**Episode 62 – Officer Programs**

**INFORMATION:** Discuss the policy and process of applying for officer programs.

https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/career/careercounseling/Pages/CommissioningPrograms.aspx

<https://www.secnav.navy.mil/doni/Directives/01000%20Military%20Personnel%20Support/01-400%20Promotion%20and%20Advancement%20Programs/1420.1B%20OPNAV.pdf>

<https://www.usna.edu/homepage.php>

<https://www.usna.edu/Admissions/Apply/Navy-and-Marine-Corps.php>

<http://navmedmpte.med.navy.mil/mscipp/mscipp.htm>

<https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/boards/administrative/ldo_cwo/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/communitymanagers/active/ldo_cwo/Pages/default.aspx>

**I. Introduction**

 A. Attention (If you want to be an officer, whether it be staff or line, DO IT. Don’t let anyone stand in your way.)

 B. Motivation (Junior Sailors can and should be their best advocates when pursuing a commission. This starts with getting in the instruction and leveraging all available resources, including seeking a mentor in the community for which you will be applying, to get selected.)

 C. Overview (I have and always will be an advocate for squeaky wheels. I like fixing things. If a wheel squeaks, I want to grease it so it runs smooth. Same applies to Sailors that want things. Don’t just say it and complain when the universe doesn’t hand it to you with a bow on it. SHOW ME. COMPETE. BETTER YOURSELF. GET IN THE BOOKS AND COME TO BE EDUCATED. If you can’t tell me anything about the designator you want to apply for in the age of Google, you’re not showing me much. I will bend over backwards to direct you to resources and help you navigate the application process, but show me you want it.)

 D. Plug “Ask DGUTS!” segment. dontgiveuptheshippodcast@gmail.com

**II. Body**

 A. Main Point 1 (Reference) – Most Sailors are weeded out during the application process. If you come to me and want to apply for Officer Programs, I’ll refer you to the instruction (after asking if you have looked at it, at which most people respond “where can I find it?”), and are then overwhelmed by its contents. It’s a lot of information, after which you then have to tackle an intimidating application process. Don’t get me wrong, if you review the entire chapter they devoted to filling out the application and highlighted your own section (specific to your program) AND followed the associated checklist specific to your program - it’s straight forward, just long and involved – but we’ll get to that later. STEP ONE, AS ALWAYS, get to the instruction. The link is in the show notes and the outline, but you need to get to OPNAVINST 1420.1(series…currently BRAVO), via NPC. Get to it via NPC instead of the all-powerful Google machine because a randomly returned search engine link may give you an old revision. Also, take the time to review and understand all the sections of the chapter, which contains detailed eligibility requirements (which I’ll go over next), the specific requirements for the application process related to your program as well as guidance for your commander for both a recommendation and proper processing/submission of your package.

 B. Main Point 2 (Programs): There are several paths to a commission, many that Sailors are completely unaware of. I’ll provide short descriptions of each but the programs covered in this instruction are: US Naval Academy (USNA) and Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS); Officer Candidate School (OCS); Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program (MECP); Medical Service Corps In-service Procurement Program (MSC IPP); Limited Duty Officer (LDO) and Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) Program; and Seaman to Admiral 21 (STA-21).

 1. Sub-point (USNA/NAPS; Chapter 3) –

 a) **USNA** is a 4-year military college that offers an outstanding opportunity for qualified young persons to embark on careers as officers in the Navy or Marine Corps after obtaining a B.S. degree. Students at USNA are midshipmen serving in the U.S. Navy, and receive pay plus tuition, room, and board. Candidates report to USNA usually in late June or early July for Plebe Summer. Graduates are commissioned as ensigns, U.S. Navy, or as second lieutenants, U.S. Marine Corps. The minimum service obligation is 5 years active duty and 3 years Individual Ready Reserve upon initial appointment.

 b) **NAPS** provides intensive instruction and preparation for the academic,

military and physical training at the USNA. NAPS students are on active duty enlisted status in the U.S. Navy. The school convenes in July of each year and runs through May of the following year. Upon successful completion of NAPS, appointments to USNA are offered and those who accept the appointment report in late June or early July with the incoming class.

 c) **USNA/NAPS:**  Any enlisted Service member in the Navy or Marine Corps, or the Navy or Marine Corps Reserve on active duty may apply. In addition, enlisted members who apply to USNA and are not selected for direct entry are automatically considered for entrance into NAPS. To be considered for NAPS, applicants should not have passed their 22nd birthday on 1 July of the year that they will enter NAPS.

 d) **Eligibility:**

 1). U.S. citizenship is required for entry to USNA. This cannot be waived.

 2) At least 17 years of age and must not have passed their 23rd birthday on 1 July of the year entering USNA. This is a statutory requirement and cannot be waived.

