



## **NBC Senior Chiefs Leads by Example**

Naval Base Coronado Public Affairs Office

NAVAL BASE CORONADO, Calif., -- Senior Chief Aviation Electrician's Mate (AW/SW) Julie Smith is the Naval Base Coronado's (NBC) Command Staff Department Leading Chief Petty Officer. When she arrived to NBC in March 2008, she decided to take her knowledge, experience and practices and incorporate a "Mentorship Program" for NBC Sailors. This formal program offers a junior Sailor the opportunity to team –up with a Senior Sailor, with the senior Sailor serving as a mentor to the junior or protégé.

Through the program, the mentor and protégé sign a contract, agree to meet monthly and define the protégé's personal and career goals. The mentor then helps the protégé to carry the goals out. To promote camaraderie, Smith has encouraged mentors and protégés to volunteer together to help community and nonprofit organizations.

With Smith's coordination, NBC Sailors have volunteered with the City of Coronado's Community Planning Project: "Take my Hand" Coronado, Silver Strand Elementary "Operation Bigs" Program, Imperial Beach Friend of the library book sales, San Diego "Stand up for kids" homeless shelter, Saint Vincent De Paul's Kitchen, Balboa Park Clean-up, YMCA Youth Camps, Operation Purple Camp for Military kids, Bay Bridge Run Walk event, Allied Garden's Little League and "Feeding America" warehouse distribution center.

"By volunteering they are representing the Navy in ways beyond their mission. They also motive others to follow their lead," Smith added.

According to Smith, NBC Sailors now have other opportunities outside their immediate command to volunteer and improve their skills and represent the "Navy" in a positive manner.

Smith started this program back in 2001 while attached to Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 6 and carried her program forward to the various commands she has been stationed at since, including NBC.

"I became compassionate about the program and quickly learned that most Navy Sailors do a great job within their career, however they are often overlooked for special recognition, awards and other opportunities because they lack professional and personal guidance outside their career," said Smith.

The idea was to pair a senior Sailor to someone junior and then provide the resources, training and classes for them to attend together to improve their professional careers.

“(Mentoring) makes them stronger leaders, better informed about resources available and also gives them practice on taking care of junior troops. My vision was to take my experience, knowledge, motivational drive and inspire junior troops to have a vision, goal and plan that would enhance their Navy career while impacting others beneath them,” explained Smith.

Smith is a Moline, Illinois, native. She has been in the Navy for more than twenty-one years and made six deployments. She joined the Navy for school and career opportunities as an electrician. Now she is focused on shaping the future leaders in the Navy.

“My goal is to impart as much wisdom and knowledge on those Sailors I come in contact with before I retire,” Smith said. “Mentorship isn't just a word; in order for it to be successful you have to listen to those who are actively involved. Having a mentor can mean the difference between having direction or thinking you have direction,” she added.