NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
Monterey, California

THESIS

AN ASSESSMENT OF
THE SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER PROGRAM
AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

by

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June 2000

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DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 4

20000818 060

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY *(Leave blank)*	**2. REPORT DATE** June 2000	**3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED** Master's Thesis

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE :
AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER PROGRAM AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

5. FUNDING NUMBERS

6. AUTHOR(S)
Richardson, David K.

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
Naval Postgraduate School
Monterey, CA 93943-5000

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES
The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.

12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE

13. ABSTRACT *(maximum 200 words)*

This thesis is an assessment of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program at the United States Naval Academy. Specifically, this thesis documents the background and presents an assessment of the program. The author conducted 34 focused interviews--four of these interviews were conducted with key personnel involved in the founding and implementation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program in its early years. The other 30 interviews were conducted with the 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders to gain insight into the current operation of the program from their perspective. The data analysis yielded eight themes related to the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. Six of these themes present positive aspects of the program, and two of these themes address areas for improvement. Overall, the data suggest that the Senior Enlisted Leader Program has had a significant positive impact on the leadership development of midshipmen and the Naval Academy as a whole.

14. SUBJECT TERMS
Leadership, Leadership Development

15. NUMBER OF PAGES
108

16. PRICE CODE

17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	**18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE** Unclassified	**19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT** Unclassified	**20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT** UL

NSN 7540-01-280-5500

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 2-89)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. 239-18

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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER PROGRAM AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
LEADERSHIP AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
June 2000

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an assessment of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program at the United States Naval Academy. Specifically, this thesis documents the background and presents an assessment of the program. The author conducted 34 focused interviews--four of these interviews were conducted with key personnel involved in the founding and implementation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program in its early years. The other 30 interviews were conducted with the 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders to gain insight into the current operation of the program from their perspective. The data analysis yielded eight themes related to the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. Six of these themes present positive aspects of the program, and two of these themes address areas for improvement. Overall, the data suggest that the Senior Enlisted Leader Program has had a significant positive impact on the leadership development of midshipmen and the Naval Academy as a whole.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Founded in 1845, the United States Naval Academy develops young men and women to become officers in the Naval Service upon graduation. Leadership training is stressed throughout the four-year Naval Academy experience, including senior midshipmen leading the rest of the Brigade of Midshipmen during their final year. Upon graduation, the vast majority of midshipmen report for duties as a division officer or platoon commander in the Fleet. In these roles, they are charged with leading enlisted Sailors and Marines.

When newly commissioned officers from the Naval Academy report to the Fleet, most have a senior enlisted man or woman in their division or platoon, usually a Chief or Gunnery Sergeant, to guide and assist them. However, until recently, nothing directly prepared midshipmen for this officer-senior enlisted relationship. In the fall of 1994, a new program, the Senior Enlisted Leader Program, was instituted at the Naval Academy to improve the leadership development of midshipmen.

The Senior Enlisted Leader Program ensures that midshipmen have direct interaction with senior enlisted Sailors and Marines throughout the four-year curriculum. A Chief Petty Officer, Senior Chief Petty Officer, Master Chief Petty Officer, or a Gunnery Sergeant is currently assigned to each of the 30 companies in Bancroft Hall. These senior enlisted assist the Company Officer in the day-to-day running of the

company, but mainly serve as mentors and advisors to midshipmen with regard to the officer-enlisted relationship.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to conduct an assessment of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program at the United States Naval Academy. Specifically, this research examines in detail the development and implementation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program beginning in the fall of 1994. Additionally, this research examines the current operation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program within Bancroft Hall from the perspective of the Senior Enlisted Leaders currently assigned to the Naval Academy. Finally, this thesis outlines strengths and weaknesses of the program and provides recommendations for improvements.

C. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Primary:

1. What is the history and purpose of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program at the United States Naval Academy?

Secondary:

1. What are the current roles and responsibilities of the Senior Enlisted Leaders? With regard to midshipmen? Within the Brigade hierarchy?
2. What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program? What seems to be working well? What is not working?
3. What should be the roles and responsibilities of the Senior Enlisted Leaders?

4. How is the effectiveness of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program currently being assessed?

5. Is there a need for a Senior Enlisted Leader's Handbook? If so, what guidance should be included in the handbook?

6. What improvements can be made to the current Senior Enlisted Leader Program?

D. SCOPE

To fully assess the Senior Enlisted Leader Program and its impact on the development of midshipmen, the program should be examined from several angles. First and foremost, it must be examined from the perspective of the senior enlisted personnel fulfilling the roles and responsibilities of Senior Enlisted Leaders on a daily basis. Next, the program should also be examined from the perspective of the Naval Academy Administration, namely the current Superintendent, Commandant of Midshipmen, Battalion Officers, Company Officers, and other faculty and staff. Ultimately, however, the full impact of the program can only be known by studying its impact from the perspective of current midshipmen and recent graduates who have benefited from the interaction with senior enlisted during their four years as midshipmen.

That said, this thesis is not an attempt to *fully* assess the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. The scope of this thesis is to document the history and the founding of the program, and to assess the program only *from the perspective of the current Senior Enlisted Leaders*. The insights and experiences of all 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders are used to examine the program from that perspective to the fullest extent possible.

E. METHODOLOGY

Interviews are the foundation of this thesis. The first part of the thesis uses interviews with the former Superintendent of the Naval Academy, Admiral Charles Larson, former Commandant of Midshipmen, Captain Randy Bogle, former Brigade Master Chief, Master Chief James Mitchell, and former Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, Master Chief John Hagan, to capture data on the history and founding of the Senior Enlisted Leader program. The combination of these four interviews provides an in-depth review of how and why the Senior Enlisted Leader Program was founded and initially implemented. Additionally, the interview with Admiral Larson is used to shed light on differences in midshipmen development between his first term as Superintendent in the early 1980s and his second term, which began almost in step with the institution of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program in 1994.

The second part of the thesis uses interviews with all 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders to gain insight into the current operation of the program. The contents of each of these interviews are combined to uncover any underlying themes resonating in the current program. Themes concerning strengths and weaknesses of the program, current roles and responsibilities, and areas for improvements, are all addressed from the perspective of the current Senior Enlisted Leaders.

F. ORGANIZATION

This thesis is divided into five chapters: Chapter II describes the research methods and interview methodologies used to collect data. Chapter III outlines in detail the history and founding process of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. Chapter IV discusses the current state of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program and summarizes the findings of the interviews with the 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders. Chapter V provides conclusions, recommendations for the future of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program, and recommendations for further research.

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II. RESEARCH METHODS

> Qualitative interviewing is more than a set of skills, it is also a philosophy, an approach to learning....understanding is achieved by encouraging people to describe their worlds in their own terms....interviewing involves a relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee that imposes obligations on both sides (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; p.2).

A. INTRODUCTION

First, it is important to understand the personal connection of the researcher to the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. A 1995 graduate of the Naval Academy, the researcher experienced first-hand as a midshipman the initial implementation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program in the fall of 1994. Furthermore, the seed of this thesis was planted from the researcher's reflection on the positive impact of the program for his own leadership development and performance as a junior officer in the Fleet.

With this in mind, the researcher acknowledges that purely objective research is not the goal of this thesis, nor is total neutrality probably ever a legitimate goal in qualitative research (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; p. 13). Rather than ignore personal experience, the researcher attempted to incorporate this experience in the data collection process. During the initial relationship-forming process, and prior to the commencement of each of the 34 interviews, the researcher explained his personal background with the program. In this way, the personal experience and positive bias of the researcher was acknowledged, understood by all parties, and utilized as an important tool in creating openness in the research process.

That said, this chapter discusses the qualitative methodology used in this thesis. Specifically, this chapter outlines the data collection methods, the personnel interviewed, the protocols used for each interview, and the data analysis.

B. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data for the history and founding of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program were obtained from in-depth interviews conducted with key personnel involved in the development and implementation process. Specifically, interviews were conducted with former two-time Superintendent of the Naval Academy, Admiral Charles Larson; former Commandant of Midshipmen, Captain Randy Bogle; and the first Brigade Master Chief, Master Chief James Mitchell. These three men were stationed at the Naval Academy in the top three officer and enlisted positions when the Senior Enlisted Leader Program was implemented from 1994-1997, and all three men played crucial roles in getting the program off the ground. Additionally, the researcher conducted an interview with the eighth Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, John Hagan, to gather data on the founding of the program from the perspective of the top leadership in the Navy. Also of note, the interview with Master Chief Hagan provides a data point from outside the walls of the Naval Academy. Appendix A provides a summary of interviews conducted for the background section of the program.

The data for the assessment section of this thesis were obtained from in-depth interviews conducted with all 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders. These 30 interviews were conducted in the respective office of each Senior Enlisted Leader in Bancroft Hall.

The interviews for this section of the thesis were done in this way for several reasons. First and foremost, the researcher attempted to create a climate of openness for the interview by conducting the interview in the comfortable setting of the interviewee's day-to-day working environment. Secondly, in several instances before, after, and throughout particular interviews, the researcher was able to directly observe interaction between Senior Enlisted Leaders, their Company Officers, and their midshipmen. While these observations did not constitute direct data collection, they did aid the researcher in understanding the context within which the current program operates. This direct, personal contact and observation of the program context is essential to gaining a holistic perspective (Patton, 1980; p.125).

Of note, rather than use a sample of Senior Enlisted Leaders for data collection, the researcher decided to interview *all 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders*. The researcher believed that in doing so, more themes resonating in the current program would be uncovered, resulting in increased validity of the results. Additionally, by interviewing all 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders, the data captured Senior Enlisted Leaders with varying experience levels with the program. This opens the door for possible additional analysis of the data from the perspective of length of time in the position. Appendix B provides the a summary of the 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders interviewed for this thesis, including date of interview, rank, warfare specialty, years of experience, and the date the respective Senior Enlisted Leader reported to the Naval Academy for duty.

C. INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

The researcher conducted the interviews for this thesis using Rubin and Rubin's (1995) guide for structuring a qualitative interview. The researcher prepared main questions for each interview, and then utilized probes and follow-up questions to clarify points and ask for elaboration about core ideas and concepts (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; p.146). Appendix C provides the interview protocol for Admiral Larson, Appendix D the interview protocol for Captain Bogle, Appendix E the interview protocol for Master Chief Mitchell, Appendix F the interview protocol for Master Chief Hagan, and Appendix G the standard interview protocol for the Senior Enlisted Leader interviews.

Prior to each interview, the researcher contacted the interviewee and briefly described the purpose and scope of the research. For the four interviews dealing with the history and founding of the program, the interviewees were provided with the interview protocol several days in advance of the scheduled interview. For the 30 Senior Enlisted Leader interviews, the interviewees were provided a general outline of the topics to be covered in the interview in addition to the brief overview of the purpose and scope of the thesis. Prior to the commencement of each interview with the 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders, the researcher explained that no statements in the interview would be directly attributed to the interviewee. This step in the Senior Enlisted Leader interview process, while often deemed unnecessary by the interviewee, was nonetheless viewed by the researcher as an important step in creating an open and comfortable environment for all parties.

The interviews conducted during the data collection phase averaged one hour in length. The shortest interview conducted lasted thirty minutes. The longest interview conducted lasted one hour and forty minutes.

D. DATA ANALYSIS

All interviews for this thesis were recorded on audio cassettes and transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Once transcribed, the data consisted of over 275 single-spaced pages of text. The four background and history interviews constituted 50 pages of the transcribed data, and the 30 Senior Enlisted Leader interviews constituted over 225 pages of the data. Once the interviews were transcribed, the researcher compiled the transcriptions and conducted content analysis.

In conducting content analysis of the data, the researcher used the data analysis approach known as "coding." Coding is "the process of grouping interviewees' responses into categories that bring together the similar ideas, concepts, or themes" (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; p.238). For the four history and background interviews, the researcher coded the responses from the data into four categories: (1) quotes dealing with the roots of the Senior Enlisted Leader program, (2) quotes dealing with the initial cohort of Senior Enlisted Leaders and the screening process, (3) quotes dealing with the initial implementation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program on the deckplates, including the process of defining the role, and (4) quotes dealing with how the program was initially viewed by the four interviewees. A similar but much more extensive coding process was conducted for the 30 Senior Enlisted Leader interviews. Since these 30 interviews

followed the same interview protocol, the researcher coded the data for this section by question response. This process involved the creation of categories for each question in the interview protocol. Once the data was coded into categories, the researcher examined and compared the data within and across categories to develop overarching themes.

Using the combination of information obtained in the four history interviews, Chapter III presents the background on the founding of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. Statements in this section regarding the background, founding, and initial implementation of the program are supported with specific quotes from Admiral Larson, Captain Bogle, Master Chief Mitchell, and Master Chief Hagan.

Chapter IV presents an assessment of the current program from the perspective of the 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders stationed at the Naval Academy in the Spring of 2000. Several themes are presented regarding current roles and responsibilities, strengths and weaknesses of the program, and recommendations for improvements in the program from the perspective of the Senior Enlisted Leaders. These themes are supported with specific quotes from the 30 interviews conducted with the Senior Enlisted Leaders.

III. BACKGROUND OF THE SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER PROGRAM

> When I look back on my first tour between '83 to '86, I taught a lot of leadership classes then....the question I was most asked by midshipmen was, *'What is my relationship with my Chief? I've gone through all this leadership training, and other than summer cruises, I haven't really had much association with enlisted people. So I am going to show up on my ship, and I'm going to be an ensign. I'm going to be the boss, I'm going to be the division officer. I've got this Chief with 15 years experience. How do I relate to them? And what kind of partnership do we form? What is our relationship? What are my responsibilities towards them and their responsibilities towards me?'* (Admiral Charles Larson, interview, 21 March 2000).

A. INTRODUCTION

Before the inception of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program in 1994, midshipmen at the Naval Academy did not have daily interaction with enlisted Sailors during their four-year training pipeline. At best, midshipmen were exposed to enlisted personnel only during summer training periods, or summer cruises. These summer experiences in the operational Fleet usually lasted about a month and provided varied amounts of interaction with enlisted personnel for each midshipman. For these reasons, before 1994, it was conceivable that a midshipman could go through the four-year Naval Academy experience without ever having meaningful contact and interaction with enlisted Sailors and Marines.

