

#SAAM: Navy continues to raise awareness beyond April

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Department of the Navy Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Public Affairs

WASHINGTON -- Commands across the fleet took time during April to discuss sexual assault as part of a concerted effort to raise awareness about the crime, its impact on victims and the negative consequences for operational readiness.

The effort is not one that ends with Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), Navy officials said May 3.

"SAAM was just the beginning of our sexual assault discussion. We have leveraged this month to raise awareness, and are continuing to push forward with our efforts," said Jill Loftus, director of the Department of the Navy Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office.

That sentiment was echoed by Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mark Ferguson, who wrapped up the month with an interactive town hall meeting focused on sexual assault awareness and prevention. The discussion was carried live to Sailors on the Internet, the Pentagon Channel and via satellite to ships at sea.

"The end of April does not mark the end of our effort to raise sexual assault awareness. We must build upon the momentum we have generated this month and move forward together, as one team, to develop a resilient and ready force that is intolerant of sexual assault," said Ferguson.

During a meeting with interested members of Congress, April 17, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta laid out new initiatives designed to combat sexual assault within the military. Details on those initiatives can be found online at [www.defense.gov/news/DoDSexualAssault.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/DoDSexualAssault.pdf)

The Center for Personal and Professional development is working to create sexual assault prevention and response (SAPR) training products to support education efforts for Navy leaders and the fleet. SAPR training for leaders is scheduled to begin this summer, with training for the fleet expected to begin soon after. Additionally, CPPD's master train-the-trainer teams are already qualifying instructors to teach Bystander Intervention (BI) at all Navy "A" schools as part of Sailors' Navy Military Training after-hours curricula.