George Washington boasts advancement cycle success

By MC2(SW) John J. Mike, *George Washington* Public Affairs

USS George Washington (*GW*) (CVN 73) advanced 249 Sailors during a frocking ceremony in the ship's hangar bay Dec. 15.

The Navy's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier gained 117 E-4s, 94 E-5s and 38 E-6s from the September Navywide advancement exam.

GW Commanding Officer Capt. David A. Lausman said the ship's success was a team effort.

"We continually promote our Sailors because of a strong in-rate training program throughout our departments," said Lausman. "You all deserve your advancement and I'm very proud of you."

Aviation Ordnanceman 3rd Class (AW) Nayda Anaya said she credits her advancement to the strong leadership and teamwork found in *GW* Weapons Department.

"We are constantly having study groups in our ordnance magazine and are constantly quizzing each other at work so we can succeed," said GW Weapons Department G3 Division bomb assembler Anaya.

Newly-frocked Operations Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) Melvin Jackson was part of this cycle's 52 percent increase in *GW* Sailors promoted to petty officer first class.

"It's an exhilarating feeling," said Jackson, "My chief gave me his old first class dress uniform tops out of pride and to motivate me to make the next pay grade."

Although a planned ceremony, 11 *GW* Sailors were awarded spot promotions by Lausman through the Command Advancement Program (CAP).

"There are several of you out of uniform right now and I have to rectify this situation," said Lausman during his closing remarks.

"I found out while I was standing in ranks," said Aviation Ordnanceman 3rd Class Shane Redder, a newly promoted *GW* CAP Sailor. "I was disappointed when I didn't make [petty officer third class] off the exam, but now I'm excited and enjoying the promotion."

Lausman said frocking *GW* Sailors was a great way to kickoff the ship's in port maintenance period at Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, but the work is never finished.

"Thank you to all of our frockees for making *GW* a more qualified ship. The next advancement cycle is approaching, so let's continue mentoring so others can have the same success as you," said Lausman.

USS George Washington (CVN 73) recently returned from a 48-day fall deployment in support of the Chief of Naval Operations' maritime strategy, enhancing stability and security throughout the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility.

Navy accepts future *USS Independence*

By Team Ships Public Affairs

The Navy officially accepted delivery of the future *USS Independence* (LCS 2) Dec. 18 during a short ceremony in Mobile, Ala. Independence is the second littoral combat ship delivered to the Navy, and the first LCS of the General Dynamics variant. LCS is a new breed of U.S. Navy warship with versatile warfighting capabilities, capable of open-ocean operation, but optimized for littoral, or coastal, missions.

"Today marks a critical milestone in the life of the LCS 2," said Rear Adm. James Murdoch, the LCS program manager in the Navy's Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. "The Navy and our industry partners have worked diligently to deliver a much-needed capability."

Prior to delivery, the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey conducted Acceptance Trials aboard LCS 2 and found the ship's propulsion plant, sea-keeping and self-defense performance to be "commendable," and recommended that the chief of naval operations authorize delivery of the ship following the correction or waiver of cited material deficiencies.

Between now and sail away in February 2010, the contractor will correct most of the trial cards received during trials. Any remaining cards will be corrected during scheduled post-delivery maintenance availabilities including the post-shakedown availability scheduled for completion in 2011.

Delivery is the last shipbuilding milestone before commissioning, scheduled for Jan. 16 in Mobile, Ala.

The LCS class is designed from the keel up to deliver efficient capability, capacity and flexibility to the warfighter. *Independence*, a high-speed aluminum trimaran, is designed to defeat asymmetric "anti-access" threats such as mines, quiet diesel submarines and fast surface craft. The 417-foot Independence will be outfitted with reconfigurable payloads, called mission packages, which can be changed out quickly. These mission packages focus on three mission areas: mine counter measures, surface warfare and anti-submarine warfare.

The littoral combat ship *Independence* (LCS 2) underway during builder's trials July 12. Builder's trials are the first opportunity for the shipbuilder and the U.S. Navy to operate the ship underway and provide an opportunity to test and correct issues before acceptance trials.

Photo courtesy of Dennis Griggs

Navy seeks 100 percent participation in ESR

By Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

As the Navy moves forward with plans to eliminate the enlisted field service record (ESR), more than 130,000 Sailors need to establish a self-service account that will allow them access to their new digital record.

"The elimination of the enlisted field service record will begin in January 2010," said Art Tate, Navy Standard Integrated Personnel System (NSIPS) ESR Career Information Management System implementation manager. "Once the paper record disappears, they will have to create an ESR account if they wish to see what is in their record."

This move follows the action already taken for officers. The Navy eliminated the officer field service record in 2000 and closed-out some enlisted field service records for Sailors in Millington, Tenn. and other test locations.

"I don't miss the paper record. It is easier to access it online, right from my desk. I don't even have to go anywhere," said Chief Navy Counselor (AW) Kelly Strickland, command career counselor at Navy Personnel Command. Strickland has logged on to her ESR to verify her dependent's data and confirm classes she has completed have been entered in her record.

Chief of Naval Personnel announced the requirement for all active duty and reserve personnel to establish and maintain a self-service ESR early this year. These accounts will allow Sailors to review all personnel, training and awards data by choosing in the view section of the ESR. Sailors also have limited self-service update capability.

The Navy first announced the implementation of the ESR in 2006 with NAVADMIN 292/06.

Self-service accounts can be created at https://nsips.nmci.navy.mil or on the NSIPS-ESR server on board ships.

NAVADMIN 043/09 directs all commands to use NSIPS/ESR as the single field level data entry point for all Sailors.

Commanding officers, executive officers and command master chiefs can obtain command-level view only access by completing the NSIPS-ESR system authorization request and contacting their local NSIPS area manager. This access provides the user view only capability for all ESR accounts within their UIC(s).

All commands responsible for service record entries are required to initiate updates in NSIPS-ESR; however official military personnel file requirements remain unchanged.

Sailors are ultimately responsible for the accuracy of their ESR and must contact the servicing personnel office if any information is incorrect.