleet Activities Yokosuka Aug. 20 to continue its 2012 patrol.
U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Alexander W. Cabrall

As the U.S. Navy's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier, *George Washington* conducts its CART II and Final Evaluation Period (FEP) inspections annually as opposed to every 18 months.

"We have to always be ready to respond to any call or crisis in this area and we have to respond quickly," said Wise. "That's our mission and regardless of CART II or any other inspection, we are committed to not only being efficient but correct when it comes to training."

Navy announces Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

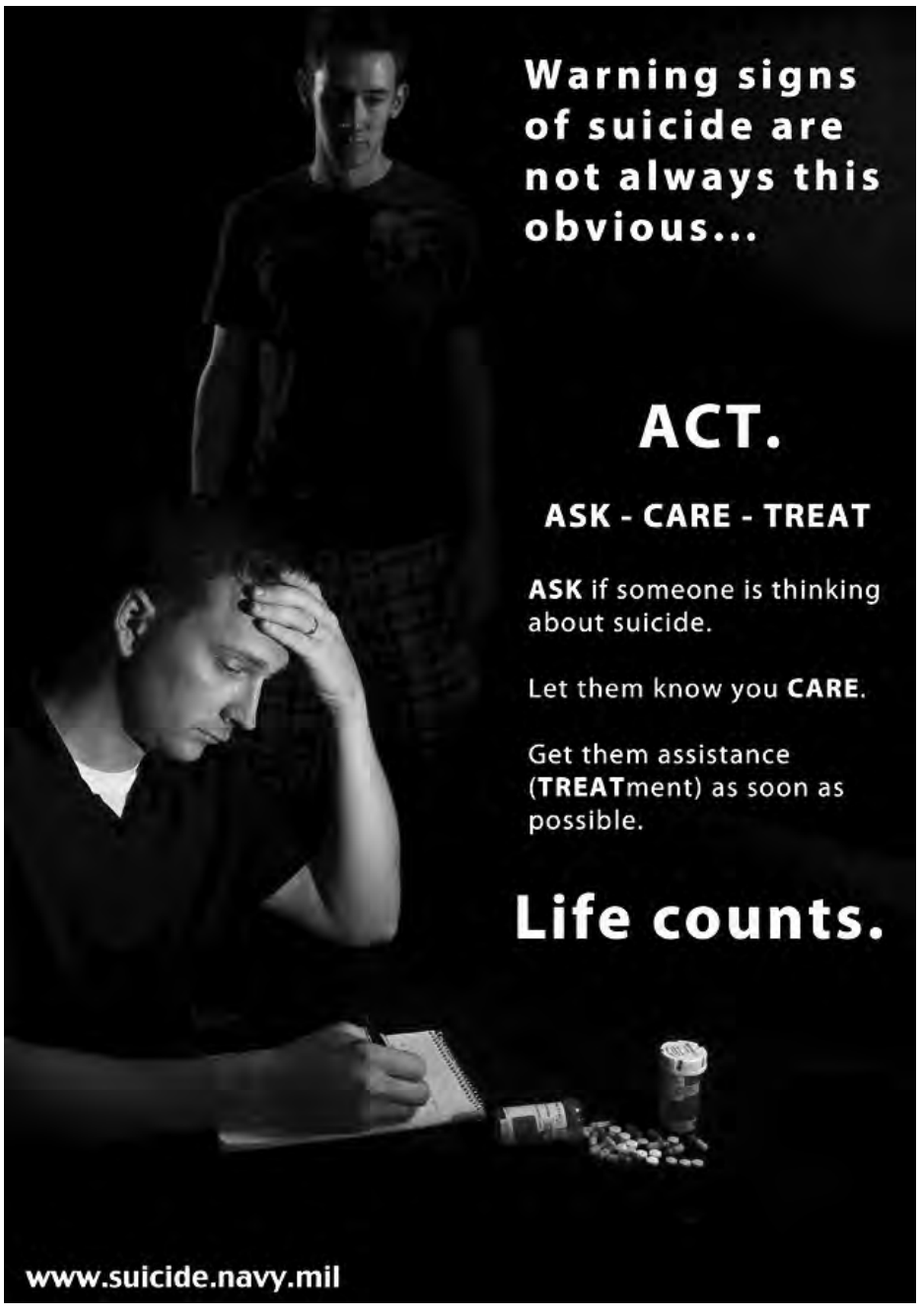
From Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and the Navy is using the month as a launch pad to focus on Navy's ongoing suicide prevention efforts, officials announced in Navy Administrative Message (NAVADMIN) 259/12 released Aug. 27.

During each week of the month resources will be available to guide discussion on stress navigation and suicide prevention concepts. The weekly concepts to be explored are: building resilience, navigating stress, encouraging bystander intervention to A-C-T (Ask Care Treat), and reducing barriers for seeking support through counseling.

The tools and resources are available on www.suicide.navy.mil and www.navynavstress.com. These tools emphasize the themes of dedication, optimism, determination and humor.

Additionally, the winner of the Suicide Prevention Public Service Announcement Contest will be announced Sept. 28. The winning video will be available year-round online and will be broadcast regularly on Direct-to-Sailor television, the American Forces Network and Pentagon channel.

"Our people are our greatest asset," said Bureau of Naval Personnel Behavioral Health Programs Director Capt. Kurt Scott. "We're promoting a lifestyle of total fitness - physically, mentally, socially and spiritually - to ensure our Sailors are best able to meet the challenges they will face in today's Navy. These efforts reinforce the Secretary of the Navy's 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative, as well as support the Chief of Naval Operation's directions. Most importantly, focusing on total fitness puts us on a path to prevent suicides."

For more information about suicide prevention visit www.suicide.navy.mil and www.navynavstress.com.