 3) Applicants must be of good moral character and have no courts-martial conviction or civilian felony conviction, no record of disciplinary action under UCMJ, article 15 or conviction by civil court for misdemeanors (except minor traffic violations) during the 3 years preceding application for the program. Any substantiated drug use or alcohol abuse will result in disqualification.

 4) Unmarried, not pregnant, and have no incurred obligations of parenthood.

 5) Applicants must be physically qualified and in excellent health and physical fitness as determined by a medical examination administered by the Department of the Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB). DODMERB will schedule the service academy qualifying medical examination and will contact the applicant by mail. In most cases, the medical exam will be done at the Service member’s local medical facility with the assistance of DODMERB. Applicants must meet the following criteria:

 (a) Have normal visual acuity of 20/20 in each eye. Waivers may be granted.

 (b) Have normal color perception.

 (c) If applicants have any tattoos, brands or pierced body parts (with the exception of a single earring perforation in each earlobe for women), these must not be visible when wearing regulation swim gear. Any tattoos or brands that are prejudicial to good order and discipline, offensive, or are of a nature to bring discredit to the Naval Service are prohibited regardless of

location.

 6) All applicants must obtain a nomination from an official source. Applicants should apply to all categories of nominations for which they qualify. Detailed nomination procedures and sample formats for each nomination category are provided in reference (g), or on the USNA’s Web site at [www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu).

<https://www.usna.edu/Admissions/Apply/Navy-and-Marine-Corps.php>

 7) Scholastically qualified as determined by the USNA based upon the following:

 (a) Acceptable secondary school transcript with college preparatory subjects and grades indicating college capability and a class standing normally in the top 40 percent in high school.

To be competitive, applicants should have completed 4 years of math (including a strong foundation in geometry, algebra, and trigonometry), 4 years of English, and 1 year of chemistry.

Additionally, physics, history, and 2 years of a foreign language are strongly recommended. Courses in pre-calculus or calculus are also very valuable and encouraged.

 (b) Acceptable score(s) on the SAT or the ACT. These tests must be no more than 2 years old upon applying for the USNA. To increase competitiveness these tests should be taken within 1 year. To be considered for a SECNAV nomination, a candidate should obtain a SAT score of 550 math and 500 critical reading/verbal, or ACT scores of 24 math and 22 English. These scores are not competitive for entrance into USNA, but may place a candidate in contention for NAPS based on a "whole person" assessment. Tests may be taken more than once, and the highest scores in each category on either test will be accepted.

 8) Recommended in writing by their CO.

 2. Sub-point (OCS/Chapter 4) –

 a) **OCS:** OCS is an initial commissioning program for individuals possessing a minimum of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. Applicants for OCS may request designation, depending upon individual qualifications, from available community designators within the Unrestricted Line, Restricted Line, and selected staff corps designators. OCS is a program of intensive officer training and indoctrination of approximately 12 weeks, located at OTC Newport, RI. The OCS course has been designed by Navy officers and educators to give an individual a basic knowledge of the high-tech Naval establishment afloat and ashore and to prepare those individuals to assume the responsibilities of a Naval officer and begin developing to their full potential.

 The OCS course is designed to prepare members to become commissioned officers by providing basic knowledge of the Naval profession and its related military, academic, and nautical subjects. It will provide moral, mental, and physical development, and instill the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty. In most cases, graduates will receive specialized follow-on training after OCS to further prepare members for their initial fleet assignment. The training candidates receive during the course is divided into 13 units of instruction: Naval history, Naval orientation, seamanship, navigation, damage control, engineering, military law, administration, military training, physical fitness, Navy 3rd class swim course, Naval leadership and special emphasis programs.

 Enlisted applicants selected for the program, who are in paygrade E4 or below are designated officer candidates and advanced to paygrade E5 upon reporting to OCS. Enlisted

applicants in paygrade E5 and above are designated officer candidates in their present paygrades. Graduates of OCS are appointed as ensign, U.S. Navy, and incur a minimum active duty

obligation of 4 years. Certain designators incur greater minimum active duty obligation because of follow-on training required for that designator. Appendix H provides a general description about each officer designator.

 ODS is an initial commissioning program for individuals possessing a minimum of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. Applicants may request designation as a nuclear power instructor. ODS prepares officers of specific staff corps and RL communities as Navy leaders supporting the fleet at OTC Newport, RI, for approximately 5 weeks. Medical, Chaplain, and Judge Advocate General's Corps Program applicants must contact their nearest Navy officer recruiter to apply.

 2) **Eligibility:**

 Citizenship. Applicants must be U.S. citizens. This requirement cannot be waived.

