During this past Faculty Council Meeting in November, Provost Leonard Ferrari presented a cumulative update on the status of the academic mission of the Naval Postgraduate School, including a review of the year’s accomplishments and the challenges ahead.

In order to achieve these accomplishments, there was a presentation beyond the walls of the Ingersoll Auditorium. Provost Ferrari was asked to sit down with Update NPS to share this story with the entire campus.

Update: Provost Ferrari, thank you for sitting down with us today. To begin, why now is it so critical to reflect on the status of NPS, and our achievements in relation to the NPS mission?

Ferrari: Certainly with our celebration of the 100th anniversary of NPS, we are almost compelled to think about our institution in its global context. We review our history and honor tradition, we celebrate our internal and external successes, and we face with determination how challenges moving forward into the next century.

Update: Let’s start with the good news, what factors are worthy of celebration as we continue this Centennial year?

Ferrari: There are many, too many to do any justice to the quality of our programs and people in a short interview. But I will focus on one aspect that is a reflection of all these successes – and that is the external perception of the Naval Postgraduate School by those that examine us with great scrutiny. The AERB (Advanced Education Review Board), for example, is the Navy’s primary oversight committee on advanced education. It’s clarified by the VCNO, attended by all OPNAV leadership, and is a critical constituent for our university. And we have their attention, and perhaps more importantly, we have their strong support. This is very important for us, and a true reflection of the entire NPS community.

But there are many groups that analyze our efforts. Beyond the AERB, the WASC visit in March was very successful, and we are right on track for the second iteration of the accrediting process. And we are well underway on the ABET and AACSB accreditations, and just renewed NASPA accreditation. The Naval Inspector General visit in August was both positive and very beneficial, and we were congratulated for our detailed strategic planning processes. And finally, Congressional awareness of NPS is building, and support is growing.

Update: We have been very successful in proving our worth to these external reviewers, and we have many outside forces beyond our control that can impact NPS. What are some of these challenges?

Ferrari: The global economic downturn over the past couple of years impacts nearly everything our nation does, and our university is not immune. We have seen a significant cut in our direct funding in FY10; we are seeing foreign enrollments shrinking due to a lack of funding. We are also seeing civilian universities striving more than ever to compete with us for both students and research dollars. Shrinking economies lead to extraordinary scrutiny in funding decisions, and we must be prepared and innovative in meeting that challenge.

Update: If these factors are outside of our control, how can we overcome these challenges?

Ferrari: I believe our campus-wide efforts in strategic planning have helped greatly in weathering this storm. Since 2003, our research expenditures have doubled – this is a program that now brings in over $200 million to the university, and is helping us grow in size and scholarly value. We’ve focused on faculty recruiting and retention, and implemented new policies and programs that will ensure our community of professors remains at its current world-class level. President Oliver has been able to secure increased funding for campus infrastructure, so we can continue to improve our facilities and academic support while enduring the deep cut in our budget. And the NPS Foundation has embarked upon some aggressive new programs that we hope will expand their level of support for the university.

Moving forward, our mandate is to continue pressing ahead. We must continue to emphasize our needs for resources, in dollars, in students, and in facilities. We must continue to share the NPS story, creating the most visible possibility for our institution both in government and beyond, domestically and internationally.

Q&A With Provost Ferrari – Successes, Challenges for the Coming Year

Provost Leonard Ferrari presents his state of the NPS mission address during the November Faculty Council Meeting in the Ingersoll Auditorium.

By Dale Kuska

There are many heroes among us at NPS, and not all of them don service uniforms. On November 3, three Public Works (PW) employees – Carl Schumaker, Gary Phillips and Lt. Chris Love – added their names to the list of campus champions when they saved the life of a PW teammate who had suffered cardiac arrest while on campus.

“I was discussing something with [the employee] when he started to convulse and appeared to be starving for air,” recalls Phillips, Deputy Public Service Officer. “I called for help and quickly throughout NPS' regional facilities engineering command, and during a ceremony held on November 25, Rear Adm. Bill Freeman, Commander Navy Region Southwest, and Capt. Keith Hamilton, Commanding Officer Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest, recognized the employees for their heroism in saving the life of their fellow shipmate.

“Receiving this award from Admiral Freeland tells me that both he and Captain Hamilton believe strongly in the culture of safety and leadership that this organization is built around,” said Phillips. “This award underscores the real value of taking the time to learn lifesaving techniques like CPR. ‘You just never know when you might have to save a life,’ said Love, who was awarded the Navy Achievement Medal. ‘Going through the CPR course, I never thought I would actually have to use what I learned. I am just thankful he is still with us.’

