Career Opportunities After Graduation

Recognizing that priorities, goals, and abilities can change a lot in four years, I sought the flexibility to change my mind and still be able to contribute to a greater mission. I found that here.
—Midshipman Genevieve Studer, Class of 2008

The Naval Academy devvelops midshipmen morally, mentally and physically to serve as combat leaders of character for our Navy and Marine Corps. Graduation from the Naval Academy brings new opportunities for leadership, learning, professional advancement, travel and excitement. From the very first assignment as an officer in the naval service Naval Academy graduates will have more responsibility and challenge on the job than almost any civilian just out of college. Many of our recent graduates are leaders of sailors and Marines throughout the world on forward-deployed ships, submarines, squadrons, SEAL teams or in Marine units.

Your service commitment begins at graduation, when you are commissioned as an ensign in the Navy or a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. All physically qualified graduates are commissioned into the unrestricted line of the Navy or Marine Corps. Most midshipmen who graduate but are physically ineligible to serve in the unrestricted line are commissioned in a restricted line or staff corps specialty such as Intelligence, Supply Corps or Civil Engineer Corps.

Service Assignment

The career options available to Naval Academy graduates are the broadest offered by any of the nation's service academies. You can:

- specialize in surface warfare, with assignments aboard ships ranging from guided missile destroyers to amphibious ships deployed in expeditionary strike groups.;
- enter the submarine service, with duty aboard nuclear-powered attack and ballistic missile submarines;
- fly a variety of aircraft from helicopters and shore-based patrol planes to supersonic, aircraft carrier-based jet fighters;
- command infantry, armor, artillery or aviation units as a Marine Corps officer; and
- lead the most talented and highly motivated Sailors and Marines in the world, no matter what career path you choose.

Sign on and Sail with me. The stature of our homeland is no more than the measure of ourselves. Our job is to keep her free. Our will is to keep the torch of freedom burning for all. To this solemn purpose we call on the young, the brave and the strong, and the free. Heed my call. Come to the sea. Come Sail with me.
—John Paul Jones

You will be given the opportunity to state your career preference early during your senior year. Actual assignment to that community is based upon the needs of the Navy and Marine Corps, your overall record at the Naval Academy, and personal and physical qualifications.

Surface Warfare

Surface warfare officers serve in every type of surface ship in the Navy. When you are selected for surface warfare, you have the opportunity to choose the type of ship and home port of your first duty assignment. Then, after graduation from the Academy, you report to your ship. Your first tour of duty lasts about 24 months.

A new ensign typically serves as a division officer, with responsibilities for leading 12 to 50 enlisted personnel and directing a portion of the ship's equipment and operations. Typical positions include those of anti-submarine warfare officer, gunnery officer, communications officer and damage control assistant. In addition, you are expected to work toward qualification as combat information center watch officer, officer of the deck and Navy surface warfare officer.

Nuclear Propulsion — Surface

The Navy's demanding and highly technical nuclear power training program is among the best in the world. Those chosen for the program usually rank high in their class and have a solid background in scientific and technical courses, though not necessarily majors in these areas.

Midshipmen who choose surface warfare can join those choosing submarines in pursuing a sub-specialty in nuclear propulsion systems. If you are accepted into the nuclear power program, you report to Nuclear Power School in Charleston, S.C., for six months of schooling following your first division officer tour. You then train for six months at one of several nuclear reactor prototype sites located throughout the country before reporting to your second ship.

All of the Navy's submarines are nuclear-powered. Most aircraft carriers are nuclear powered and surface warfare officers alternate between these and conventionally powered ships as they advance in their careers.

Submarine Force

Those assigned to the silent service begin by studying Navy nuclear propulsion at Nuclear Power School in Charleston, S.C., for six months of schooling, followed by six months of training at one of several nuclear reactor prototype sites located throughout the country.