 Age requirements. Applicants must be at least 19 years old and meet the age requirements for the specific designators requested per the applicable Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (DCNO (MPTE)) (N1) program authorizations. All OCS applicants, regardless of designator, must be able to be commissioned prior to their 42nd birthday. Below is a synopsis of age limitations based upon date of commissioning (see instruction for chart)

 Moral character and conduct. Applicants must be of good moral character and have no courts-martial conviction or civilian felony conviction, have no record of disciplinary action under UCMJ, article 15 or conviction by civil court for misdemeanors (except minor traffic violations) during the 3 years preceding application submission.

 Education. Applicants must possess a baccalaureate degree or higher from an accredited institution, in a field of study or major which satisfies requirements for the specific

designator desired. The following degree requirements are required for specific designators:

 (1) For all URL designators any technical or nontechnical degree from an accredited institution will qualify.

 (2) For submarine and surface warfare (nuclear), in addition to a baccalaureate degree or higher, applicants must have completed the following:

 (a) One year (i.e., two semesters, two trimesters or three quarters) of college calculus through differential and integral calculus of one real variable with a grade of "C" or better. One semester/quarter/term must be taken “in the classroom.” Waivers to this requirement may be granted by Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Nuclear Officer Program Manager (OPNAV

(N133)) on a case by case basis.

 (b) One year (i.e., two semesters, two trimesters or three quarters) of a college calculus-based physics course covering the classic fundamentals of mechanics, magnetism and electricity with a grade of "C" or better. One semester/quarter/term must be taken “in the classroom.” Waivers to this requirement may be granted by OPNAV (N133) on a case by case basis.

 (c) Candidates who have taken the above courses as advanced placement courses in high school and have been allowed to validate these courses by their college, and have taken an

additional course in college beyond these requirements, will be considered to have met the eligibility requirements. (Note the “and” conditions.)

(3) For SPECWAR and EOD, applicants must have baccalaureate degrees. Educational and/or professional experience in mathematics, electronics, computer technology, physics, or engineering is desired. Prior experience in diving is also desirable.

 (4) For Restricted Line and staff corps designators, the following requirements apply for the designators specified (see chapter 4).

 3. Sub-point (MECP/Chapter 5) –

 a) The MECP is a commissioning program specifically intended to provide an advancement pathway to commissioned status in the Nurse Corps, U.S. Navy, on the active duty list. It is not intended to serve as a precursor to medical school, nor for academic programs leading to certification, or licensure as a physical therapist, physician assistant, or other health care specialty. MECP provides outstanding career-motivated enlisted personnel of all ratings, who have attained previous college credit, the opportunity to complete the requirements for an entry-level degree and ultimately a commission in the NC. For those holding a valid nursing license (having passed the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX)) and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from a non-accredited institution, applications for a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) will be considered as an entry-level degree. No entry grade credit would be granted, as

the MSN would be the qualifying degree for commissioning in the NC.

 b) Selectees for the program will participate in a nationally accredited academic program leading to a baccalaureate degree in nursing. Long distance learning programs are not acceptable. When possible, the college or university must be within 50 miles of a Naval activity to which the participant will be ordered, for administrative purposes, on a PCS basis. The Naval activity may be a Navy operational support center, Naval Reserve officers training corps unit, or other Naval command.

 c) MECP students receive full pay and allowances for their enlisted paygrade and are eligible for advancement while in college. The student pays tuition, fees, books, and other expenses incurred while participating in MECP. Navy-sponsored tuition assistance may not be used to pay for tuition, but selectees may seek financial assistance from other sources, including the VEAP or MGIB, if eligible.

 d) Selectees are required to complete the requirements for a baccalaureate or entry-level master’s degree in not more than 36 consecutive calendar months and attend school on a full-time, year-round basis. Advanced academic standing may be granted at the discretion of the individual school; however, candidates must then complete the degree requirements in a proportionately reduced period of time.

 e) Selectees dis-enrolled from MECP at any time, either for academic or administrative reasons, will be made available and issued PCS orders to a new assignment in their enlisted rating to complete their active duty service obligation.

 f) Graduates from MECP are commissioned as ensign, NC, U.S. Navy, attend ODS, and incur an 8-year military service obligation with a minimum of 4 years served on active duty.

