



Commissioned Personnel Center CYBERFLASH

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Message from the Director

Good afternoon, NOAA Corps!

As I sit down to write this, I find myself in a reflective mood. Tomorrow, February 7, marks a significant milestone for me, and my fellow BOTC 109 classmates, as we reach 20 years of service. It feels like only yesterday that I was given my Oath of Office on the front porch of my mother's house in Mobile, AL. I remember being filled with a mix of nervous energy and excitement as I embarked on this new chapter. Reaching the 20-year mark has given me a chance to look back on some incredible assignments, many challenges overcome, and the close relationships that I have developed along the way.

Reaching this 20-year milestone has also brought a more practical matter to the forefront. While I do not plan on retiring anytime soon, I did attend a Transition Assistance Program (TAP) training this week. It was an eye-opening experience that reinforced for me the critical importance of planning early for life after the NOAA Corps. Whether you are five years or five months away from leaving Service, there are many tools available to you to help you plan for a smooth and comfortable transition into civilian life.

In the coming days, Active Duty NOAA Corps Officers will receive an invite to the upcoming CPC Webinar on the Transition Assistance Program (TAP), which will be held on 18 February. I urge all officers, and especially those who are nearing retirement or separation, to attend the webinar to learn more about TAP. Please take advantage of these resources; we owe it to ourselves and our families to be as prepared for our final "rotation" as we are for any other assignment in our careers.

While I am reflecting on the past, I am equally energized by the future of our service. On February 26, I will have the honor of attending BOTC 147 Billet Night. For those who haven't experienced it recently, the atmosphere at Billet Night is truly electric! It is a night defined by anticipation and excitement as our officer candidates discover where they will be heading for their first assignments. I am incredibly excited to celebrate with them as they prepare to make their own marks on the organization, both at sea and in the sky.

All the Best,

Captain Ryan Wattam, NOAA
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center

On the Horizon

26 Feb 2026	BOTC 147 Billet Night
4 Mar 2026	Command Advisory Board
2 Apr 2026	BOTC 147 Graduation
8 Apr 2026	Officer Assignment Board

Approved Resignations, Separations and Retirements

VADM Nancy Hann	01 Mar 2026 Terminal Leave: 22 Dec 2025
CAPT Kurt Zegowitz	01 Mar 2026
RDML Benjamin Evans	01 Apr 2026 Terminal Leave: 16 Jan 2026
CDR Stephen Barry	01 Apr 2026
CDR Elizabeth Mackie	01 Apr 2026 Terminal Leave: 16 Jan 2026
CDR Lecia Salerno	01 Apr 2026
CAPT Sarah Duncan	01 May 2026
LT Carly Robbins	01 May 2026
CAPT Marc Moser	01 Jun 2026 Terminal Leave: 02 Apr 2026
CDR Jonathan Heesch	01 Jun 2026
LCDR Adam Pfundt	01 Jun 2026
LTJG Connor Healy	01 Jun 2026
LTJG Justin Weeks	15 Jun 2026
LCDR Benjamin VanDine	30 Jun 2026

In Memoriam: Kathryn Richwine

It is with a heavy heart that we share that Kathryn Richwine (former NOAA Corps LTJG) passed away on January 26, 2026, in Seattle, Washington. She grew up in southern Pennsylvania and attended Eckerd College in St. Petersburg,



FL where earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Science, concentrating in geology.

After college, she became a geologist for the US Geological Survey in St. Petersburg, FL, working on paleoclimate and environmental change studies in the northern Gulf of Mexico. However, she wanted to pursue a career that satisfied both her operational and scientific interests, so she joined the NOAA Corps in August 2014, alongside her shipmates in BOTC 124. As a Junior Officer, she sailed aboard NOAA Ship *Fairweather* where she earned her Officer of the Deck and Working Diver qualifications. In 2016, Kathryn transitioned to her land assignment, serving as the Benthic Mapping Specialist in Seattle, WA. In September 2018, she resigned from the NOAA Corps at the rank of Lieutenant (junior grade) and enrolled in a graduate program called MESSAGE (Masters in Earth & Space Sciences: Applied Geosciences) at the University of Washington. LTJG Richwine's notable awards included the Commerce Gold Medal - Organizational, NOAA Corps Achievement Medal, USCG Arctic Service Medal, NOAA Corps Director's Ribbon, NOAA Corps Pacific Service Ribbon, and a Unit Citation.

