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Roberts, Jean
Monterey, California, Naval Postgraduate School

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By Capt. Jean Roberts, George Washington Strike Group Public Affairs

USS GEORGE WASHINGTON, At Sea (NNS) -- Regional Security Education Program (RSEP) personnel were aboard USS George Washington (CVN 73) April 7 - 17, 2008 and then were airlifted to USS Farragut (DDG 99) and USS Kauffman (FFG 59) to conduct training for their respective crews.

As part of Partnership of the Americas 2008, three experts in Latin American studies were employed to facilitate members of the George Washington Strike Group in cultivating a genuine appreciation for the history, culture, and people of South America.

Professor Daniel Masterson from the Department of History at the U.S. Naval Academy specializes in Argentina, Brazil, and Peru. His research areas are Latin American militarism, immigration, race relations, terrorism and counter-terrorism. For 30 years, he has researched Peru and is currently finishing a book on the history of Peru.

Richard Feinberg earned a Ph.D. from Stanford and teaches at University of California, San Diego, Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies. His expertise is U.S. Foreign Policy in Latin America, and his research areas are U.S. foreign and security policy, multilateral institutions, trade & investments, globalization, democratization and non-governmental organizations. His country specialties are Chile and Nicaragua.

Capt. Timothy Doorey, is a Senior Intelligence Officer at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif., where he specializes in National Security Affairs and Strategic Studies, focusing primarily on Panama and Colombia. He was a Navy Federal Executive Fellow at Harvard University's John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies.

"I have been very gratified by the ship's support of our RSEP mission," Masterson said. "The strong attendance at our briefings was indicative of the high priority Rear Admiral Cullom (commander of the George Washington Carrier Strike Group) and Capt. Dykhoff (commanding officer of USS George Washington) place upon our message about Latin America and the concept of a Partnership for the Americas."

"This was great training," said Aircraft Ordnance Airman Apprentice Randell Austin, a Sailor serving aboard George Washington. "At first I wasn't sure this was needed, but I did learn a lot of interesting and useful information that is going to change the way I interact with the people I meet. I want to learn more about them now."

Cullom expressed the importance of the training and how it would give Sailors a better understanding of the mission.

"RSEP training is a tremendous asset to members of the George Washington Strike Group because each of us is an ambassador for our country," said Cullom. "Knowing and appreciating our South American neighbors helps enhance our relationship as equal partners in making this a more stable, secure, and prosperous hemisphere."

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