You then go to Navy Submarine School in New London, Conn., for the 10-week submarine officers basic course. Your first tour of duty with an attack or fleet ballistic missile submarine lasts about 36 months.

In a nuclear submarine, junior officers lead divisions of 10 to 20 men. You have responsibilities in a vital area of operations such as engineering, weapons or communications. You also stand watches and work to qualify as engineering officer of the watch, diving officer and officer of the deck — all steps towards earning the gold dolphins of a Navy submarine officer.

Knowledge of the oceans is more than a matter of curiosity; our very survival may hinge on it.
—President John F. Kennedy

No man needs sympathy because he has to work, because he has a burden to carry. Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.
—President Theodore Roosevelt

Naval Aviation

Whether landing an F/A-18 Hornet on the deck of an aircraft carrier, conducting maritime surveillance in the Persian Gulf in a P-3 Orion or maneuvering an SH-60F helicopter in a rescue operation, naval aviators are constantly called upon to perform under pressure. When you are assigned this career path, you can select training as a pilot or a naval flight officer. Pilots fly aircraft while naval flight officers serve as weapons systems officers, electronic countermeasures officers and technical coordinators.

After graduation from the Academy, all those choosing aviation report to Pensacola, Fla., for Aviation Preflight Indoctrination. Pilot trainees may either stay in Pensacola or move to Corpus Christi, Texas, for basic flight training. Depending on the type of aircraft/training track chosen after basic, pilots may complete advanced training at several training bases throughout the Gulf Coast. Naval flight officers (NFOs) complete all of their flight training in Pensacola or at Randolph Air Force Base in Texas. Aviators receive their 'wings of gold' after 18-24 months for pilots and 12-18 months for NFOs. They are assigned to their first squadron after six to nine months of aircraft and mission-specific training in a fleet replacement squadron.

In addition to flying, naval aviators have significant leadership and management responsibilities beginning with their very first duty assignment. New officers typically are charged with leading a group of aviation enlisted personnel and overseeing their squadron's operations, administration, personnel management and aircraft maintenance.

Among the men who fought on Iwo Jima, uncommon valor was a common virtue.
—Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Class of 1905

Marine Corps

Up to one-sixth of each graduating class may be chosen for commissioning as second lieutenants in the Marine Corps. After graduation from the Academy, you attend the Basic School, a 26-week course for officers at Quantico, Va. This school gives all Marine officers a common background in the tactical study of land warfare. Then you go on to advanced training in a particular occupational specialty based on your qualifications and preferences.

Marine Corps career fields include those in the two basic categories of ground and air. Ground career choices include infantry, armor, artillery, logistics, engineering, communications-information systems, financial management and military police. Aviation choices include pilot, naval flight officer, air command and control, anti-air warfare, aviation maintenance and aviation supply.

In their first assignments, Marine Corps second lieutenants are generally assigned as platoon commanders with leadership responsibilities for 35 to 43 enlisted Marines. You often have a role in a Marine air/ground task force, with Marine light infantry capable of opposing much more heavily equipped forces. Meshing of air and ground officers in these task forces and individual units gives officers the opportunity later to command combined units, not just within career specialties. Marine officers are assigned all over the world.

Special Operations and Special Warfare

Special Operations includes: Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), Mine Countermeasures (MCM), Operational Diving and Salvage (ODS), and Explosive Ordnance Management (EOM). Explosive Ordnance and diving provide the common base which assures compatibility of the four functional areas. Special Operations offers men and women an exciting career and command opportunity in a small specialized community.

Special Warfare provides qualified officers the opportunity to be a member of one of the world's elite fighting forces, Navy SEALs (Sea, Air and Land forces) are known and respected around the world.

Restricted Line and Staff Corps Specialties

Midshipmen who are not physically qualified to serve in the unrestricted line but who can be commissioned as active duty officers can choose from a wide variety of alternatives and pursue a career. Restricted line and staff corps officers may choose careers in the fields of intelligence, cryptology, oceanography, medicine, civil engineering, supply and aviation maintenance. They serve aboard ships, with aircraft squadrons and at shore bases around the world. Graduating midshipmen who are accepted to medical school may be commissioned in the Medical Corps even if physically qualified to serve in the unrestricted line.

