United States, CFAY welcome newest U.S. citizens with naturalization ceremony

By MCSN Paul Kelly, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

Thirty-two Sailors and citizens from 17 countries took the oath of citizenship in the Community Readiness Center onboard Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka April 25.

The Sailors are part of the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) program ordered by the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) in 2009 which allows legal non-permanent residents (LNPR) to join the United Sates Navy and become American citizens.

"When I get out of the Navy I plan on doing a lot of volunteer work in third-world countries," said Machinist Mate Fireman Jody Singh, originally from Trinidad. "I wouldn't be able to have that opportunity if I hadn't become a U.S. citizen."

Gaining citizenship in the United States normally takes four or five years, but through the MAVNI program, it takes less than a year.

The U.S. Army pioneered the program for naturalization of LNPRs in 2008, and the Navy joined the initiative soon after in 2009.

"This ceremony is very important because it gives the Sailors recognition for their service." said Personnel Specialist 2nd class Trung Vo. "They are always working to support the nation, but now it is more important to them because it is their nation."

The mission of the MAVNI program is to find and recruit foreign individuals with certain linguistic or healthcare qualifications that will enhance the Navy's effectiveness in various regions around the globe. In return, the naturalization process is accelerated for these Sailors.

"I didn't join just for citizenship in the United States." said Singh, who moved to the United States in 1996 at 7 years old with her brother and sister. "I want to be better than I was yesterday, and I want to do something to help people."

Each year the U.S. accepts immigrants from countries all over the world. The three main countries of immigration are currently Mexico, India, and the Philippines. In 2008, a record 1,046,539 people were naturalized as U.S. citizens.

Thirty-two Sailors and citizens from 17 countries take the Oath of Allegiance during a naturalization ceremony at the Community Readiness Center on Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka April 25.

Near the end of the ceremony, all of the candidates were asked to stand and raise their right hand to take the Oath of Allegiance.

After administering the oath, Robert L. Daum, the Deputy District Director of USCIS Bangkok, Thailand turned to those gathered for the ceremony and said, "Please join me in welcoming the newest citizens of the United States."

CNIC to 'PASS' Pay–Personnel Admin Support System to NPC

From Navy Personnel Command and Navy Installations Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – Commander, Navy Installation Command (CNIC) will transfer responsibility of Pay–Personnel Administrative Support System (PASS) to Navy Personnel Command (NPC) said Navy officials April 26.

CNIC currently executes PASS via Regional Commanders, the Navy Pay and Personnel Support Center (NPPSC), Personnel Support Detachments (PSD) and Customer Service Desks (CSD). Navy-wide timeliness of pay-impacting transactions has improved more than 40 percent under CNIC stewardship and customer satisfaction is at an all time high according to CNIC officials.

"We share a common vision for the future, quality personnel service delivery that fully supports the 21st century Sailor and their families. CNIC staff who provide pay and personnel support to our Sailors have done a remarkable job over the years in improving customer service and creating efficiencies in the program," said Commander, Navy Installations Command, Vice Adm. William D. French. "Aligning the PASS program under an end-to-end business process owner, creates the opportunity for the Navy to optimize technological solutions and take that service delivery to the next level."

The transfer accomplishes vice chief of naval operations direction that supports the "end-to-end business-process owner" for Navy's pay and personnel matters.

According to a memorandum of agreement signed March 15 between the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education (DCNO–MPTE) and CNIC, aligning PASS within MPTE will streamline policy, process and execution under the DCNO–MPTE. While final details of the transfer are still being determined, officials said the projected transfer completion date is no later than Oct. 1, 2013.

"Bringing PASS back under the Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education umbrella is a large step forward in allowing the Navy's pay and personnel policy experts to manage the process down to the end user," said Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. Scott R. Van Buskirk. "We're looking closely at how our Sailors receive their personnel service transactions, and with this transfer, we plan to simplify the process. This will include making it easier and more efficient for Sailors to conduct their necessary personnel business."

Once the PASS program is transferred, DCNO–MPTE Bureau of Personnel will assume responsibility for PASS operations, which includes the NPPSC, PSDs including afloat PSDs, CSDs and the system used to process pay and other administrative actions.

"We do not expect any interruption of personnel service delivery to any of our Sailors currently serviced by the PASS network," said Bureau of Naval Personnel Personnel Service Delivery Transformation Office Director Capt. Hank Vitali.

The services PASS provides to service members and their families include military pay, educational services, reenlistments, extensions and separations, fleet reserve, retirement services, and military and dependent ID cards.

PASS supports most shore commands, deployable ships and squadrons. PASS currently covers pay and personnel actions for approximately 85 percent of the Navy at more than 60 PSDs worldwide.

Aircraft carriers, a select number of ships, and a few commands are not PASS-supported and maintain their own Pay and Personnel Servicing capability.

For more information, visit www.navy.mil, www.facebook.com/usnavy, or www.twitter.com/usnavy.

Water Conservation Tip

Don't defrost frozen foods with running water. Plan ahead by placing frozen items in the refrigerator overnight or defrost them in the microwave. Saves 50 to 150 gallons a month.