With this background in mind, this chapter is focused on answering the primary research question of this thesis: *What is the history and purpose of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program at the United States Naval Academy?* Specifically, what events led up to the 1994 inception of the program, and why was it founded? And once senior enlisted

personnel were assigned to each company at the Naval Academy in the fall of 1994, how did the Academy go about implementing this program on the deckplates? How was the role of the Senior Enlisted Leader initially defined, and what problems were encountered along the way? And finally, how did the program evolve into its current form?

To answer these questions, this chapter combines the contents of four interviews conducted with key personnel involved in the founding and initial implementation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. These four interviews, conducted with Admiral Charles Larson, Captain Randy Bogle, Master Chief James Mitchell, and former Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy John Hagan, together present the story of how and why the Senior Enlisted Leader Program came into existence.

B. ROOTS OF THE SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER PROGRAM

When Admiral Charles Larson assumed command on August 1, 1994, as the 55th Superintendent of the Naval Academy, he arrived with a very strong charter. In the five years preceding Admiral Larson's arrival, the Naval Academy had come under intense public scrutiny for sexual harassment incidents among midshipmen and the largest cheating scandal in school history. Having served a previous term as the 51st Superintendent in the 1980s, Admiral Larson was hand picked to return to the Academy to right the course of an institution many viewed as having lost its way.

Admiral Larson brought with him in 1994 his personal choice for Commandant of Midshipmen, Captain Randy Bogle. Together, Admiral Larson and Captain Bogle worked to implement positive changes to the Naval Academy and the Brigade of

Midshipmen. However, one seed of change was planted before Admiral Larson and Captain Bogle arrived on the scene. This particular change, what was then known as the Senior Enlisted Advisor Program, called for 36 senior enlisted personnel from the Navy and Marine Corps to be assigned to each company in the Brigade of Midshipmen. This new program, a notable shift in the training of midshipmen, came into fruition in the fall of 1994, just as Admiral Larson was taking the helm as Superintendent.

1. The First Marines and the First Master Chief

The roots of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program can be traced back to when senior enlisted personnel were first assigned to the Naval Academy in leadership roles. The researcher, through examination of past Naval Academy yearbooks, known as the *Lucky Bag*, discovered that the first senior enlisted to serve at the Academy in a leadership capacity was Gunnery Sergeant Joseph Frank from 1985-1986. Gunnery Sergeant Frank, according to the 1985 *Lucky Bag*, held the title of "Brigade Enlisted Advisor to the Commandant." Two other Marine senior enlisted held leadership positions in the years ahead, notably Gunnery Sergeant Elvington (later First Sergeant Elvington), who served as "Brigade Enlisted Advisor" from 1987-1989, and Gunnery Sergeant Buchanan, who served as the "Enlisted Drill Advisor" in 1991. Unfortunately, the exact roles and responsibilities and the extent of interaction these Marine senior enlisted had with midshipmen is not known.

However, one thing is clear. Beginning around 1985, Marine senior enlisted personnel became the first senior enlisted assigned to the Naval Academy in a leadership

capacity. Furthermore, this assignment of Gunnery Sergeant Frank in 1985 began a Marine Corps senior enlisted presence in Bancroft Hall that continues to this day.

The details that are known about interactions between midshipmen and early senior enlisted personnel assigned to the Naval Academy are brought to light by the experiences of Master Chief John Hagan. Master Chief Hagan, the eighth Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (1992-1998), has a history of association with the Naval Academy, especially in regards to the presence of Navy senior enlisted personnel on the Yard. This association dates back to the late 1980s, when Master Chief Hagan's son graduated as a member of the class of 1989. It was during his son's time at the Academy that Master Chief Hagan became aware of the first Master Chief assigned to the Naval Academy.

> All the way back to 1987...when my son was there, I was a constant visitor to the Naval Academy....and I got to know a Master Chief, who was, to my knowledge, the first Master Chief ever assigned there. He was the only enlisted person assigned in any leadership capacity or anything remotely resembling a leadership capacity. His name was Dave Adams....and he was assigned under the guise of deglamorizing alcohol....and he was a presence. He had an office in Bancroft Hall. He didn't have any structured contact with midshipmen, but the midshipmen saw him, talked to him....he was a good role model.

The assignment of Master Chief (AVCM(AW)) David Adams to Bancroft Hall in 1987 provided midshipmen the first opportunity to interact with a senior enlisted Sailor in a leadership capacity. And according to the observations of Master Chief Hagan during this timeframe, midshipmen definitely appreciated this new type of interaction, however minimal.

> When I went to the Naval Academy in uniform to see my son, I was the Command Master Chief of an aegis cruiser....when I would go and others would go in uniform, if you were accessible, you would have an audience....and I did a little lecturing for Karl Montor, I taught a few classes....and I noted the various personalities, but the dominant personality that I noted was hungry for some interface with the Fleet Sailor, the senior enlisted leadership in particular, that they were going to interface with....and I noted that with total clarity, beyond any doubt.

2. Admiral Boorda's Vision

After this initial assignment of Marine Corps senior enlisted and a lone Master Chief in the 1980s, the vision of a future Chief of Naval Operations provided the next block in the foundation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. Admiral Jeremy "Mike" Boorda, the 25th Chief of Naval Operations, served as Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) from 1988-1991. According to Master Chief Mitchell, who served as Admiral Boorda's Fleet Master Chief during his term as Commander-in-Chief of Naval Forces Europe, Admiral Boorda had a vision to assign a senior enlisted to each of the 36 companies and to each of the 6 battalions in the Brigade of Midshipmen. During his tour as CNP, however, Admiral Boorda fell short of his intended goal for reasons unknown.

> When Admiral Mike Boorda was Chief of Naval Personnel, and that would take you back to '91....Admiral Boorda had envisioned a plan to put enlisted at the Naval Academy, to include the companies. But it never got past, in 1991, the Master Chiefs coming to the Academy and manning one position in each battalion.

Admiral Boorda's efforts as CNP did result in the assignment of six senior enlisted personnel to direct leadership roles in Bancroft Hall. These six E-9s, four Navy Master Chiefs and two Marine Sergeant Majors, were assigned to the six battalions in the Brigade of Midshipmen. They worked directly for one of the six Battalion Officers and held the title of "Battalion Master Chief" or "Battalion Sergeant Major."

The assignment of the six battalion senior enlisted began in 1991 and was completed shortly after Master Chief Hagan became the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy in 1992. Master Chief Hagan coordinated with then Superintendent Rear Admiral Thomas Lynch on the assignment of these six E-9s, and he knew many of these senior enlisted personally.

> Those six guys were down there for one full tour or more without any company Chiefs. And there were too few of them...the only assessment I had was they were doing some good, but they were spread pretty thin and they didn't appear to have a single purpose.

The assignment of one senior enlisted to each of the six battalions in the Brigade of Midshipmen certainly increased the amount of interaction midshipmen had with enlisted personnel. However, these six Master Chiefs and Sergeant Majors found themselves, at the battalion level of the Academy structure, responsible for over 600 midshipmen. As of 1992, direct, daily, and personal interaction between midshipmen and senior enlisted still proved to be an elusive goal.

The next few years changed all that. According to Master Chief Mitchell, the goal that alluded Admiral Boorda when he was CNP came into grasp when he was named the Chief of Naval Operations in April of 1994.

> When Admiral Boorda became the CNO, that (*the plan to put a senior enlisted in every company at the Naval Academy*) was something on his list.

By that fall, the first of 36 company Chief Petty Officers and Gunnery Sergeants began arriving at the Naval Academy for duty in what was known as the Senior Enlisted Advisor Program. The vision of direct interaction between midshipmen and senior enlisted was now a reality.

C. THE INITIAL COHORT OF SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERS

Master Chief Hagan, still serving as Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy in 1994, became involved in screening the initial 36 senior enlisted personnel ordered to the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. He came across the fact that the head enlisted detailer at the Bureau of Naval Personnel (PERS-40), Captain Russell, was scrambling to fill the newly created senior enlisted billets at the Naval Academy.

> Where I got involved in the process was when I heard that Captain Russell was perceiving that Admiral Lynch and the CNO, and the CNP, were in combination, telling him to fill these billets *now*....so I called Admiral Lynch....I said, 'Do you realize that the detailer is going to send you the available assets and not the best assets, because he feels he has to have them in place before the end of September or October ('94)?'

This interference into the process by Master Chief Hagan proved crucial to the beginning stages of the program. He explained to Admiral Lynch that he wanted the personnel assigned to the company senior enlisted billets to be of the highest caliber. Specifically, Master Chief Hagan wanted them to be E-7s or above, warfare qualified, physically fit to the outstanding level, and personnel who were coming from sea duty where midshipmen were likely to be assigned upon graduation. That type of careful screening process, which Master Chief Hagan felt was absolutely critical to the success of the program, was going to take considerable time to achieve. Master Chief Hagan probed Admiral Lynch to see if a delay would be acceptable to the Academy in order to get the best personnel possible.

> And Admiral Lynch said, 'God yes, I don't care if I have to wait an extra year to get the final cut'....and we slowed down the detailing process.

Once the detailing process was slowed down to allow proper screening, another roadblock to getting the program online presented itself. When orders began to get cut by the Bureau of Naval Personnel for these new billets, it was discovered that there were not any enlisted billets assigned to the Naval Academy unit identification code, or UIC, in the Navy's manning structure. To circumvent this, the incoming senior enlisted personnel were ordered to the UIC assigned to Naval Station Annapolis. Captain Bogle, the Commandant of Midshipmen when this issue arose, saw this circumvention as the quick-fix to an administrative fiasco.

> None of us liked that setup, but it was the only way in order to get this off the ground, to get this running...to have them assigned somewhere with a UIC that could accept that number of enlisted folks...that was my understanding....I never really pursued the ins and outs of why. We were just told, you can't. And that is how we did it, we beat the system by putting them over there (Naval Station Annapolis)....we just wanted them.

The UIC issue seemingly solved, the initial cohort of Senior Enlisted Leaders reported for duty over the next year. It did take the vast majority of the 1994-1995 academic year at the Naval Academy to fill all of the senior enlisted billets in the 36 companies. But by May of 1995, Captain Bogle was pleased to see that all 36 companies in the Brigade, each made up of just over 100 midshipmen, had a Senior Enlisted Leader assigned as a mentor, counselor, and advisor.

> The initial stages of this were a little slow to react, and anytime you start up a new program, you are taking bodies from somewhere to fill somewhere else. And now you're telling people you want the best of the best....and that was the challenge. So, when you think back on it, we did get very good support from the Navy...it was just slow in getting there, and...kind of understandable. You wanted 36 of the best folks you got from the various ratings, so that was difficult for the Navy detailers....I can see where that was a challenge....but I was satisfied with how it went. I would liked to have seen us be able to man up in about six months...but that was probably a little unrealistic on our part.

The initial Senior Enlisted Leaders assigned in 1994 and early 1995 consisted of seven Senior Chiefs, 23 Chiefs, five Gunnery Sergeants, and one Staff Sergeant. All 36 were highly screened and met the criteria for selection specified by Master Chief Hagan. Looking back, Master Chief Hagan stated, "My happiness was that we got a good group of Senior Chiefs, Chiefs, and Gunnies in there." Now that the billets were filled with

talented senior enlisted personnel, the only step left in the process was for the Academy to make the program work on the deckplates.

D. EXECUTING THE PLAN

1. Creation of the Brigade Master Chief

In January of 1996, Master Chief James Mitchell left his post as Fleet Master Chief in Europe to go to the Naval Academy at the request of Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Hagan. He reported to the Academy as the 4th Battalion Senior Enlisted Advisor. At that time there were a total of 42 senior enlisted personnel assigned to the Academy (a mix of 36 Senior Chiefs, Chiefs, Gunnery Sergeants and Staff Sergeants assigned to each midshipmen company as Senior Enlisted Advisors, and a mix of six Master Chiefs and Sergeant Majors assigned to each battalion as Battalion Senior Enlisted Advisors). In 1996, each battalion at the Academy consisted of six companies, therefore each battalion had a total of seven senior enlisted assigned to it, with the Battalion Senior Enlisted overseeing their six companies and respective Senior Enlisted Advisors.

A few months after he arrived, Master Chief Mitchell was approached by the Commandant, Captain Bogle, about becoming the Command Master Chief over the entire senior enlisted structure. Captain Bogle saw the need for one central Master Chief overseeing all 36 company senior enlisted and the six battalion senior enlisted.

> We were loaded, we were really heavy in the E-9 category....I addressed that issue with the E-9s, that we really needed a Brigade Master Chief. We needed a Command Master Chief...to fill that role...and title him the *Brigade Master Chief*...who really would have the responsibility to the Commandant for the senior enlisted.

About four months after reporting for duty, Master Chief Mitchell became the first Brigade Master Chief at the United States Naval Academy. Captain Bogle's creation of this new position above the entire senior enlisted hierarchy was the first step in improving the structure of the Senior Enlisted Advisor Program. Prior to this step, there was no central authority for all of the senior enlisted to rally around. This led to each battalion, with its own Master Chief or Sergeant Major, often creating its own coalition and way of conducting business. Now, the Brigade Master Chief became the focal point of the enlisted organization in Bancroft Hall. And the importance of this new position to the Navy was solidified when the Naval Academy Brigade Master Chief position became a member of the CNO's senior enlisted panel. Additionally, the Brigade Master Chief position became a CNO priority fill for detailing purposes.

However, the changes in the Senior Enlisted Advisor Program did not stop with the creation of the Brigade Master Chief position. After several months, Master Chief Mitchell went to the Commandant with the recommendation of doing away with the six battalion senior enlisted positions.

> In '96, I went to Captain Bogle and said, 'I don't want to keep the Master Chiefs here any longer, the battalion Master Chiefs. It's a waste of manpower. With the Chiefs in each company now, they don't have enough to do. And they are running into each other...there is just too much talent for the amount of work there is.'