 2) **Eligibility:**

 a. Citizenship. U.S. citizenship is required. This cannot be waived.

 b. Age requirement. Candidates must be able to complete the baccalaureate nursing degree requirements and be commissioned prior to their 42nd birthday.

 c. Moral character and conduct. Applicants must be of good moral character and have no courts-martial conviction or civilian felony conviction. Have no conviction by civil court for misdemeanors (except minor traffic violations) during the 3 years preceding 1 October of the FY in which the selection is held.

 e. Active Duty Service. Be serving on active duty as enlisted personnel in any rating of the U.S. Navy or Navy Reserve (including FTS). Reserves on Active Duty For Special Work or 1-, 2-, or 3-year recalls and Canvasser Recruiters (not the same as NCs) are not eligible for the program.

 f. Performance Record. Have a superb performance record as well as strong academic potential.

 g. Education and Scholastic Aptitude

 (1) Be a high school graduate. High school diplomas or equivalency certificates based upon military educational experience and GED are acceptable if they are issued by the Department of Education of a State, Commonwealth, or Territory of the United States or the District of Columbia.

 (2) Have a certified copy of SAT or ACT scores no older than 3 years from application due date. Minimum recommended scores are 1000 SAT (500 math and 500 critical reading/verbal) or 42 ACT (21 math and 21 English).

 (3) Have applied for acceptance or transfer into a baccalaureate or entry level master’s degree in nursing program during the FY in which the selection board is held at a United States college or university and its nursing school that is accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

 (4) Be able to complete any prerequisites and the requirements for a baccalaureate or entry level master’s degree in nursing within 36 consecutive months from the date of enrollment into the MECP. Full-time student status must be maintained throughout the calendar year, including fall, winter, spring, and summer sessions. Therefore, acceptance must be to a college or university that offers classes applicable to MECP for each of those sessions.

 (5) Have a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. Have completed a minimum of 45 quarter, or 30 semester credit hours in undergraduate courses such as English, mathematics, psychology, sociology, chemistry, biology, anatomy, physiology, nutrition, and have them accepted for transfer into the nursing program to which applying. Credit hours may be a combination of traditional classroom courses, College Level Entry Program (CLEP) credit, on-line or distance learning, and military training credits, provided that the non-traditional credits are accepted by the school applied to.

 (6) Individuals who already have a baccalaureate degree in nursing must have that degree accepted by the NLNAC or CCNE school of nursing for which they are applying to graduate school.

 h. Physical qualifications. Meet the requisite pre-commissioning/accession physical standards for appointment as NC officer prescribed by reference (n), chapter 15. Selectees who fail to meet these minimum physical standards for appointment may be appointed upon the recommendation of the Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (CHBUMED) and waiver of the standard(s), by the Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel (DEPCHNAVPERS) acting for the Chief of Naval Personnel (CHNAVPERS). Applicants are strongly recommended to submit a pre-commissioning SF 88 Report of Medical Examination, SF 93 Report of Medical History, or DD 2807-1/2808 within the last 12 months (or 24 months for those applicants deployed). Applicants must meet physical fitness and percent body fat standards at the time of application, while in training, and at the time of commissioning. Failure to maintain physical standards will result in immediate disenrollment.

 j. CO’s Endorsement. Endorsement letter from their CO.

 k. Waivers. Waivers of eligibility requirements are reviewed by BUPERS (BUPERS-31). Waivers of eligibility requirements, other than minor physical defects, are normally not granted.

 4. Sub-point (MSC IPP/Chapter 6) –

 a. The MSC IPP provides a pathway to an officer commission for career motivated active duty enlisted personnel who meet the eligibility criteria. Some of these programs provide opportunities to complete either a baccalaureate, masters, or other professional degree. Programs include Healthcare Administration, Physician’s Assistant, Radiation Health Officer, Environmental Health Officer, Industrial Health Officer, Entomology Officer, and Pharmacist.

 b. MSC IPP is available to the above communities for members of the regular Navy and Navy Reserve on active duty, including FTS, and Active Reserve serving in any rating in paygrades E5 through E9 at the time of application (paygrade is not waiverable). Inactive-Duty Ready Reservists, Reservists on ADSW, ADT, 1- to 3-year recall and CANRECs are not eligible for this program.

 c. MSC IPP Web site (<http://navmedmpte.med.navy.mil/mscipp/mscipp.htm>) will announce the specific disciplines (fields of study) being offered for that FY and will provide other general guidance for applicants.

 d. Candidates for the specialties identified in the annual IPP NAVADMIN must possess a qualifying degree as described below. All non-masters degree prepared applicants, excluding pharmacy applicants, must submit official Graduate Record Examination, or Graduate Management Admissions Test, or the appropriate test score defined within the specialty requirement, completed within 5 years of application due date. Minimum acceptable scores identified in the annual IPP NAVADMIN are required. All applicants who request to complete a bachelor’s program must submit an official SAT or ACT score completed within 5 years of application due date. The minimum acceptable score for the SAT and/or ACT will be noted in the annual IPP NAVADMIN. Selectees with qualifying degrees will receive direct appointments to the MSC in a grade commensurate with education level and degree concentration per reference (b). An applicant desiring direct commission must earn a qualifying degree by 30 June following selection. A degree completion plan signed by a college/university official showing program of study, completion date, and number of credits/courses remaining is required as part of the application. Degree completion plans must be realistic and those having more than 15 hours remaining in their degree completion plan will not be eligible. Selectees who are going on to complete an appropriate degree will be commissioned upon completion of their degree. An acceptance letter or a tentative letter of acceptance to a full-time accredited graduate degree program with a degree completion plan is required.

