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EOD School Graduates First Students from Albania, St. Vincent and the Peruvian Navy

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The first students from Albania, the Peruvian Navy and the island chain of St. Vincent and the Grenadines graduated from the Naval School of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (NAVSCOLEOD) receiving their Basic EOD Technician qualification pins Feb. 13.

Seventeen students completed the International Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Phase II Surface Course, which began Aug. 2. Eleven of the graduates will continue into the Underwater Ordnance Division of school for a three-week course in identification, render-safe procedures and disposal procedures for underwater ordnance.

“This course was very challenging,” said Albanian Army Capt. Vladimin Pica, a recent graduate of the international course. “It was a long course, but with the help of the instructors and my friends in the class and coming to study hall, I made it.”

Currently, 94 countries send their students to NAVSCOLEOD to receive training and basic knowledge of EOD. The international students are held to the same curriculum standards as their U.S. counterparts.

“Everything that needs to be learned has to be learned at the school,” explained Pica, when speaking of the curriculum taught at NAVSCOLEOD. “We aren’t allowed to take books home.”

Petty Officer 3rd Class Damian Franklyn, a member of the St. Vincent Coast Guard, is one of the 11 students continuing onto the Underwater Ordnance course of study.

“I feel honored that I’ve made it so far,” said Franklyn. “I will take the knowledge I learned here to help teach others and make my country’s security systems stronger. I’m optimistic my country will start sending more students to this school to form our own EOD team.”

The school’s International Military Student Officer, Billy Martin, is in charge of up to 125 international students each year who attend NAVSCOLEOD and is their liaison for all issues in-and-outside of the classroom.

“Having students graduate from NAVSCOLEOD and return home as their countries’ first EOD Technicians represents a significant accomplishment,” said Martin. “They can return home knowing they made a difference at the school and will continue to make a difference performing EOD work when called upon.”

“I’m glad to be going home and to meet my two-month old daughter,” added Pica. “The U.S. government and Mr. Martin have been great – I’d like to give a big ‘thank you’ to the school.”

NAVSCOLEOD, located on Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. provides high-risk, specialized, basic and advanced EOD training to more than 2,100 U.S. and partner-nation military and selected U.S. government personnel each year.

For more information about the Naval School of Explosive Ordnance and Diving, visit the NAVSCOLEOD website:

<https://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/ceneoddive/eods/>.

Additional information on the Naval Education and Training Command can be found at the NETC website: <https://www.netc.navy.mil>.

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