Captain Bogle agreed with this recommendation, as did Master Chief Hagan. Master Chief Hagan stated, "When Master Chief Mitchell recommended doing away with the other Master Chiefs, that was just a stroke of good-thinking." The phase-out of these six E-9 positions at the battalion level took some time, but by 1998, the senior enlisted structure that exists today was firmly in place: *a single Brigade Master Chief overseeing the Senior Enlisted Leaders assigned to each midshipmen company in the Brigade.*

2. Defining the Role of the Senior Enlisted Leader

When the senior enlisted began arriving in the fall of 1994, there was no plan in place for their arrival. This was mainly due to the fact that the program was put into place so quickly. Simply put, Company Chiefs and Gunnies arrived in Bancroft Hall somewhat unexpectedly. They received a quick indoctrination, got their office on deck in the company area, and that was that. There was no job description waiting for them when they got there. For this reason, the Senior Enlisted Advisors made up the job as they went along in the initial stages of the program. Master Chief Mitchell saw this as a true blessing in disguise.

> We weren't anticipated...that was probably the brightest thing that happened....nobody...said...ok, these guys are going to be here, we've got to draw up a pad here and tell them what to do...that would have been the worst thing. What we ended up doing is coming in and we plugged our holes. I mean, a good Chief does that....they plug all the leaks. That's their job, that's what the Navy is all about.

Eventually, as the companies in Bancroft Hall each welcomed the new senior enlisted over the next year, the role of the Senior Enlisted Advisor began to pan out. Among other things, the term "Senior Enlisted Advisor" was replaced with "Senior Enlisted Leader" to more aptly capture the essence of the job. In practice, however, "Senior Enlisted Leader" became synonymous with the previous "Senior Enlisted Advisor," as well as "company Chief and Gunny." Admiral Larson explained the role of the new Senior Enlisted Leaders.

> You are a role model. You are a counselor. You are a leader....the link between the midshipmen and the Fleet.

On the deckplates, the essence of the job of the Senior Enlisted Leaders was discussed frequently among the Administration during this first phase of the program. Everyone understood the fact that the senior enlisted were role models, counselors, and advisors to the midshipmen in their company. But how this played out on a day-to-day basis was something of a work in progress. Captain Bogle led the charge in attempting to define the role of the senior enlisted in a company.

> Well, my reaction, and I think the reaction of the people who were coming here was, we don't need any help, we know how to do this. You brought us here as senior enlisted people, we're here to be the Leading Chief or Gunny in the group....so....pretty much the way we put it in place was, we met with them...I certainly met with them as a group and then we talked to them about what their roles and responsibilities were...it was much like being a Leading Chief...that's what we wanted them to do.

During the initial phase of defining the role of the Senior Enlisted Leaders, Master Chief Mitchell talked to all 36 Senior Enlisted Leaders constantly, especially the six most senior ones (one from each battalion). These six became the ad hoc Battalion Senior Enlisted Leaders, dual-hatted as the Senior Enlisted Leader for each of their respective companies and, in addition, their respective battalions. Serving much like departmental Leading Chief Petty Officers (LCPOs) in the Fleet, they served as the focal point for discussions between the deckplates and the Administration in defining roles and responsibilities of the Senior Enlisted Leaders. Master Chief Mitchell explained this process.

> I had one senior enlisted in each battalion that would come and sit down with me, and I kind of wanted to work a chain of command within the Chief's mess...and we would discuss this *stuff*...how is this being approached? How could we better work it? What can we, as senior enlisted, do? Then, Captain Bogle would meet with us privately.

This process of ironing out the roles and responsibilities of the Senior Enlisted Leaders went on for some time. In fact, some would argue that this process is still ongoing today. As a data point, in 1997, the Special Committee to the Board of Visitors conducted an assessment of the Naval Academy, which was printed in a report called <u>The Higher Standard</u>. In the Special Committee's assessment, a sense of confusion as to the role of the Senior Enlisted Leader resonated within Bancroft Hall.

> In addition, a senior enlisted advisor is assigned to each company to assist the company officer. The senior Navy and Marine Corps enlisted advisors make significant contributions to leadership development, provide midshipmen daily contact with enlisted leaders and offer another source of

> career and leadership advice. However, there is no clear job description for this position; in practice, senior enlisted advisors assume roles ranging from advisor to "second-in-command" (Turner, 1997; p.22).

The Higher Standard highlighted the improvements made by having the Senior Enlisted Leaders on deck interacting with midshipmen on a daily basis. However, it also challenged the operation of the program as of 1997, in essence saying that the program lacked clear vision. To fix this sense of confusion about the role of the Senior Enlisted Leader, the Special Committee recommended that the Commandant "establish a clear job description for the senior enlisted advisors" (Turner, 1997; p.37).

3. Initial Hurdles and Growing Pains

In the first few years of the program, the Naval Academy Administration dealt with many hurdles besides trying to define roles and responsibilities to the Senior Enlisted Leaders themselves. To be certain, the Senior Enlisted Leaders needed to understand their roles and responsibilities to function to the best of their ability. But as the Commandant and the rest of the Administration quickly discovered, the newly created senior enlisted role needed to be explained to midshipmen as well. Unfortunately, as Master Chief Mitchell explained, a midshipman very early in the program openly challenged the authority of their new Senior Enlisted Leader.

> The growing pains brought us up to one of the first issues, and that was...one of the midshipmen...took exception to the fact that the Chief was telling him what to do....Captain Bogle said, 'Let's lock this up right now, because I don't ever want this happening again'....we put out a statement to midshipmen saying that orders from a Chief are to be clearly obeyed.

> And I felt bad about that, because I thought, we don't need to be propping up Chiefs like this. But I think at the time it was a good thing....later on, we took it out, because we didn't think we needed it anymore. We didn't need to be explained.

Another challenge presented itself when Master Chief Mitchell started to work the detailing process to find the next cohort of Senior Enlisted Leaders. By this time, Admiral Larson had shrunk the Brigade from 36 to 30 companies. This decrease in the number of companies meant that the structure of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program now consisted of 30 billets instead of 36. Of these 30 billets, 24 were marked as Navy Chief Petty Officer or Senior Chief Petty Officer billets, and six were marked as Marine Gunnery Sergeant billets. Additionally, to represent the growing gender diversity of the Navy, six of the billets were reserved for female senior enlisted. Reaching the goal of this last category proved to be a constant battle for the Brigade Master Chief.

> I did have a problem, it was an ongoing issue...and that was getting enough women who were Chief Petty Officers, who were warfare qualified, who were coming off sea duty....those are hard to find...not so much now, but if you go back to '95...

Finally, the toughest growing pains dealt with the fact that a few Senior Enlisted Leaders failed to live up the calling of their prestigious billet. In discussing this aspect of the background of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program, it should be first noted that the overwhelming majority of senior enlisted personnel initially assigned to these billets were well screened and performed impeccably. The Commandant, Captain Bogle, captured this when he said, "Overall, they were just terrific...they did a marvelous, marvelous job."

However, a few bumps in the road did occur. Specifically, issues of fraternization arose between a Senior Enlisted Leader and a midshipman. Captain Bogle dealt with digressions such as these quickly and harshly.

> We had a couple of incidents, which is unfortunate really. We had one in particular while I was there where we had to send a young enlisted guy away for fraternization....I was disappointed with that....and we've had officers get in trouble too with fraternization....one of the things we talked about with all of them, and the Company Officers, is that you are here to lead....you've got to be mindful of what you represent, what you are there to do.

Overall, the initial hurdles that presented themselves were overcome. Senior Enlisted Leaders became a fixture in Bancroft Hall and something the midshipmen no longer questioned. But the one challenge that remained a primary task for the Brigade Master Chief was to attract the right kind of senior enlisted personnel to relieve outgoing initial Senior Enlisted Leaders. Getting the right Chiefs and Gunnies to the Naval Academy became almost an obsession for Master Chief Mitchell. And to attract the right caliber of senior enlisted for these billets, the Brigade Master Chief had to get the word out to the Fleet.

> One of the things I needed to do was get the word to the Fleet that the billets were here, and I wanted to create a real positive perception....there was an ALL HANDS article...they came out and did a great job. That had a lot of positive bang for the buck for the Academy....the Fleet got a handle on...what we were doing here, and right after that article, I started getting more phone calls than I almost could handle.

ALL HANDS, a magazine published monthly by the Naval Media Center and sent to the entire Fleet, published an article about the Senior Enlisted Leader Program in December 1997, titled "Mentoring Midshipmen." In addition to this positive media coverage for the program, Master Chief Mitchell also worked extensively with the Bureau of Naval Personnel to advertise the Senior Enlisted Leader billets in LINK magazine. LINK, the Enlisted Professional Bulletin of the United States Navy that provides Sailors information on key policy changes, career management issues, and retention matters, is published quarterly by the Bureau of Naval Personnel and distributed Fleet-wide. Additionally, to help the detailers to fully understand the Naval Academy and the Senior Enlisted Leader Program, Master Chief Mitchell brought the special programs detailer from the Bureau to Annapolis and let him spend a day in Bancroft Hall. Once inside Bancroft Hall, the detailer interacted with Senior Enlisted Leaders, observed midshipmen, and gained a greater appreciation for the caliber of individual needed to effectively serve in these unique billets. This type of interaction between the Brigade Master Chief and the Bureau of Naval Personnel went a long way in fostering an environment where all parties involved in the detailing process understood the importance of the screening process in place.

4. The View From the Top

The initial Senior Enlisted Leader Program was viewed by the Naval Academy Administration in a very favorable light. Master Chief Mitchell explained how imperative the support of the top members of the Administration was to the program.

> Admiral Larson was extraordinarily supportive of what we were trying to do....Captain Bogle was very, very supportive. And I think it goes without saying, no rocket science here...but if those two hadn't wanted us aboard, we probably would not have succeeded.

The enthusiastic support of the program by the Superintendent grew from his belief that it added something to midshipmen development that was desperately needed. Admiral Larson, in his drive to right the compass of the Naval Academy, was intent on instilling in midshipmen what he called "excellence without arrogance."

> When I came back in '94, there was a perception out in the Fleet, among some of the senior petty officers, Chiefs, Senior Chiefs, Master Chiefs...that our graduates were becoming a little bit arrogant, and they were a little bit clique-ish...and that they really didn't have the quality that we were looking for.

The Senior Enlisted Leader Program, in Admiral Larson's view, helped to develop midshipmen in the right ways towards this goal of "excellence without arrogance." He supported the program not just on the Yard, but in his travels outside the gates. In almost every speech he gave on the status of the Naval Academy, he mentioned the Senior Enlisted Leader Program and his strong positive views on its impact for midshipmen development.

> When I talked to Alumni groups, I always had that in the speech...I always used the words, 'This is one of the best things that's ever happened to the Naval Academy. Let me talk to you about the Chief Petty Officer and Gunny Program.'

Probably no other specific example provides a better snapshot of how the top levels of the Administration viewed the Senior Enlisted Leaders than the impact of the Chiefs and Gunnies at Academic Boards. Academic Boards, or AcBoards, are held to decide if a particular midshipman should be separated from the Naval Academy due to deficiencies in grades or performance. The Superintendent chairs this board, and only the top levels of the Administration sit on the board and vote for separation or retention. If the Academic Board votes to separate a midshipman, his or her career at the Academy is over. Always present at these boards for any of their midshipmen going up for separation, Senior Enlisted Leaders are often asked to comment on what they think about the midshipman in question. Master Chief Mitchell discussed the gravity of this moment.

> And I don't know how many times during AcBoards that I watched my Chiefs and Gunnies get questioned from Admiral Larson: *'Do you want to serve with this midshipman out in the Fleet Chief?'* And that was THE question. That was the defining moment.

The view from the members of the Academic Board also supports the gravity of the comments made by Senior Enlisted Leaders. Captain Bogle explained that the members of the Academic Board place great weight on the comments of the Senior Enlisted Leaders.

> The senior enlisted was always commenting one way or the other...that really does lend credence to their position....and they are very matter of fact....if they felt strongly about the young man or woman, they would go to bat for them... *'I think he struggled with grades, but I'd follow them anywhere.'* That is a hell of a comment to come from an E-7, E-8, or a Gunny....when the enlisted guy or gal say that, *we take that to the bank.*

E. CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the roots, the history, and the initial implementation process of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program at the Naval Academy. Using interviews with four key personnel involved in the founding and implementation of the program, this chapter answered primary research question of this thesis: *What is the history and the purpose of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program at the United States Naval Academy?*

The Senior Enlisted Leader Program traces its roots back to when Marine senior enlisted and a Navy Master Chief were assigned in the 1980s in Bancroft Hall as the Brigade Enlisted Advisor to the Commandant. Under the leadership of Admiral Boorda, senior enlisted billets were expanded at the Naval Academy. First, in 1991, the six battalion Master Chief and Sergeant Major billets were created. Next, in 1994, Admiral Boorda's big push was successful and 36 Company Chief and Gunny billets were added. Over the next several years, the program evolved to include the creation of the Brigade Master Chief billet, and the deletion of the six battalion E-9 positions created in 1991. After shrinking the Brigade from 36 to 30 companies in 1996, the program reached its current status of one Brigade Master Chief and 30 Company Senior Enlisted Leaders.

The purpose of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program is to improve the leadership development of midshipmen during their four years at the Naval Academy. Its purpose is also to better prepare midshipmen to interact with and better understand the enlisted Sailors and Marines they will lead upon graduation. The addition of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program in 1994, from the viewpoint of all four people interviewed for this chapter, has achieved just that. Master Chief Mitchell said it best when he described how

important this program is to the Navy because it effects every individual future officer at the Naval Academy in a positive way.

> And it is important to the Navy, the success of this program. And I think if there is a defining thing...when a young midshipman gets his or her commission now, and goes to the Fleet, they take hold of their new job *right away*. That's the whole thing. Instead of scrambling around figuring out what the hell these guys that wear these enlisted uniforms do...*what do I do with them?* We've taken that mystery away.

IV. THE CURRENT SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER PROGRAM

> Excel. Lead. Shape the future of your Navy. The United States Naval Academy is looking for high caliber, dynamic Chief Petty Officers to volunteer to train, counsel, and motivate young midshipmen. As a company Chief Petty Officer you will have a direct impact upon the proper development of midshipmen as they work to become officers. You will be expected to facilitate strong communication up and down the chain of command and demonstrate to midshipmen through personal example the core values of the Navy and what it means to serve in the United States Armed Forces (Mercer, 2000).

