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Civil Engineer Corps Welcomes Basic School Class Grads

PORT HUENEME, Calif. -- Rear Adm. Katherine Gregory, commander Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) and chief of Civil Engineers, welcomed 66 of the Navy's newest engineers during a ceremony held at the Civil Engineer Corps Officers School (CECOS) May 9.

The graduates had just completed the Civil Engineer Corps Basic Qualification Course, the foundation of a 12-week "pipeline" training program designed to prepare newly commissioned CEC officers for their initial assignments as engineers. Gregory stressed the importance of the military in the changing global environment, noting that the members of CECOS Basic Class 256 are part of the greatest military the world has ever known.

Ensign Bradford Garrigues is slated to manage construction projects at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. "I suspect I'll continue to lean heavily on my fellow junior officers and will try and embody the "Can Do" spirit of the Seabees," he said.

The basic course graduates were given NAVFAC assignments in the U.S. and abroad, including Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCB) in Port Hueneme, Calif., and Gulfport, Miss. and Amphibious Construction Battalions (PHIBCBs) in Little Creek, Va., and Coronado, Calif.

“I will remember the field training exercise the most,” said Ensign Matthew Karny. “It was great to get out of the classroom and apply the skills that we were learning. We also had great advisors -- their willingness to help and the real world experiences that they brought to the exercise were very valuable. The class was fortunate enough to enjoy some funny moments as well. It was overall a great experience.”

A Fleet Training Exercise (FTX) is strategically placed within the CECOS Basic Course curriculum to give newly-commissioned CEC officers and lateral transfers the chance to perform and execute skills learned in the classroom, including establishing camp, conducting patrols, leading convoys, operating the combat operations center, and mission planning to execute engineer reconnaissance operations.

When asked what advice he would give to incoming students for the next CECOS Basic Class, Ensign Chanhon Lee said, “I would advise them to be open to ideas. Everyone they are about to meet comes from different walks of life and all of the materials they are about to learn are actually useful when they reach their ultimate duty stations. But at the same time, don't be too caught up with classes. Get out and meet everyone in the class and get to know your advisers as well, because knowing them now will help you out in the future.”

For more information on the Civil Engineer Corps Officers School, visit their website: <https://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/csfe/cecos/>.

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Story by Ensign Elizabeth Olokode, Civil Engineer Corps Officers School Public Affairs