 e. Personnel selected for any of these programs who require training are provided between 24 to 48 months to complete their degree (dependent upon the program) with benefits that include tuition, mandatory fees, book allowance, full pay and allowances for their enlisted pay grades, and eligibility for advancement while in college. It is highly recommended that all requirements for the next advancement cycle be completed prior to detaching from present command. The completion plan course work must not commence until the fall semester of the year following selection. Following degree completion, selectees will be commissioned as

officers in the MSC and attend ODS.

 f. Selectees dropped from IPP at any time, either for academic or administrative reasons, will be made available and issued PCS orders to a new assignment in their enlisted rating to complete their active service obligation.

 g. Upon commissioning selectees will incur at minimum an 8-year military service obligation with a minimum of 3 years served on active duty. Selectees who obtain military sponsored training will incur an additional active duty obligation.

 h. Upon selection, selectees will be required to coordinate closely with NAVMEDEDTRACOM. Selectees, excluding Physician Assistant (PA) selectees, going to a full-time education program should ideally get acceptance to an NROTC-affiliated university.

Selectees will begin their education programs in the fall semester of the year following selection. Applicants are urged to contact NAVMEDEDTRACOM, Officer Graduate Programs, Code (OG3) at (301) 319-4520/0925/DSN 295, for guidance and processing of packages.

 2) **Eligibility:**

 a. U.S. citizenship. U.S. citizenship is required and cannot be waived. A certified copy of birth/naturalization certificate is required. In some States, it is illegal to copy,

photocopy or photograph birth certificates or naturalization certificates therefore the applicant will use DD 372.

 b. Age requirement. Applicants must not have reached their 42nd birthday by time of initial appointment and commissioning.

 c. Moral character and conduct. Applicants must be of good moral character, have no court-martial conviction or civilian felony conviction and have no conviction by civil court for misdemeanors (except minor traffic violations) during the 3 years preceding application for the program. For the purpose of this subparagraph, an offense involving DUI/DWI is a major traffic violation and is disqualifying if within the 3 years preceding application for the program. Prior service drug use is not an immediate disqualifier, however, any substantiated drug use (a

felony conviction or any record of in-service drug abuse, regardless of the date) or alcohol abuse will result in disqualification.

 d. Obligated Training. Applicants under obligated training require a waiver from their enlisted community manager.

 e. Physical qualification. Meet the requisite precommissioning/accession physical standards for appointment as an MSC officer prescribed by reference (n), chapter 15. Selectees who fail to meet these minimum physical standards for appointment may be appointed upon the recommendation of the BUMED and waiver of the standard(s).

 f. Performance record. Have a superb performance record as well as strong academic potential and be favorably recommended for appointment by the candidate’s CO.

 g. Security Clearance. The SF 86 or e-QIP is required for all applicants who do not possess a current NACLC and credit check. The command security manager should assist applicants in determining whether the appropriate agency check is on file in the JPAS. Applicants who do not have a valid NACLC must include a completed SF 86 with the OPNAV 1420/1.

 h. All applications must be submitted by the deadline posted on the annual IPP NAVADMIN. Supplemental information is due by the supplemental deadline posted on the annual IPP NAVADMIN. Any correspondence not submitted by the supplemental deadline may be submitted to the president of the IPP Board by the applicant prior to convening of the selection board.

 \*\*\*Specific program eligibility requirements…\*\*\*

 5. Sub-point (LDO CWO/Chapter 7) –

<https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/boards/administrative/ldo_cwo/Pages/default.aspx>

 a. The LDO and CWO programs provide commissioning opportunities to qualified senior enlisted personnel (and CWOs). CPOs (E7 through E9), E6 personnel who are selection board eligible for E7, and CWO (applying for LTJG) may qualify for these programs. The LDO and CWO Programs are open to both active duty and SELRES personnel. Qualified personnel may apply for both LDO and CWO simultaneously. A baccalaureate degree is not required, however, it is encouraged. Leadership ability, military qualifications, and technical expertise remain the key factors leading to selection.

 (1) Active duty personnel apply under the Active Duty LDO/CWO Program to NAVPERSCOM (PERS-803) via their CO.