For more information about CPR training sessions on campus, contact Occupational Health and Safety Manager Michael Berry at mberry@nps.edu.

Top leadership from NPS’ regional command joined campus officials in presenting three Public Works employees with awards for their heroic life-saving actions in early November. Shawn, from left to right, are Capt. Keith Hamilton, Rear Adm. Bill Freeman, Carl Schumaker, Gary Phillips, Public Works Officer Lt. Commandant Matt McCann, Lt. Chris Love and NPS Base Director Pete Dausen.

PW Employees Honored for Saving Life

By Dale Kuska

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As 2009 nears its close, I cannot help but think about the coming new year and the many opportunities and challenges that lie before us. While the turns of the calendar invokes thoughts of new prospects, and fleeting beginnings, institutions like ours can only be successful when we are also guided by a long-term vision and goals.

The finalization of our strategic plan, Visiters of a New Century in 2008, continues to be the foundation for our planning during this foresight, guiding our organization at all levels to well-informed decision-making processes for all educational and financial assessments across the institution. This document set forth four succinct goals: continuous improvement, and financial assessments across the institution;提高4. The next step in the strategic planning process is to ensure that each school, institute and department develops a guiding plan of their own, and that these plans are aligned with the university as a whole. Last January, at an all-day planning retreat, the four schools and major administrative departments presented their plans and proposed metrics. Over the past year, each area has been tracking data on their metrics and will be presenting these at the next planning retreat in January 2010. As we move to planning at the program and departmental levels, we continue to identify and acquire comparison and benchmarking data. Just recently, NPS subscribed to a scholarly database which tracks faculty publications, grants, awards and citations and aggregates this information by program. These data will allow us to monitor departments to identify similarly-sized programs at other institutions for benchmarking, identify sources of external reviewers for program review, and assess NPS’ standing relative to other programs.

NPS has made great strides in strategic planning, creating a new process that guides the creation of new programs while simultaneously ensuring current programs are both effective and productive. As we look toward the coming year, and the second of our WASC accreditation visits, it is our intention that all departments will actively use their plans and metrics and the university will find a full alignment between the strategic plan and resource allocation. Only in this way can NPS continue to improve quality and productivity and accelerate our progress on achieving strategic plan goals.

A long-standing discussion has surfaced around campus periodically over the past 20 years or so revolving around the adjustment of NPS’ current 12-week quarter system. Currently, the campus calendar has been decided in recent months at several faculty committees and councils, with no input and feedback from all,” said Moses. “As a result, NPS leadership has decided to experiment with, on a pilot program basis, a revised calendar during AY10 (academic year 2010). In Brussels, GBBP Assc. Prof. Dick Doyle joined the Education Development Working Group, part of NATO’s Partnership for Peace Consortium, in planning the 2010 summer workshop in Ljubljana, Slovenia, where Dr. Doyle will speak about distributed learning.

Donald Stoker of the Naval War College’s Monterey faculty published “The Naval War in the Baltic, September–November 1939,” in the 2009 issue of Baltic Studies and Review. It is available in print and online at https://www.bscol. org/sd/63.


The issue of changing NPS’ calendar has been discussed a number of times over the past couple of decades,” Moses added. “And interestingly, the motivations now are quite consistent with those found when the quarter system was introduced.”

There are three primary objectives for the transition to the new schedule. Currently, there is no opportunity for wrap-up and preparation for either students or faculty between the winter and spring quarters, and the summer and fall quarters. Additionally, with classes and finals consuming all available student learning time, there is no opportunity for educational enrichment activities beyond the classroom. And finally, the revised academic calendar places NPS’ academic schedule more aligned with other universities that employ a quarter system.

“This new schedule will allow our students to pursue educational activities away from the traditional classroom environment, such as short courses, workshops and conferences. They can take courses to enhance specific learning skills, explore potential thesis topics, become more involved with research projects, or participate in field activities or professional experience tours,” said Moses.

For faculty, these four weeks of enrichment offer the same myriad options for scholarly activities, such as teaching short courses, conference presentations, curriculum and course development, student consultation, research exploration and travel, and much more.

An important part of the pilot program, Moses notes, is that the changes to the quarter schedule really only impact the final two weeks of the quarter, and that the start and end dates for each of the four quarters do not change. “In the 12-week quarter, week 11 will now come at the end of the last two days of scheduled classes, followed by final exams at the end of the week. That leaves the 12th week for the enrichment programs,” Moses said. “As it is now, the final day of the quarter will of course still be graduation.”

More information on the new academic calendar can be found on the naval postgraduate school’s website. Academicplanning Calendar.