

NSA Panama City Senior Sailor, Junior Sailor & Blue Jacket of the Year Announced
By Re-Essa Buckels | NSA Panama City Public Affairs

PANAMA CITY, FL – Three Sailors aboard Naval Support Activity Panama City are selected for Senior Sailor, Junior Sailor and Blue Jacket of the Year, Dec. 15.

Master-at-Arms 1st Class Tamon Winkler, Security Department, NSA PC, was awarded the Senior Sailor of the Year.

Winkler says the award is a reflection of teamwork.

“It’s not always about myself but it’s about all of us working together and making sure that we can get the job done,” Winkler remarked. “Being Sailor of the Year is great. I think it’s amazing but it’s really everybody working as a team to really put things together.”

Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Brett Lohrbach, Security Department, NSA PC, received the Junior Sailor of the Year, which was contributed to hard work coupled with long days and nights.

“I was extremely excited to know the Secretary of the Navy was coming down and actually awarding us that, (which) doesn’t happen too often,” Lohrbach added.

Shakele Johnson, Religious Programs Specialist 3rd Class, Chaplain, NSA PC, was awarded the Blue Jacket of the Year.

Johnson said the recognition came from his 2020 motto: put your head down and work.

“Everyone knows me for coming to work, doing what I (have) to do and then repeat the next day ... the best part about it was the SecNav coming and actually giving the awards to us so that was the cherry on top,” Johnson said.

In November, Lohrbach and Johnson were recognized for their achievements by Secretary of the Navy Kenneth J. Braitwaite during his visit to the installation.

The Chief of Naval Operations established the Sailor of Year Program to recognize one Sailor who represents the best of the Navy by demonstrating both professional and personal dedication. In 1972, the SOY Program only recognized Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Sailors. The program was expanded in 1973 to recognize one outstanding Sailor representing those serving in shore establishments Navy-wide. In 1982, the program began to include the Navy Enlisted Reservist of the Year.

One of the qualifications for the distinction is getting selected as Sailors of the Quarter during the year. Each Sailor received the Sailor of the Quarter in their respective categories.

Winkler won Senior Sailor of the 2nd Quarter while wearing several hats and juggling a number of duties ranging from Security Lead Petty Officer, Auxiliary Security Force Coordinator, Assistant Drug and Alcohol Program Coordinator and 1st Class Petty Officer Association – all of which sets him apart.

Lohrbach walked away with Junior Sailor of the 2nd Quarter thanks to his contributions to his department.

“Raising the training standards, documentation ... getting us to where we needed to be for an upcoming inspection took a lot of work to get there. I was just fortunate to be recognized for it,” Lohrbach explained.

Johnson was selected for Blue Jacket of the 2nd Quarter.

The Blue Jacket award is given to Sailors who are E-4 and below.

Johnson explained it requires a certain attitude to receive the Blue Jacket.

“Just trying to set an example for my peers ... just doing the right thing at all times. It’s okay to do that, just having a positive mindset,” Johnson added.

The SOY Program recognizes Sailors who best represent the large number of dedicated professionals serving in a particular type of duty as assigned. The SOY candidate is typified by a history of sustained superior performance, command impact, mission contribution, proven leadership, dedication to self-improvement, outstanding professionalism and superior personal appearance.

“I think Sailor of the Year is a great program. I think it’s very important for the Navy. It’s good for the senior Sailor but I always have to remember it’s all about my junior Sailors,” Winkler added. “It’s all about putting them in for Sailors of the Quarter, making sure that they can achieve and grow to get to where I am so that’s what being (Senior) Sailor of the Year is about for me.”

To read the new SOY program instruction visit:

<https://www.secnv.navy.mil/doni/Directives/01000%20Military%20Personnel%20Support/01-700%20Morale,%20Community%20and%20Religious%20Services/1700.10P.pdf>

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