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International Training Marks 1000TH Student

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Field Activity (NETSAFA) International Training Center (NITC)

PENSACOLA, Fla. -- The Naval Education and Training Security Assistance Field Activity, completed training of their 1,000th international water survival student May 27.

Lt. Marco Tullio Cicerone from the Italian Navy completed the training as preparation for his attending the Joint Diving Officer Course at the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center, Panama City, Florida.

"I am very grateful for the training and am confident I will perform well at the Joint Diving Officer School," Cicerone said.

NETSAFA's International Training Center (NITC) at NAS Pensacola was established in 1988 to meet the aviation specific training needs of international officer and enlisted students from allied nations.

"Water Survival is one of many preparatory courses taught by NITC's Specialized Training Division that provides fundamental academic, physical fitness and water survival training to international students prior to their enrollment in U. S. Navy programs," said Cdr. Russ Van Diepen, officer in charge at NITC.

Initially, water survival and fitness training was provided only to pilot candidates of the Royal Saudi Naval Forces and later to Weapon Systems Officers of the Royal Saudi Air Force. This effort has since evolved to include preparatory training for numerous non-aviation military disciplines including Basic Underwater Demolition/Seal (BUD/S), Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), Navy Diver, Aviation Rescue Swimmer and Surface Rescue Swimmer School.

The normal course length for students enrolled in Aviation Pilot or Weapons Systems Officer preparatory training is 21 weeks. The normal length of training for Rescue Swimmer School, BUD/S, EOD and Diver preparatory instruction is 8 weeks. Instruction is individually tailored to student needs and provides the student with the necessary skills needed to enter these historically difficult schools. The prep training is mandatory for all international students going to BUD/s and Dive School

"The training includes, but is not limited to, rigorous physical fitness programs, intensive water survival training, thorough mask, fins and snorkel drills, introduction to diving physics and a complete physical exam and medical assessment," said Randy Hurd, lead Water Survival instructor. Hurd, a former Navy SEAL and Stan Smith make up NETSAFA's two-man team that has a combined 80 years of relevant experience conducting high-risk training. Since September 1988 they have safely trained 1000 international military students representing 50 different countries, all without any accidents or injuries.

NETSAFA oversees all U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps International Training and functions as the Center of Excellence in coordinating and supplying training and training support to international governments and organizations.

For more information about Naval Education and Training Security Assistance Field Activity and the water survival program under NITC, visit the NETSAFA website: <https://www.netsafa.navy.mil>.

For more information on the Naval Education and Training Command, visit the NETC website: <https://www.netc.navy.mil> and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/NavalEducationAndTrainingCommand>.

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