A. INTRODUCTION

The above quote, an advertisement for the senior enlisted billets at the Naval Academy, touches on the roles and responsibilities assumed by company Senior Enlisted Leaders in Bancroft Hall. And while this quote is a good overview of what Senior Enlisted Leaders can expect in this unique role, the day-to-day operation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program cannot be fully captured in one paragraph.

As presented in the previous chapter concerning the history and founding of the program, the Senior Enlisted Leader Program is now over five years old. Several iterations of Senior Enlisted Leaders have come and gone from the companies in Bancroft Hall, and in the process, the program has matured and evolved. With this in mind, this chapter is an attempt to capture the operation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program from the perspective of the 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders currently serving at the Naval Academy.

This chapter uses interviews conducted with all 30 of the current Senior Enlisted Leaders. These interviews were conducted by the researcher in February and March,

2000, and were transcribed verbatim. Of note, the Senior Enlisted Leaders interviewed had been at the Naval Academy in their positions, on average, one year and eight months. The newest Senior Enlisted Leader interviewed had only been in the job for two months at the time of the interview. The Senior Enlisted Leader who had been in the position the longest at the time of the interview had been at the Naval Academy for three years and eight months. Twenty-four of the 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders interviewed had been in the job for more than a year. Also of note, the Senior Enlisted Leaders interviewed consisted of two Master Chiefs, seven Senior Chiefs, 15 Chiefs, and six Gunnery Sergeants. In addition, there were three female Senior Enlisted Leaders, one Master Chief, one Senior Chief, and one Gunnery Sergeant.

The contents of these 30 interviews were combined and analyzed in an attempt to answer the six secondary research questions: *(1) What are the current roles and responsibilities of the Senior Enlisted Leaders? (2) What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program? (3) How is the effectiveness of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program currently being assessed? (4) What should be the roles and responsibilities of the Senior Enlisted Leaders? (5) Is there a need for a Senior Enlisted Leader's Handbook? If so, what guidance should be included in the handbook? (6) What improvements can be made to the current Senior Enlisted Leader Program?*

The data from the 30 Senior Enlisted Leader interviews produced eight themes resonating in the current program. The eight themes center on how Senior Enlisted Leaders view their roles and responsibilities, the strengths and weaknesses of the program, how the program is currently being assessed, and the overall operation of the

current program. This chapter presents those eight themes and supporting quotes from the 30 Senior Enlisted Leader interviews.

B. THEME I: SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERS BRING A *SIGNIFICANT* AMOUNT OF FLEET AND OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE INTO BANCROFT HALL

1. Theme

Senior Enlisted Leaders currently serving in the 30 companies within the Brigade of Midshipmen bring 539 years of experience to Bancroft Hall. They average 17.9 years of service in the Naval forces. Additionally, each Navy Senior Enlisted Leader is warfare qualified (eight Surface Warfare, six Submarine Warfare, four Air Warfare, two Seabees, two SEALs, and two Surface Warfare *and* Air Warfare qualified) and every Senior Enlisted Leader possesses significant operational experience with the Fleet or Fleet Marine Force. This level of experience, coupled with the quality of individuals screened for the Senior Enlisted Program, is viewed by the Senior Enlisted Leaders as the main strength of the program. The experience of the senior enlisted benefits midshipmen and can also allow Senior Enlisted Leaders to fill a wide variety of roles easily.

2. Justification

Every single Senior Enlisted Leader interviewed, when asked by the researcher to discuss the strengths of the overall program, stated that the primary strength is the vast amount of experience the senior enlisted bring into Bancroft Hall. This experience level allows Senior Enlisted Leaders to assume their roles and advise midshipmen on any

number of subjects. In interview number 21, one Senior Enlisted Leader summarized this strength of experience.

> Overall, the strengths would be that the 30 of us probably bring somewhere between 400 and 600 years of experience...and...we pretty much represent every community in the Navy...surface, submarines, aviation....we bring a thousand life experiences here...none of us are ever going to be uncomfortable talking about any subject, because almost any subject a midshipman can throw at us, we've talked about with our Sailors out in the Fleet before...and it's the same here, just a different group of individuals.

Prior to the arrival of the Senior Enlisted Leaders in the company areas, midshipmen interacted solely with the Company Officer, usually an O-3 Navy Lieutenant or Marine Corps Captain. The Company Officers usually assume this role with an average of four to six years of Fleet experience. Many of the Senior Enlisted Leaders, when discussing this fact, explained how their increased level of experience brings a new, more experienced dynamic into Bancroft Hall that can only benefit midshipmen. In interview number 17, one Company Chief expounded on this difference in levels of experience.

> And the fact that we average 16-17 years of Fleet experience, versus the Company Officer, who averages...five to six...that's another ten years out there....you have one or two tours, what have you experienced, really? Versus someone who's had five different tours? It makes a huge difference! They (the midshipmen) come in...'Chief, where have you been?' Well, I've been on two air stations and three ships...what do you want to know?

Also, the fact that almost all warfare specialties are represented by the cohort of Senior Enlisted Leaders means that a wealth of experience about all facets of the Navy and Marine Corps rests inside the walls of Bancroft Hall for midshipmen to exploit. One Senior Enlisted Leader, in interview number nine, explained that this diversity of backgrounds and warfare specialties among the 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders benefits the entire Brigade.

> I think that one of the great things is you have such a diverse background of all the senior enlisted. For instance, if I have a midshipman that wants to know what life is like as a SEAL, there is a SEAL Chief here. If they come and ask me a question that I can't answer, I can find somebody in the senior enlisted community here, whether they are a Marine or Sailor...who's got experience in that area....they can help that midshipman get access to more resources to help get their questions answered....so that's really great.

And according to several Senior Enlisted Leaders, this reputation of experience can lead to tasking of the senior enlisted by the Administration for various things. Interviewee number one explained that this tasking of the senior enlisted due to their experience level can be viewed as both a positive and a negative.

> The experience here of these guys and gals...the Chiefs and Gunnies...these are the folks that I would love to have at every type of command that I go to....they are the cream of the crop....but...because of the way that the Chiefs (and Gunnies) have always been the "can-do" type....we tend to get a lot of stuff dumped on us here....I think that we have put ourselves in such a position that we have done such a good job that now everybody wants to jump on that bandwagon...which can be a good thing and a bad thing....but look at it like this, we have established a very valid reason for being here.

These taskings due to level of experience often revolve around the area of training. Many Senior Enlisted Leaders brought up the fact that most new training is assigned to them simply because they have the most experience of anyone within Bancroft Hall. This can result, according to interviewee number five, in company Chiefs and Gunnies filling a bunch of training roles that sometimes lack an overarching purpose.

> It seems like anytime something new comes up that needs handled, if there isn't somebody else to do it, they give it to us....financial training....formal alcohol counseling....very often, it's like putting your finger in the dike, and we're just the finger that goes in the dike in a bunch of different places. I don't think they have a sense for what they really want us to do....it's more of a gut reaction, I think...that something comes up and they say, we already know the Company Officers have a lot on their plate....but...those Chiefs and Gunnies, I know they can handle this.

C. THEME II: SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERS ASSUME VARIOUS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE COMPANIES BY FORMING A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMPANY OFFICER

1. Theme

Senior Enlisted Leaders at the Naval Academy do not assume universal roles and responsibilities in their respective companies. Instead, each Senior Enlisted Leader assumes various roles and responsibilities by forming a leadership team with their Company Officer. Roles and responsibilities vary among the 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders based on their particular strengths and weaknesses, the strengths and weaknesses of their unique Company Officer, and the needs of the midshipmen in their respective company. The end result is that Senior Enlisted Leaders, as a whole, serve in *totally unique billets*

that require them, at any point in time in their companies, to assume roles ranging from Command Master Chief to Executive Officer.

2. Justification

Each Senior Enlisted Leader interviewed conducted business in their company in a unique way. All of them worked with their Company Officer upon arriving and, at least initially, assumed roles and responsibilities centered on what was often termed by the interviewees as "Chiefly things"--uniform standards, room standards, morale of the company, and administrative items. In interview number four, one Senior Enlisted Leader explained how his roles and responsibilities came about by working with his Company Officer.

> He and I spent a lot of time...just feeling each other out....now, my daily responsibilities....I am responsible for, obviously not removing the responsibility from the Company Officer, but these are my areas of expertise, I guess...maintenance, room standards, uniform standards....0800 reports, and the muster forms....the accountability....monitoring the weekends....the Company Officer...is by far the pinnacle...he's the guy that's responsible for the company. And I can't remove that responsibility, nor do I want it, quite honestly....my job is to support him....so I do that. I do room inspections, walk around the halls. And I do a *lot* of counseling.

Many senior enlisted see their role as the Command Master Chief for their company of approximately 140 midshipmen, with the Company Officer filling the role of Commanding Officer. In interview number 29, one Senior Enlisted Leader explained how his Company Officer filled the role of a Commanding Officer for the company and

that he felt much like a Command Master Chief advising midshipmen on a plethora of issues.

> The Company Officer has the final word on everything....I am like the Command Master Chief...and maybe even the Command Chaplain in some cases. I've had everything in here from 'I think my girlfriend is pregnant' to 'I think I have a venereal disease' to 'my grandfather is going to die.' And they don't...do that with him. And I think that is one of the roles they want us to have...I'm very comfortable with that. I think most Chiefs are. It is very much like a Command Master Chief.

The Company Officer and Company Chief or Gunny work closely together to form a leadership team for their company. This formed partnership, according to interviewee number 30, serves to react to the needs of the midshipmen in the company, and to also display a model junior officer-senior enlisted relationship for the midshipmen to see and learn from.

> And every day is a different day, just depending on what the problems are that they are having...what we can do as a company to support the midshipmen...so you sort of figure out...as you go, how to do this job. I...work in tandem with my company officer...to provide the midshipmen with a real-life look at what a junior officer and senior enlisted relationship is....sort of let them pick up by the way that the Lieutenant and I interact....for how it's going to be for them when they get to the Fleet.

Another Senior Enlisted Leader, in interview number 10, discussed the uniqueness of the job and why it is constantly evolving for him, even to this day. He explained that the job of the senior enlisted evolves not only because of the nature of the

partnership between the Company Officer and the Company Chief, but is also due to the culture and needs of the group of midshipmen who are assigned to his company.

> It's still evolving. And I think it always will. It will evolve for two reasons. One, it's definitely an interaction between the Company Officer and the Chief, in their chemistry, and what they want to do...where their priorities are. It is also going to change because of the culture of the company that you are attached to. I would have to change many things if I went to any one of the other companies, because of their culture. They may be lacking something in an area that I'm not lacking here, so we don't have to focus on that....that's definitely going to change from company to company and Company Officer to Chief.

In interview number six, one Senior Enlisted Leader stated that his roles and responsibilities are a combination of various roles he has seen in the Fleet. What role he assumes depends entirely on the situation, and even may include him serving in the role of the Company Officer in the Company Officer's absence.

> I would characterize it as Executive Officer, Command Master Chief, Division Chief, Division Officer, Leading Chief Petty Officer, Departmental Chief Petty Officer...all those things mixed into one...and it will depend on the day and the situation during the day. It all depends....and...if the Company Officer leaves the deck, you are now the Company Officer. That's all there is to it.

In fact, out of the 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders, six have served at some point in their tours as the Company Officer *and* Senior Enlisted Leader for a period, sometimes for as long as three months. This assumption of both roles occurred mostly because of gapped billets in the officer system in Bancroft Hall that for one reason or another could not be avoided. As one Senior Enlisted Leader explained in interview

number 17, filling both the role of the Company Officer and Senior Enlisted Leader was an easy shift for him to make, simply because of the teamwork and understanding of both roles he gained working with his previous Company Officers. However, while able to fill the shoes of the Company Officer, he felt this took away from his main job, interacting with midshipmen.

> You work hand in hand....not necessarily the same roles, but we're capable of doing the same roles....we're more than capable of filling each other's shoes....I was the Company Officer for three months. It was fine. It was an increased workload....the Company Officer has a lot more paperwork than the Chief does, and that's a good thing...because it frees us to go interact, which is why we were brought here, to go and interact with the mids.

Another Senior Enlisted Leader who had also filled in as a Company Officer for several months, interviewee number five, agreed with the fact that Company Chiefs and Gunnies can make that transition to fill both roles if necessary. However, as several others also noted, he stated that while he was more than capable of filling the billet of the Company Officer, this was not the ideal situation. In his mind, the midshipmen suffered without both the officer and the senior enlisted in the company working as a leadership team to give them the full perspective.

> It wasn't a problem for me...we got everything done that we needed to do. But I felt that they really missed that example of a commissioned officer running the show and giving them that perspective that I just could not give them....I can tell them an awful lot about the Fleet and how things work and what they ought to do...and make sure that things happen and get done, but I just could not give them that officer perspective, which is what

> really, in many ways, they prefer to have. Particularly the firsties (seniors), as they get closer to graduating.

On the Marine Corps side of the house, many of the Gunnery Sergeants interviewed equated the role of Senior Enlisted Leader to that of a First Sergeant in the Marine Corps, which is a close parallel to the role of the Command Master Chief on a Navy ship. In interview number 12, one Company Gunny explained how he saw his role and how he worked in tandem with his Company Officer to define his responsibilities.

> I would describe my role mainly as an advisor...very similar to a First Sergeant....the Company Officer just gave me commander's intent....and from there I took it. And then...periodically, I would go back and ask him....where do you think the company is heading, and am I taking this in the direction that you expect? And he'd say, most of the time, yes, you are right on track.

And finally, a few of the Senior Enlisted Leaders went so far as to say that the billets are so completely unique that they defy explanation. In interview number seven, one Senior Enlisted Leader explained how she has come to understand the undefinable role she holds.

> I couldn't describe it, because you have to be such a chameleon....only because it is so much...it is about *you*. Because I know that there are senior enlisted here that do nothing like what I do. Absolutely nothing. And when I first got here and asked, 'So, what is this job...tell me about what this job is?' Nobody could tell me. Now I know why! Because it's basically *what you are*. It's your personality and what you want to do with it....it's a philosophy.

