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Marine Air Wing Commander Congratulates Summer Grads

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Marine Air Wing Commander Congratulates Summer Grads

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Article By: Barbara Honegger

Commanding General of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Maj. Gen. Thomas Conant rallied 255 Naval Postgraduate School graduates to use their intellectual capital to the fullest in their continued careers at commencement ceremonies in King Hall, Sept. 25.

"I'm honored to be here on behalf of [Marine Corps Commandant] General Conway [who succeeded NPS Hall of Fame alumnus Michael Hagee]," said Conant, himself a graduate of the Aviation Safety School, then located at NPS. "Not only does the future reside in education, but the highest and best use of the present resides in education as well."

Conant called upon the graduates to "rise to the moral imperative to continue to find new and innovative ways to provide the resources needed by our fighting forces engaged in combat. Who among you will find the solution to lighten the load of our infantrymen, so they will no longer have to rely on the standard, heavy battery pack? Who among you will find a counter to the IEDs [improvised explosive devices] that threaten their life and limb? Finding solutions to such simple but challenging questions is and remains all of our responsibility.

"May we continue to be blessed with the intellectual capital that you represent as you walk across the stage today," Conant concluded.

The Summer 2009 graduating class included 147 officers from the Navy, 29 from the Marine Corps, one from the Marine Corps Reserve, 38 from the Air Force, six from the Army, two from the Coast Guard, and 22 from allied and coalition partner nations; as well as 93 Department of Defense civilians. Three hundred forty five degrees were conferred, including eight Ph.D.s, 211 Masters of Science, 58 Masters of Arts, 65 Executive Masters of Business Administration, one Master of Business Administration, one Electrical Engineer, one Mechanical Engineer, and eight dual degrees. Eighty two students – a growing number in distance learning programs – received their degrees in absentia.

Following the ceremony, the graduates and their family members gathered in the Barbara McNitt Ballroom for the cutting of the class cake. Joining President Daniel Oliver, Provost Leonard Ferrari and Conant for the honors was the recipient of four top awards for academic achievement and excellence in engineering, Lt. Cmdr. Jon Letourneau.



Letourneau received the prestigious Monterey Council of the Navy League Award for Highest Academic Achievement, Naval Postgraduate School Outstanding Academic Achievement Award for Department of Defense Student, Naval Sea Systems Command Award in Naval/Mechanical Engineering, the Northrop Grumman Student Award for Excellence in Systems Engineering.


The previous week, NPS' leadership recognized four faculty members and 35 students for exceptional instructional and academic achievement at the university's Summer Quarter 2009 Awards Ceremony officiated by Dean of Students Capt. Janice Wynn, also in King Hall.

Operations Research Associate Professor Thomas Lucas received the prestigious Richard W. Hamming Teaching Award, presented to a faculty member whose contribution to student learning has been demonstrated both in and out of the classroom through excellence in instruction and thesis advising. Lucas routinely ranks among the highest-rated professors in student classroom teaching evaluations and has won numerous other teaching awards at both NPS and the National University of Singapore (NUS), where he regularly teaches as part of a joint NPS-NUS program. He also co-directs the NPS SEED Center for Data Farming, which he helped form to support and mentor student thesis research.

The Rear Admiral Wayne E. Meyer Award for Teaching Excellence in Systems Engineering (Distance Learning) went to two faculty members – Research Associate Professor of Information Systems John Osmundson and Systems Engineering Lecturer Gregory Miller.

Osmundson has published more than 35 refereed journal articles, book chapters and conference papers in the past five years. His most recent research is on emergent behavior in the North American power grid and the collateralized debt obligation market. Miller has published over ten papers in the fields of command and control and systems engineering. He teaches courses in C4I, weapons and sensor systems, software engineering, and architecting.

Senior Lecturer of Management Don Bonsper received the Lieutenant Commander David L. Williams Outstanding Professor Award of the School of International Graduate Studies (SIGS). The award is presented to the SIGS faculty member who has demonstrated the greatest dedication, and therefore had the greatest impact, on the intellectual growth and learning of students, both in residence

 and abroad.

Information on the above awards courtesy of Graduation Coordinator Sonya Solomon.

Posted October 7, 2009.

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