Assignments for Women

Military service is just that: service. I wanted to protect the values that I hold as the pillars of freedom. At a civilian college, I knew that my time and efforts would be concentrated on myself. I decided I would prefer to focus on doing what I could to support others without sacrificing my own.
—Midshipman Genevieve Studer, Class of 2008

For female officers in the Navy and Marine Corps, many options are open to you to serve in assignments vital to our national defense. You may fly planes as a pilot or naval flight officer or serve on combatant ships as a surface warfare officer. Women may also enter restricted line or staff corps specialties such as oceanography, intelligence, supply or civil engineering if not physically qualified for aviation, ships or Marine Corps.

You also may choose to enter the Marine Corps. Women Marine Corps officers can be assigned to all career fields available to male officers, except infantry, artillery and armor.

A very limited number of billets in medicine are available each year to both male and female graduates who are accepted for admission by an accredited medical school.

Career Choices of the Class of 2007

The members of the Class of 2007 chose the following service and warfare specialties to enter after graduation and commissioning:

Aviation:
- Pilot Training — 256
- Naval Flight Officer Training — 94

Surface Warfare:
- Conventional — 239
- Nuclear — 36

Marine Corps: 213

Submarine warfare: 116

Navy Restricted Line and Staff Corps: 11
- including men not physically qualified for the unrestricted line duties above, elected specialization in aviation maintenance duty, cryptology, intelligence, supply corps, civil engineer corps and meteorology/oceanography

Medical Corps: 10

Special Warfare (SEAL): 26

Special Operations (diving, salvage and explosive ordnance disposal): 15

Typical Pay and Allowances for Junior Naval Officers

This table shows the approximate pay and allowances of Navy and Marine Corps junior officers. Promotion to Navy lieutenant (junior grade) or Marine Corps first lieutenant normally comes two years after commissioning. The next promotion, to Navy lieutenant or Marine Corps captain, normally comes four to five years after commissioning. All of these figures, including cost-of-living increases, are subject to change.

Monthly Pay and Allowances

	ENS/2nd LT	LTJG/1st LT	LT/CAPT
Base Pay	$ 2,469.30	$ 3,239.70	$ 4,392.00
Subsistence	$ 192.74	$ 192.74	$ 192.74
Housing Allowance*	$ 1,350.00 (single)	1587.00 (single)	$ 1,740.00 (single)
	$ 1,665.00 (family)	$ 1,795.00 (family)	$ 2,008.00 (family)
Sea Duty Pay**	$ 100.00	$ 100.00	$ 225.00
Flight Pay**	$ 125.00	$ 156.00	$ 206.00
Submarine Pay**	$ 230.00	$ 305.00	$ 510.00
Nuclear Power Incentive	$12,500 upon completion of nuclear power training		

** Varies based on rank and location assigned. Figures here represent amounts for junior*

I applied to the Naval Academy because I saw opportunities in its curriculum and mission that I didn't find anywhere else. I knew that I wanted to work with people and spend as little time behind a desk as I could manage.
—Midshipman Genevieve Studer, Class of 2008

officers living in Annapolis, MD.
***Amounts shown are approximate and will increase with each year in service.*

After Your First Tour of Duty

By the time you complete your first tour of duty, you will probably have a pretty good idea about your career goals, and the Navy and Marine Corps will give you every opportunity to achieve them. You will have assignments to prepare you for advancement and command of a surface ship, submarine, aircraft squadron, Marine Corps unit or an organization ashore.

Naval officers alternate between tours of duty with shore-based units and operational commands that deploy overseas in support of our nation's maritime strategy. You also have the opportunity for postgraduate study, advanced technical training in your specialty