D. THEME III: IN ADDITION TO THEIR PRIMARY ASSIGNMENT, SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERS ASSUME VARIOUS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES *OUTSIDE* OF THEIR RESPECTIVE COMPANIES

1. Theme

Senior Enlisted Leaders assume roles and responsibilities *outside* of their company areas, taking on tasks throughout the Brigade, Bancroft Hall, and the Naval Academy complex. These collateral duties range from warfare-specific duties such as SEAL Physical Training and the Semper Fi Society, to committees, midshipmen activities, and sports teams, such as the Women's Midshipmen Study Group, the Gospel Choir, and the representative for the hockey team. These collateral duties often take place after hours from the normal work day, and every activity the senior enlisted are involved in benefits the Brigade of Midshipmen in some way. For this reason, the Senior Enlisted Leaders, as a group, do not feel these activities hinder their ability to perform their primary function--to be in the company area for their midshipmen.

The one collateral duty that all Senior Enlisted Leaders participate in that does take them out of the company area during the work day is teaching classes in the Professional Development building, or Luce Hall. This teaching role ranges from guest appearances in leadership classes to teaching an entire professional course in tandem with an officer instructor for senior midshipmen who are preparing to enter the Fleet. Many Senior Enlisted Leaders feel that teaching midshipmen is the most enjoyable role they fulfill at the Naval Academy.

2. Justification

When asked to discuss their *primary* role at the Naval Academy, almost every Senior Enlisted Leader discussed mentoring, advising, and counseling the midshipmen assigned to them in their companies. However, many Senior Enlisted become involved during their tours with extracurricular activities, or collateral duties. As one Senior Enlisted Leader explained in interview number 17, almost all collateral duties that he chooses to participate in occur after his normal working hours and allow him the opportunity to interact with midshipmen outside his company.

> Most of the collateral duties take place after hours. That's the nice thing about it, is they take place after hours. And it's just that many more midshipmen I get to interact with.

Some Senior Enlisted Leaders use collateral duties to not only interact with other midshipmen outside of their company, but also to pursue their own interests and expand their horizons during off duty hours. But even in this capacity, as interviewee number 19 explained, the Senior Enlisted Leaders still interact with officers and make an impact on midshipmen in the process.

> I am also involved in the CSTS (Navy Sailing) program....that's enabled me to touch base with midshipmen out of the company....I do it, one, because I wanted to learn how to sail...I primarily use that for myself, as get-away time, for enjoyment....but I've also found that midshipmen (in the program) come and ask me for advice....they've just got another source, somebody else to bounce things off of....something else I do, I'm the Brigade representative for the hockey team. And again, for the same reasons....it kind of does two things...if fulfills my enjoyment....and the same kind of relationship that the Company Officer and I have, so does the

> team's officer representative and myself....it still provides something back to the midshipmen.

The main collateral duty that every Senior Enlisted Leader assumes is that of instructor in Luce Hall for professional and leadership courses. This mostly takes the form of guest appearances several times a semester, where Senior Enlisted Leaders teach Naval Leadership (NL) classes to midshipmen about counseling and the junior officer-senior enlisted relationship. Of note, over half of the Senior Enlisted Leaders have been to a formal Instructor Training (IT) School, and two of the current Senior Enlisted Leaders are Master Training Specialists. Many senior enlisted view IT school as a "nice to have," but do not think it should be a requirement in the current program for all senior enlisted to attend. However, in recognition of the Senior Enlisted Leaders' increased involvement in teaching in a formal classroom environment, the senior enlisted have all attended training sessions at the Naval Academy pertaining to useful instructor techniques. Many dubbed these sessions "mini-Instructor Training (IT)."

The senior enlisted Marines are by far the most involved in this teaching process. As one Marine Gunny stated in interview number 20, the Marine senior enlisted teach a class, along with an assigned Marine officer, for the entire semester to first class midshipmen about to be commissioned in the Marine Corps.

> The Gunnies that are on the Yard, they put one of us in a classroom with the capstone...the graduating seniors that are going to be selected for Marines. For that capstone course, there is a Marine officer and there is a Marine Gunny that teach that course. So we are in there three days a week with the officer, and establishing that officer-enlisted relationship....so this at least gives them...three times a week, the exposure to see how a Gunny

> and a Marine Captain...how that relationship works and how they exchange thoughts and ideas, and handle themselves. And that works really well.

Many of the Navy Senior Enlisted Leaders, including interviewee number 26, enjoy teaching and envy the way the Marine Gunnies are so involved in teaching formal classes to future Marine Corps officers.

> The NL (Naval Leadership) classes that come up...I think that is a terrific opportunity...I think the Chiefs and Gunnies need to be more involved with that than once a semester....I think that is a really important part of where the Chiefs and Gunnies should be. I know the Gunnies do it already, they spend a lot of time in the classrooms with a Marine Officer teaching the Marines-to-be all about the Marine Corps...but we don't do that with the Navy side, and I think we're missing the big picture on that.

To several Senior Enlisted Leaders, formally teaching classes in Luce Hall is not only a way to impact midshipmen just as they do in their primary role, but the most enjoyable aspect of being a senior enlisted on the Yard. In interview number 28, one Company Chief, who has not had formal instructor training, discussed his love of teaching and how it really ties in with his purpose at the Naval Academy.

> It allows me to interact with midshipmen outside of my company...and I enjoy it....any opportunity that I'm given to provide some insight or some tools for them to be successful, that's what I feel I'm here for, and that's what I try to do....teaching...is probably the part I enjoy the most.

E. THEME IV: SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERS INTERACT WITH MIDSHIPMEN ON A DAILY BASIS IN A MOSTLY *INFORMAL* MANNER

1. Theme

One hundred percent of Senior Enlisted Leaders interviewed stated that they interact with midshipmen on a daily basis in a mostly *informal* manner. This informal interaction mostly takes the form of informal counseling sessions, where midshipmen stop by the Senior Enlisted Leader's office to discuss any number of issues. These informal counseling sessions range from professional to personal issues, and are usually concentrated at peak times during the day. These peak times for informal interaction coincide with the timeframes when midshipmen are not in classes. The data also shows that most Senior Enlisted Leaders spend the majority of their day in some type of informal interaction with midshipmen.

2. Justification

Senior Enlisted Leaders work in offices within Bancroft Hall that are located in the midshipmen company areas. This workspace allows Senior Enlisted Leaders to observe and interact with midshipmen in their company on a frequent and daily basis. This interaction is almost always informal, although some senior enlisted formally counsel half of the midshipmen in their company once a semester while the Company Officer formally counsels the other half. In interview number 22, one Company Chief discussed how much time he spends informally counseling his midshipmen.

> I spend most of the day just counseling and stuff like that...but it's just off the record counseling mostly....you'd be surprised....I'd say I spend about two-thirds of my time just talking to them and stuff like that. Because that's what they want to hear...they want to hear the enlisted side.

Another Company Chief, in interview number 27, explained how this informal counseling usually starts and why midshipmen in his company seek him out.

> They usually poke their head in, 'Hey, Chief...you got a minute?' And I say, 'Sure, come on in, sit down, what do you want to talk about?' And they will tell you whatever....for the most part, I'd say they come in and they just want advice. They want to make their own decision, but they want to see what somebody else thinks...which is kind of cool, having them come in and say, 'What do you think about this?' Then you can guide them in the right direction.

This informal interaction almost always occurs at specific times in the day. These specific times, labeled "windows of opportunity" by several Company Chiefs and Gunnies, fall out between the midshipmen's jam-packed day of formations, meals, sports, and classes. As one Senior Enlisted Leader pointed out in interview number three, this equates to five peak times throughout a normal day where the majority of informal interaction occurs.

> You end up doing a lot of your work from 0645 'til 0700, because that's before quarters in the morning....from 0730 'til 0745, because that's when they come back from breakfast for a little while....from 1145 'til 1200...from 1250 'til 1320....and then from 1545 'til 1700...those are your prime times to talk to midshipmen, because those are the only times they are really available. So you do a lot of counseling during that time. That's when they come in with their problems, with their requests, with their suggestions...sometimes they just come in here to vent...to get it out of their system, and then they're happy and they go on their way.

F. THEME V: SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERS VIEW MIDSHIPMEN FEEDBACK ON THEIR PERFORMANCE AS THE MOST VALUABLE ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR THE PROGRAM

1. Theme

Senior Enlisted Leaders get feedback concerning their performance from all parts of the Naval Academy chain of command. Besides the normal fitness reports and required mid-term counseling, the senior enlisted receive a combination of informal and formal feedback on their job performance from the Commandant of Midshipmen, Battalion Officers, Company Officers, and even their peers. These feedback channels are a valuable resource, however they are not the main performance measurement tool utilized by Senior Enlisted Leaders. Senior Enlisted Leaders rely on midshipmen feedback and feedback from recent graduates from their companies to assess their job performance.

2. Justification

Over two-thirds of the Senior Enlisted Leaders stated that their primary tool for assessing their own performance was feedback they received from midshipmen. This feedback can take many forms, including direct feedback from midshipmen who have graduated and are now out in the Fleet. For many Company Chiefs and Gunnies, like the Company Chief in interview number 29, this direct feedback from graduates coupled with the response of current midshipmen to his mentoring are the primary job assessment tools.

> I just got an e-mail yesterday from Ensign X. Ensign X was the class of 1999. Ensign X is sitting somewhere over in the Persian Gulf right now, he just got to his first ship, and he's got a Chief that he works with...some of the things the puts in his letters....'Hey, I appreciate what you told me to do here, and it seems to be working. Your advice to shut up and listen and try to learn and be humble...is working.' When I hear things like that, that lets me know that things are going ok. I've always said...and you can definitely quote me on this one...I can gauge my success here by the knocks on the door. If that door keeps knocking, I'm doing a good job. Because they are coming to me. Even if they are coming to me to hear something they probably don't want to hear, they are still coming to me. And when I first got here, I wasn't getting any knocks on the door. I used to wait for knocks on the door...and it was frustrating as hell. Now...if I'm here in the morning before...class...there's...a line out the door sometimes, and that makes me feel good.

The Company Chief in interview number 27 agreed with this viewpoint, pointing out that among all the feedback he receives on his performance, the midshipmen feedback is the most valuable.

> I think the feedback comes from...actually...multiple levels....I get feedback from my Battalion Officer...that's a good thing...it lets you know if you are doing exactly what he expects of you. Same thing with the Company Officer, because we talk, and we really bounce ideas off of each other...so we know what we are doing and where we expect to go. But where I think the most satisfying stuff is...is the feedback from the midshipmen.

And many Senior Enlisted Leaders realize that assessing their performance and the performance of the overall program is something that possibly cannot be measured for many years to come. One Senior Enlisted Leader, in interview number 16, said that the inability to assess performance immediately is just part of the process.

> Most of us come in here...realizing that it's not going to be something that you can look at the end of the day and add numbers and go, yep, we won today...or you did a good job. I think it's something that you will see...six years from now, seven years from now....hey, this guy had an impact on my life and I learned a lot....or, I remember Chief saying something, and now it's five years later, and man, he was right! But I think that's just the experience of it, how it all works.

G. THEME VI: AS A GROUP, SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERS DO NOT INTERACT AND EXCHANGE IDEAS ON A FREQUENT BASIS

1. Theme

Senior Enlisted Leaders at the Naval Academy, because of the unique nature of each of their companies and intense demands on their time, feel that one major area for improvement in the program is in the area of peer interaction. The Brigade Master Chief holds meetings with all of the senior enlisted on a monthly basis. In addition, the Commandant holds monthly breakfasts with the Senior Enlisted Leaders to discuss issues and answer questions. However, many Senior Enlisted Leaders crave more interaction with their fellow Chiefs and Gunnies and think the overall program would benefit from this type of frequent peer-to-peer contact.

2. Justification

When asked to discuss weaknesses in the Senior Enlisted Program or areas for improvements, no consensus emerged from the data. However, one-third (10 out of 30) of the Senior Enlisted Leaders discussed that the one glaring weakness of the program was the fact that all 30 Company Chiefs and Gunnies do not get together on a regular

basis to discuss issues. In interview number six, one particular Senior Enlisted Leader viewed this infrequent sharing of information as the *only* weakness in the entire program.

> We don't get together enough to talk about what we do in our companies. About the only time we really do that is if the Commandant has a breakfast for us...we'll stay after the breakfast, mainly because we are already there...Commandant leaves, and we'll start chatting to each other....this is what we do in our company and this is how it works. So the other guys say, that's neat, I'm going to do that....Master Chief is...trying to have a meeting at least once every month, where we sit down and talk about this....but...we get so tied up in mentoring and working mechanics and that things like that within our own company, we just don't get that much of a chance to wander over to another Chief's office in another battalion and sit down...look at their clipboard, see what they're doing, see what their company rooms look like, things like that.

Most of the frequent peer interaction and exchange of ideas among the Senior Enlisted Leaders occurs only at the battalion level. And surprisingly, frequent interaction is sometimes elusive even at the battalion level of the Brigade structure as well. As one Company Chief explained in interview number 22, this phenomenon happens due to the fact that each company is almost in its own world in Bancroft Hall.

> You are in your own little world here in X Company. Even above me, in Y Company...it's like everybody is in their own little world...so I try to communicate...we have battalion meetings twice a week, where you see...all the company Chiefs out of the battalion....so that's the only time you really see each other sometimes.

The reason for this lack of interaction, according to several Senior Enlisted Leaders, is due to time constraints and the fact that the company areas are so spread out

over the eight wings of Bancroft Hall. In interview number eight, the lack of peer-to-peer interface struck one Company Chief immediately after his arrival in Bancroft Hall.

> One of the first things I remember noticing was, how come we don't get together more, the Chiefs and Gunnies? How come we don't get together more? I want to know what A Company and B Company and D Company are doing...because maybe I can pick something out....It didn't seem like a lot of sharing of information. It didn't seem like anybody got out of their office. Now I know...after being here 18 months, that you can really get bogged down in your own company.

