

NAS Meridian establishes CSADD chapter

By Penny Randall

Editor

NAS Meridian has recently established a chapter of the Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD).

CSADD is one of the newest approaches the Navy has developed to reach out to Sailors and educate them about destructive decisions and the ramifications of those decisions.

“Many naval stations already have peak participation with everything from making their own YouTube videos about drunk driving to posters and clinics on sexual assault,” said Air Traffic Controller 3rd Class Whitney Powell, who serves as Meridian’s chapter advocate. “The chapter focuses on the 18-25 age group, but anyone can get involved and help. Junior Sailors are really taking this project on and getting involved.”

OPNAVINST 1500.80 has provisions for all personnel within the active and reserve naval units. Naval Reserve Officer Training Corp (NROTC) and Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp (NJROTC) are encouraged to implement this program as well.

Chief Culinary Specialist Jessica Nettles serves as Meridian’s CSADD chapter sponsor and said the goal is to promote good decision-making among peers, especially junior Sailors.

“This program is designed to positively influence Sailors’ behavior through resources and tools that promote good decision-making processes, enabling leadership development and influence among peers at the junior level which in turn fosters both an attitude and atmosphere conducive to good order and discipline,” Nettles said.

CSADD is unique because it is a junior peer-on-peer mentoring group utilizing one of today’s main outside online networking hubs such as Facebook which have become increasingly popular and effective among commands by relaxing the formality by which information is passed thus enabling a generally resistive group to be more receptive to policies and concerns.

CSADD was started in early 2009 by a chief and a few petty officers at Navy Region Mid Atlantic in Norfolk, Va., as a peer influence social group and is now Navy-wide. The program received a huge push from the Navy on June 18, 2010, when Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. Mark Ferguson signed OPNAVINST 1500.80 authorizing commands to participate in the program. Even before approval, there were 75 chapters already established worldwide, according to a Navy command list. Now, according to instruction it is mandated that all 11 Navy regions worldwide establish and maintain a regional CSADD main chapter.

Each month CSADD takes the Navy monthly focus topics and concerns, and makes them more relevant for junior Sailors to identify with. April is Sexual Assault Prevention and Response. Upcoming in May will be Operational Stress Control and Suicide Awareness. In June the focus will be Driving Safety emphasizing the dangers of texting, speed and the need to use seatbelts.

Everyone is encouraged to check out the Meridian chapter’s FACEBOOK page, CSADD NAS Meridian. For more information on Meridian’s chapter or to volunteer to assist with any of the monthly topics, e-mail the CSADD team at nasmer2011@yahoo.com.