 (2) Inactive duty personnel apply under the Inactive Duty LDO/CWO Program to NAVPERSCOM (PERS-91B) via their unit CO.

 b. LDOs are technically oriented officers who perform duties limited to specific occupational fields and require strong managerial skills. CWOs are technical specialists who perform duties requiring extensive knowledge and skills of a specific occupational field at a level beyond what is normally expected of a MCPO.

 5. Applicability. The LDO/CWO programs apply to CWO and senior enlisted personnel in the following categories:

 a. Active duty enlisted personnel may seek appointment to commissioned officer status via the Active Duty LDO/CWO Program. FTS personnel and Navy Reservists on general recall who are selected under the Active Duty LDO/CWO Programs will receive appointments in the U.S. Navy. These personnel will be honorably discharged from their enlistment in the Navy Reserve and concurrently reenlist in the regular Navy before being appointed as a temporary LDO.

 2) **Eligibility:**

 a. Service requirement

 (1) Active duty applicants must be serving on active duty at the time application is made, and, if selected, they must remain on active duty until the appointment is tendered.

 (2) Inactive duty applicants must have been serving in a drilling unit (pay or non-pay) of the Ready Reserve for at least 1 year at the time application is made, and, if selected, they must remain in a drill status until the appointment is tendered. Members who were serving under regular Navy or FTS enlistment, and who enlist in the Ready Reserve with assignment to a drilling unit (pay or non-pay) within 90 days following release from active duty do not need to complete the prescribed 1-year time period in a drilling unit.

 b. U.S. citizenship is required and cannot be waived.

 c. Must be of good moral character and have no record of disciplinary action under UCMJ, article 15, no courts martial conviction or civilian felony conviction, or conviction by a civil court for misdemeanors (except minor traffic violations ($300 or less)) in the past 3 years as of 1 October of the year application is made. Any substantiated drug or alcohol abuse

within the last 3 years as of 1 October of the year application is made will result in disqualification.

 d. Must be a high school graduate or possess an equivalency certificate.

 e. Must be physically qualified for appointment per the physical standards outlined in reference (n),chapter 15.

 f. Must meet physical fitness standards of satisfactory medium or higher per reference (a) at the time of application and appointment.

 g. Must not exceed HYT requirements.

 i. Service with the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, and/or Coast Guard may be credited to meet the minimum service requirement when it can be clearly documented, by the applicant, that service in another branch provided the requisite training, knowledge, and expertise that directly relates to and parallels the needs and requirements of the Naval Service. If applicable, comments regarding experience gained in another branch of service, to include relation of the experience with Navy’s needs and requirements, should be included in the applicant’s personal statement of the OPNAV 1420/1. The CO will attest to such qualifications in their endorsing statement.

 j. Favorably recommended by their CO. (Inactive duty applicants must be favorably recommended by their unit CO.)

 k. Must meet color perception requirements. Defective color perception is disqualifying for appointment in the certain designators.

 - Enlisted Eligibility for LDO: In addition to the eligibility requirements listed in paragraph 5 of this chapter, LDO applicants must also meet the following requirements:

 a. Be serving as a petty officer first class (E6) or CPO (E7 through E9). An E6 must have served in that capacity for at least 1 year as of 1 October of the year application is made. Such service shall be computed from the TIR date for an E6. If broken service is involved, an E6 must have served a total of at least 1 year as an E6 as of 1 October of the year application is made.

 b. E6 applicants must complete all eligibility requirements for E7 (except TIR and Leadership Training Continuum (LTC)) and must successfully compete in the annual Navy-wide examination for advancement to CPO, receiving a final multiple equal to, or greater than, the minimum final multiple for E7 selection board eligibility. Personnel accepted to the LDO program attend leadership training via ODS. Therefore, LTC is not required for E6 taking the E7 exam for the express purpose of applying for LDO. E6 applicants must forward a copy of their most current examination profile sheet with their application. An E6 is exempt from the requirements of this subparagraph when notification has been received by the CO that the individual is a selectee for CPO or that advancement to CPO has been authorized.

 c. Active duty Time in Service (TIS) and inactive duty TQFS requirements:

 (1) Active duty personnel must have completed at least 8, but not more than 16 years of active Naval Service (day-for-day) exclusive of ADT in the Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard

Reserve as of 1 October of the year application is made.

- Enlisted Eligibility for CWO: In addition to the eligibility requirements listed in paragraph 5 of this chapter, CWO applicants must also meet the following requirements:

 a. Be a CPO (E7 through E9), including E6 personnel, when notification has been received by the CO that the individual is a selectee for CPO or that advancement to CPO has been authorized, and serving on active duty or as a member of the Ready Reserve in a drilling unit (pay or non-pay) for inactive duty applicants.

 b. Active TIS and inactive duty TQFS requirements:

 (1) Active duty personnel must have completed at least 12, but not more than 22 years of active Naval Service (day-for-day) exclusive of ADT in the Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard

Reserve as of 1 October of the year application is made.

