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MACO Graduate Commissioned to Warrant Officer

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MACO Graduate Commissioned to Warrant Officer

MC2 Patrick Dionne | December 7, 2018

MACO Graduate Commissioned to Warrant Officer



Chief Cryptologic Technician (Networks) Kurt Myers was commissioned to Chief Warrant Officer 2 in a ceremony held on the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) campus, Nov. 30. Myers, a recent graduate of NPS' Master of Applied Cyber Operations (MACO) program, is one of a very few enlisted Sailors to be selected for commission while enrolled at NPS.

“It feels surreal to be commissioned, but it was sad to not be a chief anymore because I really liked being a Chief,” said Myers. “When I found out, I was surprised, happy, excited but it was a long nine-month wait to finally be commissioned.

“There is this initial excitement when the results come but there is a lot of planning involved,” he continued. “Fortunately, the chief’s mess pulled together and helped me out with a lot of the small details and I really appreciated that.”

The rank of Warrant Officer is that of a commissioned technical specialist who directs specific activities essential to strategic operations that require a higher level of authority. The highly-competitive commissioning program is only available to high-performing chief petty officers with a minimum of 14 years of service.

“Being a Chief Warrant Officer to me means that I hold a lot of responsibility that not a lot of people in the Navy get, so it is an honor to take on that challenge but it is also a little intimidating because I want to live up to those expectations,” said Myers.

“There is a lot of history behind what Warrant Officers are supposed to be doing,” he continued. “They are tasked with being subject matter experts and to me my responsibility is to provide that expertise in operations, making sure the junior sailors know how to execute the mission while the senior officers are advised on the technical details that matter to the mission.”

Myers first enlisted in the Navy as an Information Systems Technician in 2003. He would eventually go on to cross-rate to Cryptologic Technician Networks, at the time a still new and emerging field. From 2008-2017 Myers would take part in hundreds of high priority cyber operations while rising to the rank of chief petty officer.

In 2017, Myers was accepted into NPS’ MACO program following the completion of his bachelor’s degree in Computer Networks and Cyber Security from University of Maryland’s University College, which he earned on his own time.

“I just graduated in September from the MACO program which is a one year program for enlisted personnel to come to NPS and get a Master in Applied Cyber Operations,” said Myers. “It is a lot more fast-paced than other degree programs because they are expecting you to already have a pretty strong background in the subject matter.

“When you come here, you don’t get any refresher courses and you have to hit the ground running and focus on your studies because you’re expected to finish a capstone and graduate within a year of checking on board,” Myers continued.

Myers was one of six enlisted Sailors in his graduating cohort, and is the only program at NPS open to enlisted personnel. The MACO program was designed to bridge the gap in the Navy’s still growing need of highly-trained cyber professionals. Myers’ research was recognized as an “Outstanding Thesis” while attending the program.

“I had a lot of training as an enlisted person but I was missing the education and I think there is a big difference,” said Myers. “Coming here I was able to get the education too and now as a warrant officer I will be able to lean on my training and capitalize on my education and ideally that will make me a lot more effective.”

The ceremony included key remarks from NPS’ Information Warfare Chair Navy Capt. Clark Bone, who remarked on Myers’ outstanding service and his road ahead. The ceremony also included gifts and remarks from other members of the Monterey Chief Petty Officers mess before it concluded with Myers buying his first salute from his niece, Seaman Savanna DiDomenico, currently studying at the nearby Defense Language Institute.

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