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Fellowship Connects NPS Information Warfare Students to NIWC Pacific Needs

MC2 Lenny Weston | December 2, 2022



The latest cohort of Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Pacific Fellows, from left Lt. Matthew Coleman, Lt. Ashley Dodd, Lt. Jacob Dwyer, Lt. Cmdr. Marianna Luporini and Marine Corps Capt. Ryan Helm, are pictured with Naval Warfare Studies Institute Director Marine Corps Col. Randy Pugh on the steps of Herrmann Hall at NPS.

Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific (NIWC Pacific) selected five U.S Navy and Marine Corps students from the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) for the prestigious NIWC Pacific Fellowship. These warrior-scholars are directly connecting their education, ideas and research to fleet information warfare (IW) force design objectives in support of the capabilities necessary to counter adversary forces, improve command and control across the fleet, and to persistently cover the maritime battlespace for decision advantage.

The partnership between the two organizations provides a direct connection between the alignment select NPS research efforts with NIWC Pacific focus areas, advancing the impact of NPS education and research programs in IW for the U.S. Navy and DOD. In addition, the partnership lays the groundwork for future technical and project management assignments for NPS graduates at NIWC Pacific.

“The NIWC Pacific Fellowship at NPS supports our warrior scholars in their thesis research,” said Dr. Kevin Smith, NPS Vice Provost for Research. “This support helps provide awareness of some NPS research activities to NIWC Pacific, and serves to promote collaboration between our organizations. It also provides an opportunity for NPS warrior scholars to engage with one of the Navy’s premier Naval Research and Development Establishment (NR&DE) warfare centers, highlighting the value of warfare center activity in support of the fleet, and the Fleet Marine Force.”

“The fellowship is about showcasing the naval-relevant education and defense-unique research that is done at NPS,” added J.D. Morrison, NIWC Pacific liaison to NPS.

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NIWC Pacific Fellowships last 6 to 18 months, depending on the type of research. They allow NPS students to work closely with their thesis advisor and a mentor from the Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) who will guide them in their research. These interactions not only provide networking relationships that students can use throughout their time at NPS, they also foster long-term professional associations that can last a career.

“This partnership allows NPS students to produce a higher-quality research product in support of NIWC initiatives, and therefore, provide the DOD with more relevant research,” said U.S. Navy Lt. Matt Coleman, current NPS student and one of the five selected for the fellowship. “NIWC personnel are the subject-matter experts in their fields ... Having a mentor working with us here at NPS has already been a great asset to my research efforts, and that expertise will continue to prove very useful to my research.”

Coleman’s research focuses on a control system for the Wreck Interior Exploration Vehicle (WIEVLE), a foot-wide spherical autonomous underwater vehicle developed by previous students at NPS that provides a scalable, modular and expendable effects-delivery mechanism designed for operations within confined spaces, littoral, entanglement-prone or deep-sea extremes.

Another recently-selected NIWC Pacific Fellow, U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Ryan Helm, is using his opportunity to conduct geospatial data analysis research to support infantry leaders' mission planning. Helm plans on developing a prototype for the Android Team Awareness Kit (ATAK) to conduct field testing at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., in December.

"Warfare is both art and science. We can leverage new technologies and methods to rapidly optimize the science, while freeing human cognitive load to focus on decision trade-offs and the art of warfare," Helm said.

For these new fellows, Smith says, this is a great chance to showcase how NPS’ defense-focused, naval-unique education and research coupled with the innovative, technological expertise of NIWC, can enhance the student experience and maximize the impact of their work.

"This partnership provides NPS faculty and students access to NIWC Pacific's capabilities and engineering personnel," explained Smith. "Likewise, this partnership offers NIWC Pacific engineers and researchers access to NPS expertise and the operational experience of its warrior scholars, which is highly valued throughout the Naval Research and Development Establishment."

"The NIWC Fellowship is an avenue for students to attain research funding on campus," added Coleman. "In addition to providing their expertise and mentorship, the partnership offers student researchers access to testing facilities and resources that are simply not available at NPS."

For these warrior scholars, it provides an opportunity to see their hard work and dedication to the DOD go beyond an idea. It offers them a chance to develop their innovative solutions and become better innovation leaders.

"Theses projects are published. They're sent to DISA [Defense Information Systems Agency] and to the library, and for far too many of them, that's the last time anybody's going to hear about them," said Morrison. "What we're hoping is that, by connecting the research to ongoing developmental projects at a lab-like network, there will be greater chances of that work being used in a larger sense rather than becoming a dust collecting binder on a library shelf."

Since its establishment in 1994, the NIWC Pacific and NPS partnership has awarded an impressive 215 student fellowships.

In addition to the selection of Helm and Coleman, additional NIWC Fellows selected with this cohort include U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Marianna Luporini, and Lts. Ashley Dodd and Jacob Dwyer. Their studies and applied research at NIWC Pacific contributes directly to the development of innovative warfighting solutions and naval leaders educated to employ them.

[Happy Holidays to the NPS Community!](#)

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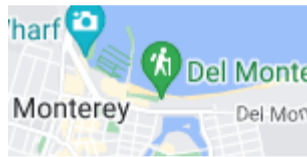
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