H. THEME VII: SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERS SEE A NEED FOR A SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER HANDBOOK OR A FORMALIZED INDOCTRINATION PROCESS FOR NEW PERSONNEL COMING INTO SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER BILLETS

1. Theme

The Naval Academy, for newly arriving Senior Enlisted Leaders, is a completely foreign and unique environment. Within Bancroft Hall, new Company Chiefs and Gunnies must quickly master Academy-specific jargon, battle with competing and hectic schedules, understand multiple chains of command, and learn to work with their Company Officer to lead and develop up to 140 midshipmen. Senior Enlisted Leaders view a Senior Enlisted Leader Handbook, some type of formalized guide for their billets, or a structured indoctrination process as a necessary item to aid in this transition to Academy life. However, Senior Enlisted Leaders are wary of the format of any type of handbook or guide, and strongly feel that a specific, binding job description should not be promulgated.

2. Justification

In August of 1996, Commandant of Midshipmen Captain Randy Bogle promulgated a Company Officer's Handbook. This handbook, 36 pages in length, was published to assist Company Officers in the performance of their duties, and contained information and structured guidance on topics ranging from the standards of behavior to the responsibilities of the chain of command. Many of the Senior Enlisted Leaders, including interviewee number one, have read this handbook and found it a useful document.

> I read that...the Company Officer Handbook...when I first got here. That is an excellent handbook....I took it home and read it. Front to back....and the first thing I thought was, 'Gee, how come they don't have one for us?' That's exactly what I thought.

However, almost all of the Senior Enlisted Leaders feel that the format of the Company Officer Handbook does not apply to their unique billets. For newly arriving Company Chiefs and Gunnies, Senior Enlisted Leaders feel that a handbook containing only reference information would be the most useful type of document. In interview number two, one of the Company Senior Chiefs explained what he would want in a Senior Enlisted Leader Handbook.

> What the handbook should have is point of contacts...certain things that are unique to the Naval Academy....it should be a reference guide for us...instead of wandering around asking questions, it gives us an idea on who our point of contacts are for certain things. I think we do need something, and it is mainly because it takes awhile for you to actually understand how this place operates...to find the answers that you need.

There have been several attempts at producing formal guidance or a handbook for the senior enlisted. Specifically, short one-page to two-page instructions outlining the duties and responsibilities of the Senior Enlisted Leaders have been signed and promulgated by the Commandant in recent years. The Senior Enlisted Leaders had mixed reactions to these documents, stating everything from "I loved that wonderfully vague job description" to "I was insulted by it." One thing is clear from the data, however. The Senior Enlisted Leaders, as a group, feel adamantly that duties and responsibilities for the Company Chief or Gunny should not be formally promulgated *in a manner that binds them to any set of duties and responsibilities*. One Senior Enlisted Leader, in interview number four, discussed his objection to rigidly defining the role in any type of formal document.

> I do not feel that anybody can put duties and responsibilities on paper....personally, I don't think we need a formal instruction outlining our responsibilities and duties...I think it is inappropriate actually....the midshipmen will let you know what your job is. And your Company Officer will let you know what your job is. And you kind of have to work together to figure out what duties and responsibilities you are willing to take on, what you are good at....and it has to be worked out in every company. So if you put it down on a piece of paper, it is not going to work that way in every company.

Of all the attempts at producing a useful document for Senior Enlisted Leaders, the only lasting document still in use is a turnover folder written and disseminated by a former Company Gunny, Gunnery Sergeant Kirkendall. Several of the current Senior Enlisted Leaders have copies of this turnover binder, which contains useful information about the billets and helpful hints on performing the role and becoming acquainted with

the inner workings of the Naval Academy. First disseminated to the six Marine Gunnery Sergeants, this turnover binder is now held by more than a dozen Senior Enlisted Leaders. However, as even this best of documents shows, capturing these unique billets on paper, no matter how detailed and informative, is not the most useful media for learning this leadership-type, hands-on billet. In interview number 23, one of the current Marine Gunnies explained that the turnover folder he received from Gunnery Sergeant Kirkendall was helpful to a limited extent, but could never substitute for hands-on experience.

> Gunnery Sergeant Kirkendall...provided me and the others with more or less a turnover folder...and it was pretty detailed, almost to the day, on what was going on. I've used it and I haven't used it....because coming here...cold to the company...we all know a manual is a manual is a manual....I can sit and read that turnover folder until my eyes are red, and it still won't give me that true sense of what is going on until I actually deal with things.

Where Senior Enlisted Leaders see the greatest usefulness out of any type of Senior Enlisted Leader Handbook is when there is no turnover between an incoming and outgoing Company Chief or Gunny. Surprisingly, the assumption of duties without a turnover happens quite often. Almost one-third (9 out of 30) of the Senior Enlisted Leaders assumed their current positions without a turnover from their predecessor. In such situations, almost all Senior Enlisted Leaders agree that any type of document would be useful if it helped a person through those first months of learning the ropes.

For many of the senior enlisted, it took anywhere from three months to one full year to fully grasp the inner workings of Bancroft Hall and the nuances of their unique positions. One Company Senior Enlisted Leader, in interview number seven, stated that the process of figuring out the job and the nuances of Bancroft Hall was "the most frustrating time in all of my Navy career."

Several of the senior enlisted explained that perhaps the best way to solve these growing pains is to have a Company Chief and Gunny "indoctrination phase," similar in nature to Indoctrination Division (I-Division) on a Navy ship. In interview number 19, a Company Chief explained how an indoctrination phase run *by* the senior enlisted and solely *for* the senior enlisted would alleviate these problems.

> There are some things that would've definitely helped, in that indoctrination phase....we could cover those kinds of things in an indoctrination, that was senior enlisted based, senior enlisted run...and at the same time, I think it would build a little camaraderie quicker amongst ourselves...getting to know each other.

I. THEME VIII: THE MOST POSITIVE ASPECT OF THE SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER EXPERIENCE AT THE NAVAL ACADEMY IS PARTICIPATING IN AND OBSERVING MIDSHIPMEN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

1. Theme

Of all aspects of their jobs, the most positive experience for Senior Enlisted Leaders is the viewing and first-hand participation in the leadership development of midshipmen. Senior Enlisted Leaders take great pride in the role they play in the formation of future Naval officers, and gain no greater satisfaction than watching their

midshipmen succeed. Conversely, because of the direct interaction and bonds formed between the senior enlisted and the midshipmen in their company, the most negative experience for Senior Enlisted Leaders in their jobs is seeing midshipmen fail to meet the high standards set by the institution.

2. Justification

When asked to explain their most positive experience to date as a Senior Enlisted Leader, one hundred percent of the Company Chiefs and Gunnies stated that the most rewarding part of their jobs was working with midshipmen and watching them grow and succeed. Many Senior Enlisted Leaders, like in interview number 23, equated the positive experience of watching midshipmen learn and grow with experiencing their own children growing older.

> The most positive experience...just getting positive interaction between the midshipmen and myself. Just having them actually get the point, what you are trying to get across to them....for them to actually understand the role that they are going to be stepping into upon graduation. Having one come back to me and say, 'Gunny, I get it....I know what I need to be doing. Thanks. You put your foot in my butt for a good reason. It makes sense. I understand. I'm going to make a difference for somebody else.' I had that happen. That was good to go! That was probably the best thing I have ever experienced....it's like talking to your grown children.

Other Senior Enlisted Leaders discussed how the most positive experience was realizing that they reached midshipmen they never expected to reach with their mentorship. In interview number 14, one Company Chief told the story of how one of his worst performers came back to his office immediately after graduating.

> And he said to me, 'Chief, I really appreciate everything that you've done. I can really tell that you care...it really showed in how you treated us and how you acted around us...and I really appreciate it.' Coming from him....not one of my top performers...it meant a lot....the fact that I made an impact on him. He would've been one of the last people in the company that I thought was soaking any of this in....it probably meant more coming from him than coming from one of my company commanders. It's about those little victories. You train people one midshipman at a time.

On the flip side, many Senior Enlisted Leaders display their personal attachment to the leadership development of the midshipmen in their company when they discuss the most negative experience they have ever had as a Company Chief or Gunny. Almost two-thirds of Senior Enlisted Leaders, when asked to name their most negative experience to date, listed an example of a midshipman failing to meet the high standards of the Naval Academy. In interview number 18, a Company Chief explained the case of his biggest disappointment.

> We sent a senior home at Christmas this year. He was just not suitable to ever be an officer at this point in his life. We worked with him since...the middle of last year....and you counsel, mentor, and kick his butt....and every tool that you have in your bag, trying to get him on track. Just go to class, just wear the uniform, just finish the PRT! And he couldn't do it....well, you know, I want to see them succeed. I wanted to see him make it. And unfortunately, he got all the way into his senior year and it was

> like....you know skipper, you definitely don't want to send this one out the door...this is the worst possible product we could send to the Fleet.

Finally, the personal pride that each Senior Enlisted Leader takes in their job was readily apparent in each and every interview. The Senior Enlisted Leader in interview number one said it best when she talked about the seriousness with which the senior enlisted approach their roles.

> You will find that every senior enlisted here takes this job personally. This is ownership to us, because this is somebody that I'm sending out into the Fleet....it's like I've signed my initials on everyone of these people....so this is something very personal to me!

J. SUMMARY

This chapter presented eight themes produced from interviews with the 30 current Senior Enlisted Leaders. Six of these themes centered on strengths and overall observations of the program, and two of the themes presented involved areas for improvement. The main strength, from the perspective of the Senior Enlisted Leaders, is that fact that the group of 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders bring significant Fleet and operational experience to each company at the Naval Academy. Additionally, Senior Enlisted Leaders assume various roles and responsibilities inside and outside their respective company structure, and almost always interact with midshipmen in an informal manner. Although they get formal and informal feedback from the upper chain of command, Senior Enlisted Leaders view midshipmen feedback on their performance as the most valuable assessment tool. Finally, the most positive aspect of

the Senior Enlisted Leader experience is participating in and bearing witness to individual midshipman leadership development.

As far as areas for improvement in the current program, Senior Enlisted Leaders see only two areas to build upon to make an already-great program better. First and foremost, Senior Enlisted Leaders crave more interaction with their peers on a more frequent basis to facilitate the exchange of ideas. And finally, Senior Enlisted Leaders see a need for guidance for newly arriving senior enlisted personnel, either in the form of a handbook or a structured indoctrination phase taught by experienced Senior Enlisted Leaders.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> In the greater sense, this is the Navy's Naval Academy....and I really think that the Senior Enlisted Leaders have added to the importance of the Naval Academy. They have made it more important just by being there (Captain Randy Bogle, interview, 28 April 2000).

A. OVERVIEW

In this thesis, the researcher attempted to conduct an assessment of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program at the United States Naval Academy. Specifically, the researcher examined in detail the background and initial implementation of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program by interviewing four key personnel associated with this implementation process. The interview data and specific quotes from these key personnel were combined in Chapter III to present the background of the program. Next, Chapter IV presented an overview of the existing program by combining the contents of interviews conducted with the 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders currently stationed at the Naval Academy. These interviews yielded eight overall themes, all presented from the vantage point of the current Senior Enlisted Leaders. Supported by specific quotes from the 30 interviews, six of these themes centered on positive aspects of the program, and two themes outlined areas for improvement. This final chapter combines the contents of Chapters III and IV to provide overall conclusions and recommendations.

B. CONCLUSIONS

The mission of the Naval Academy is *to develop midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty in*

order to provide graduates who are dedicated to a career of naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government. Stated simply, this mission statement describes the one goal of the Naval Academy, to develop midshipmen into leaders. Therefore, in an assessment of any program that is a functioning part of the Naval Academy, the following question must be asked: *Does the program add something to the leadership development of midshipmen?* Combining the history of the program presented in Chapter III with the current functioning of the program presented in Chapter IV, the conclusion of this thesis is that the Senior Enlisted Leader Program absolutely enhances the leadership development of midshipmen.

Additionally, in almost every single interview conducted for this thesis, the phrase *"this is one of the best things that has ever happened to the Naval Academy"* was uttered at one point or another to describe the addition of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. From Admiral Larson to Captain Bogle to Master Chief Mitchell, right on down to Senior Enlisted Leaders currently serving in the billets, that positive description held true. Is the program perfect? Absolutely not. No program ever achieves perfection. However, the researcher was awestruck throughout this research process at the *overwhelmingly* positive impact this program is making on midshipmen development, the Senior Enlisted Leaders serving in the billets, and the Naval Academy as a whole.

Is there a sacrifice in having this program? The quick answer is, "Yes, absolutely." Taking 30 of the most talented and experienced senior enlisted personnel in the Navy and Marine Corps and stationing them at the Naval Academy means those 30

people are not out in the Fleet leading Sailors and Marines. That is indeed a price to pay. Admiral Larson, the man undoubtedly with the most insight on this matter, said it best when describing the long-term benefits of this program. Stationing 30 of the brightest senior enlisted personnel in every company at the Naval Academy is a huge investment in resources. But according to Admiral Larson, this investment is a sound one.

> I have always felt that an investment here at the Naval Academy pays dividends for years and years out there in the Navy...and in society.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE PROGRAM

The researcher recognizes the huge positive force that the Senior Enlisted Leader Program has become in six short years. However, the 34 interviews conducted for this thesis also shed light on several recommendations for improving an already outstanding program. The following six recommendations are presented for the future of the program based on the data presented in Chapters III and IV.

1. Continue the Selective Screening Process

Enough cannot be said about the quality and experience of the 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders currently serving in Bancroft Hall. To summarize this quality, it is best to examine the thoughts of the Senior Enlisted Leaders themselves. Perceptions and evaluations among a peer group are perhaps the most honest, and often the most telling. And when discussing their peers, almost every single Senior Enlisted Leader agreed with

the one Company Chief who said, "The talent that we have in our organization is just phenomenal."

This level of talent is no doubt due to extremely selective screening process for the Senior Enlisted Program. Pushed initially by Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy John Hagan, the time-consuming task of screening the proper individuals for these billets now falls under the leadership of the Brigade Master Chief. Master Chief Mitchell, the first Brigade Master Chief, worked exhausting hours during his tenure to ensure only the "best of the best" were accepted into this program. Now his relief, Master Chief Randy Welch, continues that task with the same zeal.

