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January 1, 2022

Your Navy

By [Geoff Ziezulewicz](#)



Saturday, Jan 1



Lt. Mitchell Kempisty has invented a product that keeps coverall nametags from getting curled and wrinkly, and it's now for sale. (Naval Postgraduate School)

Years ago, Navy Lt. Mitchell Kempisty saw a problem that needed fixing.

Namely, the name tag on his coveralls kept wrinkling and curling during the rigors of warship life.

“They just look really bad,” he said this spring. “People just walk around looking disheveled with that nametag. It’s the first thing you notice.”

So, he set about creating and then patenting a simple invention to fix this “unsat” look.

And now, Kempisty has teamed with one of the nation’s biggest military insignia companies to bring his invention to other service members.

Kempisty's basic concept is simple: a backing board attached to the back of the nametag that has its own Velcro to attach to the uniform, keeping the nametag straight and true in the process.

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Meet the sailor who wants to make your coverall nametag look less crappy.

The junior officer's invention came about after he noticed that nametags weren't holding up to the wear and tear of shipboard life.

By Geoff Ziezulewicz

"The Enforcer," as it's been named by Vanguard, the military insignia company, gives a stiffer spine to name tags on coveralls, flight suits and other uniforms, preventing the curled and tattered edges that look anything but squared away.

"When I began the invention that has become 'The Enforcer,' all I wanted to do was to fix the sloppy, curled, wrinkled mess that I saw as my coverall name tag," Kempisty told Navy Times. "To have 'The Enforcer' on shelves means the world to me, as it signals the culmination point of three years of effort."

Vanguard officials read a prior Navy Times article about Kempisty's invention earlier this year and realized it would fit their existing product line, according to Michael Harrison, the company's chief operating officer.

The company entered into a licensing agreement with Kempisty, and the product is now available online.

Vanguard is also negotiating to get the product on shelves in military exchanges, Harrison said.

“It was a good idea,” he said of the product, which is not a mandated piece of insignia. “For the guy who wants to stand out among his peers, this product provides a service.”

Kempisty, who graduated with an engineering degree from the U.S. Naval Academy in 2014, said it took nearly three years to move his idea from the lightbulb stage to prototype.

He bought a basic 3D printer, futzed around with it on his dining room table during his off time, learned computer-aided design, or CAD, and then cranked out a prototype.

A childhood friend and patent attorney helped him legally lock the idea down.

Kempisty graduated from the Naval Post Graduate School in December with a master’s degree in aeronautical engineering and is joining the guided-missile destroyer Mason as its operations officer.

“My hope is that ‘The Enforcer’ becomes a standard purchase, to protect and enhance the appearance of anyone wearing a working uniform with identification: name tag, unit patch or other,” he said. “This could apply whether in the military, or other professions or activities performed in uniform.

About Geoff Ziezulewicz

Geoff is a senior staff reporter for Military Times, focusing on the Navy. He covered Iraq and Afghanistan extensively and was most recently a reporter at the Chicago Tribune. He welcomes any and all kinds of tips at geoffz@militarytimes.com.

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