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## **Submarine Learning Center Renews Educational Accreditation**

GROTON, Conn. – The Submarine Learning Center (SLC), headquartered in Groton, Conn. announced May 20 reaffirmation of their accreditation by the Council on Occupational Education (COE), including all SLC learning sites.

A four-person COE site-inspection team led by Michael Bouwhuis, Campus President of Davis Applied Technology College in Kaysville, Utah devoted three days to reviewing the programs and processes of SLC and its associated sites.

“The purpose of COE is to improve the quality of education within the institution itself,” explained Bouwhuis. “As a nationally recognized accreditation agency, COE’s evaluations are based on 11 standards, to include the institutional mission, educational programs, learning resources, as well as physical, financial and human resources.”

The reaffirmation process requires the SLC to continually evaluate how well it achieves its mission, standards and goals. SLC was first accredited in 2008 and every four-to-six years, they are required to re-initiate the entire process; including hosting a COE visit.

According to the post-inspection write-up, the inspection team reported no deficient findings and specifically mentioned two sections as notably praiseworthy.

"We commend the Submarine Learning Center in two areas," offered the report. "The Instructional Bridge and associated training hardware and software is state-of-the-art technology." The COE report also cited "the faculty mentorship and constant care of submariners, combined with an environment of 'failure is not an option'" as both highly commendable and an excellent practice.

Capt. David Roberts, SLC commanding officer, noted that SLC required about a year to complete the entire reaffirmation process, and the results exceeded his expectations.

"I feel reaffirmation means the practices and methods of our entire staff are acknowledged by contemporaries in both the public and private learning sectors," said Roberts. "Our standards are recognized by an authoritative agency or professional group, in this case, the COE."

Roberts added that reaffirmation offers tangible benefits for his staff and the Sailors they train.

"Our Sailors benefit by independently documented verification that our processes and procedures, what we do and how we do it, are equal to those of a civilian college or university," he said. "Reaffirmation of accreditation provides our civilian counterparts an opportunity to see how we conduct ourselves in support of education and training and to look at how we spend the taxpayer's money."

Roberts, a former commanding officer of USS Dallas (SSN-700), noted that pride in accreditation is important, but it's purpose and achievement that shows up on the bottom-line when training is evaluated for effectiveness.

"We (the Navy) are performance-focused and driven. We have to constantly strive to transform concepts, goals, innovations, plans and vision into measurable mission milestones," he said. "What we teach is embodied in every Sailor we provide to the fleet and reflected in the achievements and performance of every submarine crew."

The COE notice of accreditation reaffirmation for SLC is only interim until a scheduled meeting of the COE commissioners this coming September adjudicates and ratifies the visiting team's findings.

The other three members of the COE inspection team that inspected SLC included: Dwayne Eldridge, Director of Online Learning for the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio; Jeanette Gantt, Curriculum Development, Department of Defense; and William Prescott, Manager of Training at the Apprentice School at Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, Va.

The mission of SLC is to plan, program, budget, and execute individual and team training for Undersea Warfare Enterprise mission readiness. Additionally, it develops, assigns, and coordinates future undersea warfare training and education solutions and allocates resources to execute undersea warfare training in fleet concentration areas. SLC has 1,150 instructors and staff (enlisted, officer and civilian) and had 232,000 enrollments during 2013 for an average on-board under-instruction (AOBUI) of 2,145 students during the fiscal year. The SLC blended learning solution combines instructor-led classes, hands-on labs, simulation, interactive course ware, and computer-based training and is a critical support element of Undersea Warfare.

Photo caption: 140506-N-LA529-003 GROTON, Conn (May 6, 2014) – Members of the Council of Occupational Education Site Visit Team learn from Machinist Mate 1<sup>st</sup> Class (Submarine Qualified) Robert Fallaw, a Naval Submarine School (NSS) instructor in Basic Mechanical Skills (BMS), how he works with student Sailors of varying aptitudes to assure learning objectives are mastered in a timely and effective manner in critically needed mechanical skills. The site visit team reaffirmed the accreditation of the Submarine Learning Center to Naval Submarine School during a three day visit in early May. (US Navy photo released by William Kenny)