

NAVAIR employees graduate from national leadership development programs

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HEADQUARTERS, NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. - One hundred nineteen NAVAIR civilians and military members recently graduated from the NAVAIR Leadership Development Program (NLDP) and Journey Leadership Development Program (JLDP).

Administered by NAVAIR's Career Planning and Development Division, a part of the Human Capital Management Dept., both programs help prepare mid- to senior-grade employees to learn and master leadership skills more effectively. Over the course of several years, participants take classroom-based leadership development courses and online training, shadow senior leaders, find a mentor and engage in professional reading, among other things.

One of the classes focuses on Emergenetics — a measurable way to recognize and apply the thinking and behavior patterns people use regularly at work and in their communication and interpersonal relationships — which several graduates said they benefited from.

"Emergenetics was by far my favorite, because it showed a deep respect for synergy and diversity of opinions and thoughts and made me understand the power in those differences," said Will Jones, deputy assistant program manager logistics, PMA-207 C-130/T AOU Program. "You really had to be honest with how you see yourself, and that honesty reveals so much if you're willing to be vulnerable to yourself and others around you."

Ray Delcher, an electronics engineer, said he learned his team functions better with each of the Emergenetics types represented.

"I've been interested in personal growth for a long time, and I thought that I had an awareness, if not an understanding, of most of the valuable material," Delcher, a JLDP graduate, said, "but I was totally unaware of Emergenetics."

As a result of their participation in the programs, the graduates have gone on to apply their skills and lessons to their daily jobs.

Jones, a member of the 2016 NLDP cohort, said he has used his new network and leadership communication skills as he provides logistics support for the fleet.

Shira Oberkirsch, another 2016 NLDP cohort member, went on a job rotation with NAVAIR's AIRSpeed Office, where she created the "Spark" ideation tool to replace the former digital suggestion box, and began developing a "Digital Toolbox," which now houses links to more than 200 digital tools for the workforce. Her team also launched the Digital Influencer network and the DigitaLink Speaker series.

Deputy Division Head/Contracting Officer Ayana Graham, a member of the 2017 NLDP cohort, said her contributions have been limitless.

"I was exposed to meeting so many speakers, within NAVAIR and other organizations," she said. "I had the opportunity to communicate all that I learned to my co-workers. I was able to empower my team by applying what I learned in my NLDP courses to everyday situations. Based on the amazing leadership courses, opportunities to meet others from other organizations and shadowing opportunities, I was able to leverage all this knowledge, which enabled me to become a better leader and eventually get promoted within the organization."

NLDP and JLDP have existed since 2008 and 2012, respectively, to cultivate a community of leaders at all levels trained to increase effectiveness.

"I was impressed with how [in NLDP] you focus on yourself as a leader first, and then see your interaction and influence with others," Jones said. "Career development never stops, and nor should it, as every day is a new chance to be more, do more and aspire to more."

Because of social distancing requirements, the graduates will be recognized at the next national graduation ceremony.

For more on NAVAIR's career development initiatives, visit <https://jobs.navair.navy.mil/training>