 6. Sub-point (STA 21/Chapter 8) –

This program is open to enlisted personnel of all pay grades and ratings who meet eligibility requirements in paragraph 5 below. Since STA-21 replaces several previously available commissioning paths, including the Enlisted Commissioning Program, STA, and enlisted applications to the NROTC Scholarship Program, this chapter should be reviewed in its entirety. Individuals selected for, and participating in, the STA-21 enlisted to officer commissioning program are not eligible to participate in immediate, post-commissioning graduate education programs (such as Immediate Graduate Education Program, Voluntary Graduate Education Program, scholarship, fellowship, etc.). STA-21 graduates must first complete their initial fleet service obligation/operational assignment prior to gaining eligibility for Navy fully funded in-resident graduate education programs.

STA-21 is a commissioning program that provides an excellent opportunity for highly motivated active duty enlisted personnel in the Navy or Navy Reserve, including FTS, SELRES, and

Navy Reservists on active duty. Excluded are those on ACDUTRA to include AT, I-ACDUTRA to complete requirements for a baccalaureate degree and earn a commission in the URL, NC, SC,

MC, CEC, special duty officer (Intel), special duty officer (IW, formerly Cryptology),SWO IP/IW/ED/OCEANO options, or HR officer. Although the applicant’s history of fleet performance will receive consideration during the selection process, emphasis will also be placed on the identification of those applicants who possess both the academic and leadership potential necessary to become outstanding Naval officers. STA-21 has two components:

 (1) NSI: An 8-week course of intensive officer preparation and indoctrination at OTC, attended by all selectees in route to their university assignment.

 (2) Full-time, year-round study for up to 36 months at an NROTC-affiliated university. All selectees will be ordered to an NROTC unit on a PCS basis, and may choose to enroll in either the NROTC host institution or one of its affiliated cross-town universities as listed in appendix B. STA-21 officer candidates will participate in drills with their NROTC unit, attend two Naval science leadership courses, and are strongly recommended to hold leadership positions within the unit. STA-21 officer candidates do not participate in the NROTC midshipman cruises. They remain on campus to attend classes during summer academic

sessions.

 b. STA-21 students receive full pay and allowances for their enlisted pay grades and are eligible for advancement while participating in the program. Service members enrolled and

active in the STA-21 program will be waived from the Leadership Development Course requirements to participate in the enlisted advancement exam and for advancement. If dis-enrolled from the STA-21 program, the Service member will take the proper leadership development course, which was previously waived, prior to reporting to their next duty station, or at the first available opportunity thereafter. All other requirements for the next advancement exam should be completed prior to detaching from the present command. Entitlement to the SRB is as specified in reference (l).

 (1) Once the Service member transfers from the command with orders to NSI, the member is no longer eligible to receive SRB bonus installments.

 (2) All SDAPs cease upon transfer to NSI.

 (3) Some special pays may continue for those individuals selected for and participating in the STA-21 SPECWAR or EOD option programs, if specific program qualifications are maintained as directed by NAVPERSCOM Assistant Chief Navy Personnel Command, Business Operations/Comptroller (PERS-3;). Maintenance of certain Naval SPECWAR and EOD skills enhances safety and is more cost effective than periodic retraining that is required when such skills lapse.

 c. STA-21 students receive up to $10,000 per year, paid to the university by Naval Service Training Command (NSTC to supplement costs of tuition, books, and fees (i.e., if tuition, fees, and book costs total $7,000, only $7,000 will be paid out by the STA-21 program; if tuition, fees and book costs total $13,000, the selectee must pay $3,000). The $10,000 is disbursed in increments by school term. Therefore, students receive $4,000 for the fall and spring term and $2,000 for summer term. Students attending quarter schools receive $2,500 per quarter.

STA-21 students are neither eligible for tuition assistance under the Navy’s Tuition Assistance Program as specified in reference (m), nor are they eligible to use their MGIB educational benefits as specified in reference (b), nor are they eligible to use VEAP benefits.

