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Contact: Ed Barker

850.452.4858
(DSN) 922.4858
(FAX) 850.452.4900

FY-17 Olmsted Scholarship Program seeking applicants

PENSACOLA, Fla. –The Olmsted Scholar Program for Fiscal Year (FY-17) was announced March 16 via NAVADMIN 064/15.

Career-minded Unrestricted Line, Information Dominance Corps and Supply Corps officers interested in developing language skills and regional cultural knowledge are encouraged to apply for the Fiscal Year (FY-17) Olmsted Scholar Program.

The Olmsted program is a unique scholarship opportunity offering two years of graduate study using a foreign language while providing overseas cultural and travel opportunities and often leads to a graduate degree at a foreign university. Applicants for the FY-17 program should be available to start language training in summer/fall 2016, begin study at a foreign university in 2017 and complete study in 2019.

The Navy is looking for leaders who display the qualities of dedicated career officers and who aspire to command as line, Information Dominance and Supply Corps officers. Applicants must have demonstrated strong leadership qualities, solid overall performance, strong promotion potential, and superior demonstrated scholastic ability. Candidates must have three years of

commissioned service - but no more than 11 years of total active federal service as of April 1, 2016, to apply for the scholarship. Specific designator eligibility is listed in the NAVADMIN.

Historically, Olmsted Scholars have benefited from the program and continue to promote to senior leadership positions, including 12 past Navy scholars that achieved flag rank.

One Olmsted Scholar currently in line for command following his international experience in St. Petersburg Russia is Cmdr. Michael "BC" Nordeen, VFA-211 executive officer.

"While the proven path to squadron command in Naval aviation is traditionally through a Fleet Replacement Squadron, Test Pilot School or Weapons School, the Olmsted Scholar Program provides a unique opportunity for personal and professional growth for those who aspire to senior operational leadership roles," said Nordeen. "Since our Navy operates forward, we know global experience is an invaluable advantage. I knew I'd have to work to regain my warfighting skill-set, but the Olmsted Scholarship definitely made me a better leader, strategic thinker and decision maker."

According to the Olmsted website, scholars interact daily with locals and immerse themselves in the culture of their host country, but a background in a specific foreign language is not a prerequisite to selection. Scholars are expected to live on the local economy and travel widely. Olmsted scholars receive their normal pay and allowances, and if married, are normally accompanied by their families.

The Naval Education and Training Professional Development and Training

Center (NETPDTC) is currently accepting applications from regular or full time support line, Information Dominance and Supply Corps officers for the FY-17 Olmsted Scholar Program. Applicants are required to meet a list of qualifications and prerequisites and submit a command-endorsed nomination package that must be received by NETPDTC, Code N2A2-Olmsted no later than Aug. 28. In October, the applications are reviewed and a final, Navy-sponsored list of nominees is selected. For each of the past five years, the Foundation Board of Directors has selected five Navy scholars.

The Olmsted Foundation, named in honor of Maj. Gen. George and Carol Olmsted, and the Department of Defense have jointly sponsored this scholarship program since 1959. Since its inception, the foundation has focused on educational and charitable purposes.

Retired Army Maj. Gen. Bruce Scott serves as president and chief executive officer of the Olmsted Foundation and was an Olmsted Scholar from 1979-81 at the University of Freiburg (Albert Ludwig) in Freiburg, Germany. Scott believes the success of the program is a direct result of the vision of the man for which the foundation and the scholarship program is named.

"General Olmsted, our benefactor and founder, certainly possessed great vision when he said that the world's greatest leaders must be educated broadly," said Scott. "For more than 50 years, our program has educated young officers in foreign language fluency and foreign cultures, which are becoming more and more important in today's world and in supporting the Navy's Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower."

With the selection of the 57th Olmsted Scholar Class in March 2015, 620 scholars have completed, are completing or are preparing for two years of

study abroad. Their studies to date have been in 40 languages, in 202 different foreign universities, spanning 60 countries worldwide.

The Navy nominations are submitted to the Olmsted Foundation Board of Directors, along with nomination packages from the other services. During a comprehensive personal interview, the foundation staff examines the nominee's academic and professional background, motivation to be a scholar, choice of foreign university, proposed course of study, language aptitude and career goals. Taking all this data into account, the interview panel makes its recommendations to the board for final decisions on the nominees at its meeting in March 2016 for the FY-17 Olmsted Scholar class.

Specific guidelines and additional details for applying for the Olmsted Scholar Program can be found in NAVADMIN 064/15.

All eligible and interested officers should visit the Olmsted Foundation website at www.olmstedfoundation.org for additional details.

For more news from Naval Education and Training Command, visit www.navy.mil/local/cnet/.

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Story by Ed Barker, Naval Education and Training Command Public Affairs.