What her shipmates remember most about her is her passion for life. Prior to joining the NOAA Corps, Kathryn began competing in Triathlons. She raced mainly sprint triathlons that included a 1/4-mile swim, 10-mile bike and a 3.1 mile run. She also raced 2 Olympic distance triathlons and a half ironman just before reporting to BOTC, where she earned 4th place! This passion for running continued after she left the NOAA Corps. She trained for and ran the Chicago Marathon, the 5VH Trail Run, and completed the Lake Sammamish Half-marathon in Washington State. She also entered the New York City Marathon in 2025, where she was able to walk a 5K, despite her declining health.

Kathryn's [obituary can be found here](#). Her life was too short, but she lived it to the fullest. To know her was to be inspired by her, and she will be deeply missed. Rest Easy, Shipmate.

Update from the NOAA Corps Officer Training Center

Basic Officer Training Class (BOTC) 147 has completed the administrative and indoctrination phases of the training program. The Officer Candidates are now four weeks through their intensive training. They have entered the "Leading Self" phase which focuses on establishing foundational leadership skills and introduction to aviation and maritime specific training. Most recently, they traveled to Middletown, RI for First Aid/CPR and the ever-famous underwater egress training. This stage of the program encourages Officer Candidates to identify and refine their own skills in preparation for a gradual increase in leadership responsibilities. In all phases, key components of military bearing, marching, and drill formations are essential in reinforcing honor, respect, and commitment to service.



Photo credit: NOAA Social Media Coordinator



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COLA Living Pattern Survey (LPS)

The 2026 COLA Living Pattern Survey (LPS) is designed to collect data on shopping patterns of Service members and their families and will be used to assist in the determination of Overseas and CONUS Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) rates.

The survey is open to participants from January 1 through March 31, 2026. Service members and their families may access the survey at the following link:

<https://dod.go.mil/2026-lps>

This is an opportunity for the service community at-large to participate in the COLA process. The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and only one survey per household should be completed by the primary shopper. Service members will be asked to select which goods and services they regularly purchase and the percentage of shopping they complete off-base, on-base, and online.

Your continued support in promoting the survey within your communities is greatly appreciated.

New PCS Travel Voucher DD 1351-2 Form

A new version of the DD 1351-2 (Travel Voucher or Subvoucher) has been released (Revision: November 2025) and is now mandatory for all future Permanent Change of Station (PCS) travel voucher submissions.

Officers can find the updated form on the CPC Intranet under the Personnel Management section, specifically within the [PCS & PCA page](#).

All PCS vouchers will be submitted using this new version of the form. Detailed, updated instructions on how to properly complete the November 2025 revision are forthcoming.

Please ensure you are utilizing the current form for any upcoming PCS moves to avoid processing delays.

From the Assignment Desk: #0211: Staff Officer, UMSD

The Uncrewed Systems Operations Center (UxSOC) is seeking a motivated junior officer to fill a critical shore assignment within the Uncrewed Marine Systems Division (UMSD) in Gulfport, Mississippi. The position offers a unique opportunity to work with cutting-edge technology, including uncrewed surface vehicles (USV) and autonomous underwater vehicles (AUV) that support a variety of NOAA missions.

Billet Title: Staff Officer

Duty Type: Mobile (Up to 180 days at sea)

Description: This versatile position assists the UMSD team with administrative, logistical, and operational tasks. The officer will be trained to perform duties as a UMS Operator/Pilot, deploying from both NOAA vessels and shore-based locations to execute missions for various Line Office programs. Completion of a first sea tour and qualification as an Officer of the Deck (OOD) is strongly preferred.

Interested officers should ensure their up-to-date assignment preferences are reflected in their Official Personnel File (OPF) and reach out to the assignment coordinator, LCDR Melissa Trede at assignmentbranch.cpc@noaa.gov, if interested.

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