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NPS Base Commander completes NPS-CHDS Executive Leaders Program

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NPS Base Commander completes NPS-CHDS Executive Leaders Program

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Brian
Seals

August 24, 2018

Captain Rich “Coyote” Wiley, Commanding Officer of Naval Support Activity Monterey, found an ideal way to learn more about emerging homeland security challenges without leaving the Naval Postgraduate School campus.

Wiley completed the Center for Homeland Defense and Security Executive Leaders Program August 16, the first Commanding Officer to do so in the 12-year history of the course. The ELP is a nine-month, graduate-style program aimed at senior leaders from the public and private sector to broaden their understanding of homeland security issues.

As the Commanding Officer of a Naval installation, Captain Wiley oversees the operation and safety of 14 properties to include the Naval Postgraduate School campus, the nearby Navy Research Lab (NRL), the Fleet Numerical Meteorology and Oceanography Center (FNMOC) as well as numerous Government Owned but Contractor Operated production facilities located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, Sunnyvale, Camp Roberts Air National Guard Base, and Dixon Radar Facility.



NSAM Base Commander Captain Rich “Coyote” Wiley completed the NPS-CHDS Executive Leaders Program August 16. (Photo courtesy of NSAM Public Affairs)

For Wiley, homeland security is installation security.

“My number one priority and question I ask every day is, ‘are we ready to fight this base tonight?’” “Have we done the due diligence and training to give ourselves options when the fight comes to us or the disaster occurs? In order for me to fight this base tonight, I need the help of outside agencies – the same people that were in the ELP program. The professionals in the program represent the Subject Matter Experts I rely upon to provide the services and counsel I need to support this \$1.5 billion asset.”

Studying with senior leaders from the public and private sector reinforced that interagency collaboration is essential to security. His role ensuring the safety of all who work and study not only at NPS but at all his properties is an all-hazards concern – infamous California earthquakes and wildfires that affect personnel, infrastructure, intruders jumping the gates as well as terrorism threats are just some of the headaches.

Just days after completing the ELP, Captain Wiley was overseeing a three-day force protection exercise at the installation reflecting the kinds of issues and real-world scenarios covered in the course. Additionally, Captain Wiley is in the process of connecting with senior leadership and emergency staff from the Presidio of Monterey, as well as Monterey County and city leadership, to work on exercising against shared potential threats in a setting mirroring the ELP classroom.

For example, should a wildfire, earthquake or some other catastrophic event call for evacuating the area, how would the area Emergency Management entities work together as partners to facilitate the flow of traffic on the limited roadways leaving the Monterey Peninsula? Or should a gunman scale a building or tower with intent to do harm, how would the various organizations work together to attack the scenario to neutralize, stabilize and recover?

“We will be taking a recent, real world shooting or a natural disaster scenario and present it within a Monterey Peninsula and County framework and have the CHDS staff coach us through the process to ensure we are on the same sheet,” he said.

Wiley is a Naval Aviator who assumed command of NSAM in December 2016. He earned master’s degree in 2006 from the Naval War College, but firmly believes in the necessity of lifelong learning opportunities such as the ELP.

“The ELP with the CHDS is priceless in that it is educating professional’s right here in Monterey,” he said. “I didn’t want to be that CO who didn’t tap into this incredible resource right on my base. The friends that I met through the ELP are so knowledgeable and proficient in their craft and on a daily basis use that expertise to help people and places through very bad situations serves only to reinforce my confidence that if and when a tragic event occurs here in the Monterey area, there are professionals out there we can lean on to help us through. That is huge.”

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