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NPS, NSAM Communities Reflect on Pearl Harbor

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Today@NPS



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Shawn J. Stewart

NPS, NSAM Communities Reflect on Pearl Harbor

By MC2 Shawn J. Stewart

Defense Innovation Unit Experimental Military Deputy Rear Adm. Daniel "Brian" Hendrickson, delivers the keynote speech during the 2015 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Dinner in the Barbara McNitt Ballroom, Dec. 4. Hendrickson paid tribute to the fallen heroes of Pearl Harbor and spoke about the Navy's need for innovation in the midst of an ever-changing technological warfare climate.

"It's truly an honor and a privilege to recognize and pay tribute to our fallen heroes from the attack on Pearl Harbor 74 years ago," said Hendrickson. The results of that attack stunned our nation, leaving 2,400 Americans dead and another 1,200 injured, he stressed.

Hendrickson also shared a little known story about an innovation adopted by the Navy and used the morning of the infamous attack.

"That morning, at 6:45 a.m., Army Pvts. Joseph L. Lockard and George E. Elliot were conducting training on a new technology called 'radar,'" said Hendrickson. "During that training, the cathode grey screen lit up. What they were seeing was the first wave of 183 aircraft, 130 miles at sea. They were sure that what they were seeing was the system gone haywire."

The confused privates reported the contacts to Lt. Kermit Tyler who assumed that they were returning U.S. bombers. He instructed Lockard and Elliot to ignore the signals and continue training. They complied, but followed the contacts all the way to Oahu.

"In the wake of the attack, the military realized that although we possessed the technology that would have provided the early warning required to scramble aircraft and to man the anti-aircraft guns ... We did not develop a

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plan for the proper integration of that technology," said Hendrickson.

Hendrickson also noted that universities like NPS are critical to both fostering and developing innovative technologies, like the early radar system used by Elliot and Lockard, as well as integrating them into existing national defense strategy.

"Institutions like NPS are key and essential enablers of our Navy, our joint force, and our coalition partners as we seek collectively to avoid the type of strategic surprise that we endured on Dec. 7, 1941," said Hendrickson.

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