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Longtime Naval War College Professor Hal Blanton Honored

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U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Lewis Hunsaker

Longtime Naval War College Professor Hal Blanton Honored

By MC1 Lewis Hunsaker

Naval War College (NWC) Monterey Chairman Professor Fred Drake presents a Meritorious Civilian Service Award recognizing NWC Associate Chair and Dr. Harold (Hal) Blanton for 18-years of dedicated service to the program during an award ceremony in the Trident Room, April 27. The event also served as a retirement ceremony for Blanton who has been part of the NWC Monterey program since its inception in August of 1999.

"I came to NPS in August of 1999 with Donald Stoker and Fred Drake. I felt like I won the lottery when I got this job" said Blanton. "Being the first group, it was definitely a learning experience for the three of us. It took us a few years but we eventually got settled in."

Throughout the years, there were many changes, Blanton says, to include switching from a trimester to a quarterly system, faculty increasing from three to 18, and the changes to the curriculum.

"I have had some really good groups of students over the years," said Blanton. "I have stayed in contact with students dating as far back as 2000 with one former student returning as a professor. It's interesting to teach students that are also professionals.

"As we watch the events around the world, it makes you feel that what we are doing here at NPS really helps and matters," Blanton continued. "And hopefully the service we are providing makes the students' jobs a bit easier, or at least more understandable. The military is changing so we have to change with it. As long as we keep a flexible mind, we will do a good job," Blanton said.

In closing, Blanton reflected on the first time he saw Monterey as a young man back in 1964 when he completed Army training at the former Ft. Ord.

"After the Army, I returned to the area to watch races at Laguna Seca," said Blanton. "I always loved this area and I thought if I could just make a living here. Years later the War College helped me achieve that goal."

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