Everyone interviewed for this thesis understands the importance of the screening process, but Master Chief Hagan said it best when he described why the selection process was so crucial to the success of the program. According to Master Chief Hagan, the selective screening process is vitally important, because if the right individuals are not screened, then there is the potential for a program that will do "more harm than good." Having the right people has made and will make the Senior Enlisted Leader Program a success. For that reason, to continue the success of the program, it is recommended that the extremely competitive and selective screening process remain in place, and that the standards of this screening process never be lowered.

2. Do Not Promulgate a Formal Job Description

In The Higher Standard, the Special Committee to the Board of Visitors commented on the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. During their 1997 assessment, the Committee concluded that Senior Enlisted Leaders assume various roles within a company, and that this wide range of roles equated to Senior Enlisted Leaders being everything from "advisor to second-in-command" (Turner, 1997; p.22). The Higher Standard presented this wide range of roles as a negative aspect of the program and recommended that the Commandant of Midshipmen "establish a clear job description for the senior enlisted" (Turner, 1997; p.37).

After examining the data, the researcher agrees with the Turner Commission's initial statement. Yes, Senior Enlisted Leaders assume various roles within their companies that range from Executive Officer to Command Master Chief. However, the researcher, after 30 detailed interviews with the Senior Enlisted Leaders performing the job on a day-to-day basis, concludes that this is a *very positive aspect* of the program, and should not be viewed negatively as in the Turner Commission's report.

Each of these billets is unique. It is recommended that nothing be promulgated that puts restraints on the ability of each Company Chief and Gunny to define their role, as they and their Company Officer, working as a leadership team, see fit. What one Senior Enlisted Leader does in his or her company is not what another will do in theirs. *It all depends*. It depends on the Company Officer. It depends on the midshipmen. And it depends on the Senior Enlisted Leader. For these reasons, promulgating formal roles

and responsibilities for a job that will change constantly is viewed as a potentially impossible task and is *not recommended.*

3. Involve Senior Enlisted Leaders in the Formal Classroom Environment

Senior Enlisted Leaders, since the program's inception, have been assigned various training roles. Most of this involvement in training has revolved around General Military Training (GMT) and informal training of midshipmen. This role has expanded over the years to include limited involvement in the formal classroom environment in Luce Hall. This expansion has been nothing but positive and should continue.

Specifically, the Marine Senior Enlisted Leaders are heavily involved in teaching Marine Corps capstone classes. Currently, the involvement of the other 24 Senior Enlisted Leaders in their respective capstone courses is limited at best. In the view of the researcher and the current Senior Enlisted Leaders, the first class midshipmen taking the capstone course and preparing to graduate benefit greatly from this type of classroom interaction. Additionally, the data show that feedback from Senior Enlisted Leader involvement in Luce Hall classrooms has been nothing but positive. The data also show that Senior Enlisted Leaders enjoy this interaction and that most wish they had the opportunity to teach more classes, especially within their warfare community. Therefore, it is the recommendation of this thesis that the inclusion of Senior Enlisted Leaders in *all* capstone classes be examined closely and, if feasible, incorporated beginning in the spring of 2001.

4. Solve the Unit Identification Code (UIC) Issue

When Senior Enlisted Leaders receive orders to come serve at the Naval Academy, their orders are to report to Naval Station Annapolis. As presented in Chapter III, this is due to the fact that no enlisted billets exist at the Naval Academy. Because of the way the manning structure is laid out, the Senior Enlisted Leaders are attached to Naval Station Annapolis and, in essence, are on temporary duty to the Commandant of Midshipmen for their *entire tours* in Bancroft Hall. This results in all fitness reports for Senior Enlisted Leaders being written and signed by the Commandant of Midshipmen, and then endorsed by their "true" Commanding Officer, the Commanding Officer of the Naval Station. This creates another administrative step in the process, and the data reflect that this makes absolutely no sense to anyone involved with the program.

The Senior Enlisted Leaders work in Bancroft Hall and work for the Commandant of Midshipmen. They have no interaction with the Commanding Officer of Naval Station Annapolis. Stated simply, *the manning structure of the Navy should reflect this reality.* There should be 30 Senior Enlisted Leader billets assigned to the UIC held by the Commandant of Midshipmen.

That said, this issue has been tackled previously. Master Chief Mitchell and several former Administrative Officers in Bancroft Hall worked extensively to get to the bottom of this matter. And currently, Brigade Master Chief Randy Welch has assumed the torch from his predecessor and is working the issue. To date, no one has succeeded in fully uncovering why the system is set up as it is, and more importantly, what is involved

in changing it. Hopefully, in the future, that will change, and the UIC assigned to the Senior Enlisted Leader billets will reflect reality.

5. Institute an Indoctrination Process for Senior Enlisted Leaders

At the outset of this thesis, the researcher had in the back of his mind the goal of writing a Senior Enlisted Leader Handbook. After examining all of the data, that goal quickly vanished. The data suggest that while such a handbook might be helpful, the need for an indoctrination process for the Senior Enlisted Leaders coupled with ample time for a turnover with their predecessor is what Senior Enlisted Leaders truly desire.

The researcher is hesitant to expound on this issue because, frankly, this area for improvement is really in the arena of the Senior Enlisted Leaders themselves. The data show that an indoctrination process is needed. What form that could or should take is unknown. That is up for the Brigade Master Chief and current Senior Enlisted Leaders to decide, for only from their experience can a truly beneficial indoctrination process be developed. As one Company Chief stated, any indoctrination process should be "senior enlisted based and senior enlisted run."

That said, the researcher feels strongly that two areas should be addressed that are related to an indoctrination process for Senior Enlisted Leaders. First and foremost, the importance of a turnover for newly arriving Senior Enlisted Leaders cannot be overstressed. The data show that almost one-third of current Senior Enlisted Leaders assumed their duties without a turnover. This makes the process of figuring out the unique aspects of this program and the Naval Academy that much harder. Gapped billets

are inevitable in the Navy. Turnovers are not always possible. However, the impact of not having a proper turnover at the Naval Academy is not the same as not having a turnover in the Fleet. These billets are extremely unique and unlike any other job in the Fleet. The lack of a turnover, according to the data, severely hinders the ability of Senior Enlisted Leaders to "hit the decks running." Therefore, to reinforce the importance of these billets, it is the recommendation of this thesis that turnovers be *required* for all Senior Enlisted Leaders.

Finally, as this thesis has stated before, the Senior Enlisted Leader and the Company Officer form a "leadership team" in their respective companies. Each of these billets is vitally important in the proper functioning of the company. It is not only important for the Senior Enlisted Leader to have a proper turnover and be properly indoctrinated into the Naval Academy, but this process is vitally important for the Company Officer as well. The Company Officer Master's Program, initiated by Admiral Larson in 1997, has gone a long way in preparing Company Officers for their billets in Bancroft Hall. However, nothing in the year-long Master's Program prepares future Company Officers to understand the uniqueness of the Senior Enlisted Leader billet. To enhance this understanding and allow future Company Officers to come into their jobs fully grasping both aspects of the "leadership team," it is recommended that future Company Officers be indoctrinated in the Senior Enlisted Leader Program as well.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This thesis documented the background of the program and assessed the Senior Enlisted Leader Program from the perspective of the Senior Enlisted Leaders. As stated in Chapter I, to *fully* assess the impact of this program on midshipmen leadership development, the program must be examined from multiple angles. The following recommendations are offered for future research and thesis projects:

1. Assess the Senior Enlisted Leader Program from the perspective of the current Administration. Conduct interviews with the Superintendent of the Naval Academy, the Commandant of Midshipmen, Battalion Officers, Company Officers, and the current Brigade Master Chief.

2. Assess the Senior Enlisted Leader Program from the perspective of midshipmen. Conduct interviews and focus groups with midshipmen of all four classes. Explore how the program has directly impacted the leadership development of midshipmen from the viewpoint of the midshipmen on the receiving end of the program.

3. Assess the Senior Enlisted Leader Program from the perspective of recent graduates now serving in the Fleet. Specifically, conduct interviews with graduates from the classes of 1995, 1996, and 1997. These three classes of Naval Academy graduates are in the unique position of having attended the Naval Academy *with and without* Senior Enlisted Leaders. This assessment could offer great insight as to what the program initially brought to the leadership development of midshipmen, and how the program impacted performance in the Fleet for these three classes.

4. Further document the history and initial implementation of the program. Conduct interviews with the first Marine Corps Senior Enlisted Advisors stationed at the Naval Academy in the 1980s, as well as with the first Master Chief stationed in Bancroft Hall. Additionally, conduct interviews with the first six battalion Master Chiefs and Sergeant Majors stationed at the Naval Academy in the early 1990s. Finally, conduct

interviews with the 36 original Senior Enlisted Leaders, and tell the story of the initial program from the vantage point of those that lived through it.

E. FINAL THOUGHTS

In Chapter II of this thesis, the researcher introduced his own personal connection to the Senior Enlisted Leader Program. In August of 1994, the researcher returned to the Naval Academy to begin his first class year. During those first few weeks on deck 8-3, the researcher's company welcomed the arrival of one of the first Company Chiefs. At first, no one in the company, including the researcher, knew what to think about this new addition to life in Bancroft Hall. As presented previously, direct interaction with an enlisted Sailor on a daily basis was foreign to midshipmen at that time.

As time passed in 1994 and early 1995, the researcher's company became more relaxed and accustomed to interacting with the new Senior Enlisted Leader. One day, the researcher stopped by his Senior Enlisted Leader's office, poked his head in, and said, "Hey, Chief, do you have a minute? I want to bounce something off you." Thus began an informal interaction that is still the cornerstone of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program today.

The researcher's Company Chief tied a lot of leadership lessons together in those few months before graduation in 1995. Now, as the researcher returns to the Naval Academy as a Company Officer, this thesis project has allowed a significant amount of time for reflection on this issue. The researcher has reflected on his first class year, that interaction with the Senior Enlisted Leader, and what it meant for his success out in the Fleet as a junior officer. In reflecting on what the Senior Enlisted Leader Program has

meant for the Naval Academy and for midshipmen development, one particular quote stands out from all of the interviews conducted in this thesis. When Master Chief Mitchell stated the following, he was discussing with the researcher how he used to explain the Senior Enlisted Leader role to newly reporting Company Chiefs and Gunnies.

> The most important thing at the end of the day is to show midshipmen the value and worth of other human beings, because it is so key to living, and so key to leadership....because, if you genuinely don't care about your Sailors or Marines...you are not going to be successful.

Of all the positive aspects of this program, perhaps the above quote strips down the job of the Senior Enlisted Leader to its essence. From personal experience as a midshipman, the researcher gained the understanding Master Chief Mitchell was talking about from his own Senior Enlisted Leader. This made the transition to the Fleet upon graduation a much smoother evolution than it would have been without that insight.

In the course of this thesis, the researcher discovered that this same type of interaction and leadership training is still ongoing today. The program has matured and evolved over the years, but Master Chief Mitchell's quote still holds true. On the deckplates of Bancroft Hall, the success of the program essentially comes down to each individual Senior Enlisted Leader, fulfilling their unique roles each day, achieving those "little victories," and training midshipmen "one midshipman at a time." It has been this ongoing process for the last six years that has turned the Senior Enlisted Leader Program into what it truly is... *"one of the best things that has ever happened to the Naval Academy."*

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEWEE	INTERVIEW DATE	INTERVIEW SITE	PERTINENT EXPERIENCE OF INTERVIEWEE
Admiral Charles Larson, USN (ret)	21 Mar 2000	Luce Hall, US Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland	51st Superintendent, USNA, 1983-1986; 55th Superintendent, USNA, 1994-1998
Captain Randy Bogle, USN (ret)	28 Apr 2000	North Island BOQ, Coronado, California	75th Commandant of Midshipmen, USNA, 1994-1997
ETCM(SW) John Hagan, USN (ret)	12 May 2000	Crystal Park Five, Crystal City, Virginia	8th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON), 1992-1998
ISCM(SW) James Mitchell, USN (ret)	25 Apr 2000	Private Residence, Annapolis, Maryland	Fleet Master Chief, Naval Forces Europe (under Admiral Boorda); First Brigade Master Chief, US Naval Academy, 1996-1999

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APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW # / DATE	RANK	WARFARE SPECIALTY	YEARS EXPERIENCE	DATE REPORTED TO USNA
#01 - 15 Feb 00	E-9	Surface (SW)	21	Jul 1997
#02 - 15 Feb 00	E-8	Surface & Air (SW/AW)	18	May 1998
#03 - 15 Feb 00	E-9	Submarine (SS)	19	Aug 1998
#04 - 17 Feb 00	E-8	Submarine (SS)	19	May 1998
#05 - 18 Feb 00	E-8	Submarine (SS)	17	May 1997
#06 - 18 Feb 00	E-8	Air (AW)	20	Apr 1999
#07 - 23 Feb 00	E-8	Surface (SW)	21	May 1998
#08 - 23 Feb 00	E-7	SEAL	19	Aug 1998
#09 - 24 Feb 00	E-7	USMC	17	Aug 1999
#10 - 24 Feb 00	E-7	Seabee (SCW)	18	Sept 1999
#11 - 29 Feb 00	E-7	Submarine (SS)	19	Aug 1998
#12 - 29 Feb 00	E-7	USMC	16	Aug 1999
#13 - 01 Mar 00	E-8	Surface (SW)	21	Dec 1998
#14 - 01 Mar 00	E-7	Surface & Air (SW/AW)	19	May 1997
#15 - 01 Mar 00	E-7	Air (AW)	21	May 1997
#16 - 01 Mar 00	E-7	Air (AW)	18	Jul 1997
#17 - 02 Mar 00	E-7	Surface (SW)	15	Apr 1997
#18 - 02 Mar 00	E-7	SEAL	19	Apr 1998
#19 - 02 Mar 00	E-7	Air (AW)	14	Apr 1999
#20 - 02 Mar 00	E-7	USMC	17	Jun 1998
#21- 03 Mar 00	E-8	Surface (SW)	17	Jan 2000
#22 - 03 Mar 00	E-7	Surface (SW)	21	Aug 1998
#23 - 03 Mar 00	E-7	USMC	17	Jul 1998
#24 - 06 Mar 00	E-7	USMC	16	May 1999
#25 - 06 Mar 00	E-7	Surface (SW)	18	Oct 1997
#26 - 06 Mar 00	E-7	Submarine (SS)	16	Nov 1997
#27 - 06 Mar 00	E-7	Surface (SW)	20	Feb 1999
#28 - 07 Mar 00	E-7	Submarine (SS)	14	Sept 1998
#29 - 07 Mar 00	E-7	Seabee (SCW)	14	Jul 1996
#30 - 10 Mar 00	E-7	USMC	18	Aug 1998

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APPENDIX C: ADMIRAL LARSON INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. To your knowledge, where did the idea of having a Senior Enlisted assigned to each company in the Brigade come about?

2. Briefly describe your role in the founding of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program.

3. Did you get involved at all in initially defining the Company Chief and Gunny's role in Bancroft Hall? From your perspective at the top, how did that process of defining their roles and responsibilities within the companies pan out?

4. Did you as Superintendent get involved in interviewing or approving packages for potential Company Chiefs and Gunnery Sergeants? What are your thoughts on the Senior Enlisted personnel that get approved for and come to this program? Is the screening process working well, or are there changes/improvements we could make to that process?

5. What do you see as the purpose of having the Senior Enlisted Leader Program? What is the "spirit" of the program as you see it?

6. Discuss, if you would, any differences you saw in midshipman development from when you were Superintendent in the early 1980's and when you were Superintendent in the 1990's with the Senior Enlisted Leader Program in place. Do any changes or differences stand out from your perspective?

7. Were there any "bumps in the road" with the Senior Enlisted Leader Program during its first few months or years?

8. What were the initial successes of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program?

9. How did the upper echelon of the Navy establishment view the program? Was the Senior Enlisted Leader Program something you talked about in your travels as Superintendent and interactions with the Navy outside the Yard? How did the Navy outside the Yard react to the institution of the program?

10. In *The Higher Standard*, the report to the Board of Visitors in 1997 assessing the state of the Naval Academy, one of the recommendations was for the Commandant of Midshipman to "establish a clear job description for the senior enlisted advisors." What are your thoughts on this recommendation? How should that process, if needed, occur?

11. One of the things that I've come across in my interviews with the current 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders is that many of them do not understand why they are attached to Naval Station Annapolis---why their fitreps are written by the Commandant and then endorsed

by the CO of the Naval Station. They say it has something to do with no billets in the Navy system being directly attributed to USNA and that there is no enlisted UIC for USNA. What are your views on this? Is it just a formality? Should it be changed? What would be involved in changing it?

12. When you were Superintendent, in hearings you presided over for the dismissal of a certain midshipman, whether it be an Academic Board or a conduct case...what weight did you put on any comments from that midshipman's Senior Enlisted Leader?

13. We are living in times of a "smaller Navy." This program I am studying is a new program that, to some degree, is still being defined. Do you see any threat of the Senior Enlisted Leader billets ever going away in the future? If so, threats from where? Are there any steps we can take as a Naval Academy to ensure that the Senior Enlisted Leader billets are "put in stone"?

14. Is there anything else you would like to add about anything we have talked about? Do you have any questions for me?

APPENDIX D: CAPTAIN BOGLE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. To your knowledge, where did the idea of having a Senior Enlisted assigned to each company in the Brigade come about?

2. Briefly describe your role in the founding of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program.

3. Discuss your involvement in initially defining the Company Chief and Gunny's role in Bancroft Hall. From your perspective as Commandant, how did that process of defining their roles and responsibilities within the companies pan out?

4. Did you as Commandant get involved in interviewing or approving packages for potential Company Chiefs and Gunnery Sergeants? What are your thoughts on the Senior Enlisted personnel that get approved for and come to this program? Is the screening process working well, or are there changes/improvements we could make to that process?

5. Were there any initial problems with the Bureau in filling billets? Do you think my thesis research would gain anything by talking to the Bureau about this program?

6. What do you see as the purpose of having the Senior Enlisted Leader Program? What is the "spirit" of the program as you see it?

7. What did you see during your tour as Commandant as the strengths and the weaknesses of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program?

8. Discuss, if you would, any differences you saw in midshipman development from your previous tour at USNA to when you were Commandant with the Senior Enlisted Leader Program in place. Do any changes or differences stand out from your perspective?

9. Were there any "bumps in the road" with the Senior Enlisted Leader Program during its first few months or years? If you would, describe these in detail and how the Administration, especially yourself and Master Chief Mitchell, worked through them.

10. What were the initial successes of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program?

11. How did the upper echelon of the Navy establishment view the program? Was the Senior Enlisted Leader Program something you talked about in your travels and interactions with the Navy outside the Yard? How did the Navy outside the Yard react to the institution of the program?

12. In *The Higher Standard*, the report to the Board of Visitors in 1997 assessing the state of the Naval Academy, one of the recommendations was for the Commandant of Midshipman to "establish a clear job description for the senior enlisted advisors." What are your thoughts on this recommendation? How should that process, if needed, occur?

13. One of the things that I've come across in my interviews with the current 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders is that many of them do not understand why they are attached to Naval Station Annapolis---why their fitreps are written by the Commandant and then endorsed by the CO of the Naval Station. They say it has something to do with no billets in the Navy system being directly attributed to USNA and that there is no enlisted UIC for USNA. What are your views on this? Is it just a formality? Should it be changed? What would be involved in changing it?

14. When you were Commandant, in hearings you presided over for the dismissal of a certain midshipman, whether it be an Academic Board or a conduct case...what weight did you put on any comments from that midshipman's Senior Enlisted Leader?

15. We are living in times of a "smaller Navy." This program I am studying is a new program that, to some degree, is still being defined. Do you see any threat of the Senior Enlisted Leader billets ever going away in the future, or did you see any threats to the program while you were Commandant? If so, threats from where? Are there any steps we can take as a Naval Academy to ensure that the Senior Enlisted Leader billets are "put in stone"?

16. When you were Commandant, you promulgated a "Company Officer's Handbook." Should a similar document, do you think, be promulgated for Senior Enlisted Leaders? Was one ever discussed during your tenure? What do you think should go into this handbook if you see the need for one (i.e., what should the scope of this document be)?

17. As Commandant, how did you assess the performance of Senior Enlisted Leaders?

18. Is there anyone else you think I should talk to in my research that may be able to shed some light on the founding and initial stages of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program (besides Admiral Larson and Master Chief Mitchell)?

19. Captain, is there anything else you would like to add about anything we have talked about? Do you have any questions for me?

APPENDIX E: MASTER CHIEF MITCHELL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. To your knowledge, where did the idea of having a Senior Enlisted assigned to each company in the Brigade come about?

2. Briefly describe your role in the founding of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program.

3. Discuss your involvement in initially defining the Company Chief and Gunny's role in Bancroft Hall. From your perspective as Brigade Master Chief, how did that process of defining their roles and responsibilities within the companies pan out?

4. Did you as Brigade Master Chief get involved in interviewing or approving packages for potential Company Chiefs and Gunnery Sergeants? What are your thoughts on the Senior Enlisted personnel that get approved for and come to this program? Is the screening process working well, or are there changes/improvements we could make to that process?

5. Were there any initial problems with the Bureau in filling billets? Do you think my thesis research would gain anything by talking to the Bureau about this program?

6. What do you see as the purpose of having the Senior Enlisted Leader Program? What is the "spirit" of the program as you see it?

7. What did you see during your tour as Brigade Master Chief as the strengths and the weaknesses of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program?

8. Discuss, if you would, any differences you saw in midshipman development with the new Senior Enlisted Leader Program in place. Do any changes or differences stand out from your perspective?

9. Were there any "bumps in the road" with the Senior Enlisted Leader Program during its first few months or years? If you would, describe these in detail and how the Administration, especially yourself and the Commandant (Captain Bogle), worked through them.

10. What were the initial successes of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program?

11. How did the upper echelon of the Navy establishment view the program? Was the Senior Enlisted Leader Program something you talked about in your travels and interactions with the Navy outside the Yard? How did the Navy outside the Yard react to the institution of the program, especially the Senior Enlisted Leadership of the Navy (i.e., how did Master Chiefs, MCPONs, and CPOs out in the fleet react to it)?

12. In *The Higher Standard*, the report to the Board of Visitors in 1997 assessing the state of the Naval Academy, one of the recommendations was for the Commandant of Midshipman to "establish a clear job description for the senior enlisted advisors." What are your thoughts on this recommendation? How should that process, if needed, occur?

13. One of the things that I've come across in my interviews with the current 30 Senior Enlisted Leaders is that many of them do not understand why they are attached to Naval Station Annapolis---why their fitreps are written by the Commandant and then endorsed by the CO of the Naval Station. They say it has something to do with no billets in the Navy system being directly attributed to USNA and that there is no enlisted UIC for USNA. What are your views on this? Is it just a formality? Should it be changed? Why or why not?

14. When you were Brigade Master Chief, did you ever attend hearings for the dismissal of a certain midshipman, whether it be an Academic Board or a conduct case...and if so, what weight did you feel the convening authority put on comments from that midshipman's Senior Enlisted Leader?

15. We are living in times of a "smaller Navy." This program I am studying is a new program that, to some degree, is still being defined. Do you see any threat of the Senior Enlisted Leader billets ever going away in the future, or did you see any threats to the program while you were Brigade Master Chief? If so, threats from where? Are there any steps we can take as a Naval Academy to ensure that the Senior Enlisted Leader billets are "put in stone"?

16. When Captain Bogle was Commandant, he promulgated a "Company Officer's Handbook." Should a similar document, do you think, be promulgated for Senior Enlisted Leaders? Was one ever discussed during your tenure? What do you think should go into this handbook if you see the need for one (i.e., what should the scope of this document be)?

17. As Brigade Master Chief, how did you assess the performance of Senior Enlisted Leaders?

18. Is there anyone else you think I should talk to in my research that may be able to shed some light on the founding and initial stages of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program (besides Admiral Larson and Captain Bogle)?

19. Master Chief, is there anything else you would like to add about anything we have talked about? Do you have any questions for me?

APPENDIX F: MASTER CHIEF HAGAN INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. To your knowledge, where did the idea of having Senior Enlisted assigned at the Naval Academy come about? How about the idea of having one Senior Enlisted Advisor assigned to each midshipmen company?

2. Describe in detail your role in the founding of the Senior Enlisted Advisor Program at the Naval Academy.

3. Describe in detail what you remember about Admiral Boorda's role in the founding of the Senior Enlisted Advisor Program at the Naval Academy.

4. Did you as MCPON get involved in interviewing or approving packages for potential Company Chiefs and Gunnery Sergeants for USNA billets?

5. From your level as MCPON, did you see any initial problems with the Bureau in filling billets? Do you think my thesis research would gain anything by talking to the Bureau about this program?

6. What do you see as the purpose of having the Senior Enlisted Advisor Program at the Naval Academy? What is the "spirit" of the program as you see it?

7. How did the upper echelon of the Navy establishment view the program? Was the Senior Enlisted Advisor Program something you talked about in your travels and interactions with the Navy as a whole? How did the Navy outside the Yard react to the institution of the program, especially the Senior Enlisted Leadership of the Navy (i.e., how did Master Chiefs and CPOs out in the fleet react to it)?

8. We are living in times of a "smaller Navy." This program I am studying is a new program that, to some degree, is still being defined. Do you see any threat of the Senior Enlisted Advisor billets ever going away in the future, or did you see any threats to the program while you were MCPON? If so, threats from where? Are there any steps we can take as a Navy to ensure that the Senior Enlisted Advisor billets are "put in stone"?

9. Is there anyone else you think I should talk to in my research that may be able to shed some light on the founding and initial stages of the Senior Enlisted Advisor Program (besides Admiral Larson, Captain Bogle, and Master Chief Mitchell)?

10. Master Chief, is there anything else you would like to add about anything we have talked about? Do you have any questions for me?

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APPENDIX G: SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Demographic Data / Background Data
   - gender, rank, rate
   - time at USNA, time in Navy/USMC, prior commands/operational and leadership experience

2. Describe your current roles and responsibilities as a Senior Enlisted Leader within your company. How did those roles and responsibilities come about (ie, defined by your Company Officer, Brigade Master Chief, or your initiative)? What do you think your primary job is here at USNA?

3. Is your current job different than you imagined when you received orders to USNA? What were your expectations coming in? Have those been met? Have they been exceeded in any way? Any disappointments?

4. Describe your daily interaction with midshipmen.
   a. Do you train midshipmen in any formal manner? How is that working out?
   b. Do you counsel midshipmen in a formal manner?
   c. Describe the *informal* interaction with midshipmen in your company.

5. Describe your relationship/interaction with your Company Officer.
   a. How does your role differ from the Company Officer with regard to interaction with midshipmen? Do you share any roles or responsibilities with the Company Officer?
   b. Do you see your relationship with the Company Officer as a CO-XO relationship or a CO-CMC(Command Master Chief) relationship? If not, how would you characterize it?

6. Describe your relationship/interaction with the Brigade Master Chief.

7. What roles do you fulfill, if any, outside of your particular company?
   a. Within the Battalion hierarchy?
   b. Within the Brigade hierarchy?
   c. How are these roles defined and assigned? Who do you report to in these roles?
   d. Do these roles impact in any way your primary roles as a Senior Enlisted Leader to the midshipmen in your company?

8. How is your performance as a Senior Enlisted Leader assessed?
   a. Input of the Company Officer/Brigade Master Chief/Battalion Master Chief/Battalion Officer/Midshipmen
   b. Fair? Accurate?

9. What do you think are the strengths of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program? What is working well?

10. What do you think are the weaknesses of the Senior Enlisted Leader Program? What is not working well?

11. How can the current program be improved?

12. Should the roles/responsibilities of Senior Enlisted Leaders be expanded in any way? How and why?

13. Should a formal job description for Senior Enlisted Leaders be written and promulgated by the Commandant? Would a Senior Enlisted Leader Handbook (similar to the existing Company Officer Handbook) be helpful? If so, what guidance would you want in that handbook---for example, what guidance would you want your relief to have in a formal document to help them understand the job better?

14. What has been your most negative experience to date as a Senior Enlisted Leader?

15. What has been your most positive experience to date as a Senior Enlisted Leader?

16. Is there anything else that comes to mind concerning your experience as a Senior Enlisted Leader?

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