 2) **Eligibility:**

 a. Be a citizen of the United States. No waivers.

 b. Be recommended by the CO as having good moral character, officer potential, and unquestionable loyalty to the United States.

 c. Be serving in the U.S. Navy on active duty, FTS, SELRES, and Navy Reservists on active duty except for those on ACDUTRA to include AT, and I-ACDUTRA. Individual option programs may have additional requirements and specific restrictions. Refer to section 2 for community-specific information.

 d. Be a high school graduate. High school diploma or equivalency certificates based upon military education experience and GED test results are acceptable to meet the educational requirements if issued by the Department of Education of a State, Commonwealth, or Territory of the United States of America or the District of Columbia.

 e. Be able to complete requirements for a baccalaureate degree in 36 months. Applicants are encouraged to accrue as many fully transferable semester hours of earned credit as possible

before beginning STA-21. Credits obtained through regionally accredited colleges or universities or the Navy College Program for Afloat College Education (NCPACE) program are considered

fully transferable. Many universities do not accept all transferable credits because of their individual policies governing transfer of credits. Non-traditional credits ( i.e., military service and service school credits, CLEP courses, vocational/technical school credits, correspondence courses other than NCPACE, etc.) should be used to obtain advanced academic standing to the maximum extent permitted by the university in which enrolled. Normally, credits obtained from foreign institutions are accepted; however, again, not all are considered fully transferable. Navy college office counselors should be contacted for educational counseling to include determination of which credits will transfer to specific universities.

 f. Be able to complete degree requirements and be commissioned by age requirements as specified by specific option programs which are addressed in section 2.

 g. Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better on a 4.0 scale while enrolled in STA-21. Must obtain a minimum of 2.0 on the required calculus and physics courses. Certain STA-21 option programs may have different requirements and are addressed in section 2.

 h. Have a certified copy of SAT or ACT scores no older than 3 years from application due date. The new SAT contains three sections, only the math and critical reading/verbal sections will be considered. A minimum score of 1000 SAT (with minimum scores of 500 math and 500 critical reading/verbal) or 41 ACT combined math/English (with minimum scores of 21 math and 20 English) is required. No waivers will be considered. Certain STA-21 option programs have more stringent requirements and are addressed in section 2.

 i. Meet physical commissioning standards for appointment in the URL, CEC, NC, SC, MC, or special duty officers (Intel),SWO IP/IW/ED/OCEANO options, or HR officers as prescribed in reference (n) and the physical fitness standards as prescribed in reference (a). Applicants must keep NSTC Officer Development (OD)/STA-21 (OD2) advised of any significant changes to physical status (e.g., broken bones, pregnancy, surgery, etc.), which

occur after the physical examination is completed.

 j. Have no record of court-martial convictions or civilian felony convictions. Have no record of DWI or DUI within the 3 years preceding application due date. Have no record of

disciplinary action under UCMJ, article 15, or conviction by civil court for misdemeanors (except minor offenses that impose a fine of $300 or less, exclusive of court charges) during the 3 years preceding application due date.

 k. Have passed a PFA test taken within the year of application obtaining a good high or better (no waivers).

 n. Individuals who have already obtained their baccalaureate degree are not eligible for STA-21 and should apply directly for OCS. OCS application procedures are found in chapter 4.

 o. Maintain eligibility requirements of paragraph 5 above during the application period and during participation in the program.

 B. Main Point 2 (Application Process):

 1. Sub-point (Chapter 2) – This chapter is very procedural and walks you block by block through EXACTLY what needs to be put in each block. Pay attention as you work through the application and refer to your program specific chapter for specifics.

 2. Sub-point (Program Specific/Checklists) – Every program has specific things required to be done on each application, and they’re DIFFERENT. So make sure while completing the application you’re also reviewing the application process section of your program’s specific chapter to ensure that any deviations or extra steps added to what is detailed in chapter 2 are completed as well. Also, USNA/NAPS, OCS/ODS, MECP, MSC IPP, LDO/CWO, and STA 21 all have PROGRAM SPECIFIC CHECK-LISTS. These check-lists are invaluable to ensure you capture every requirement for your program application. USE THEM.

 3. Sub-point (NAVADMINs/Board Pages) – ALWAYS consult the NAVADMIN soliciting applications for your program. They generally come out annually and will have the most up to date policy guidance for applicants that SOMETIMES is contrary or in addition to what you find in the instruction. Also, consult the available board pages, I included links in the outline and show notes for pages like the LDO/CWO page and MSC/IPP website.

 4. Sub-point (Mentor Review) – This one is BIG. GET A MENTOR. Find an officer in the community/program you are applying for and leverage their experience! If you want to be an LDO, someone who went through it all will be the best resource for guiding you through the experience. The more senior the better, so don’t be afraid to aim high, but anyone is better that no mentor.

 5. Sub-point (NPC Page) – Check out the NPC page for commissioning programs. There’s a ton of resources for all of the programs, useful links to websites and downloadable, fillable forms. Lot of great resources – link in the show notes and outline. Also, make sure if there are board precepts/convening letters available to you (i.e. LDO/CWO), you review them in DETAIL. It’s a road map for what they want in their selections.

 C. Main Point 3 (Why should you care?): So why should anyone not applying as an applicant care about this episode? It was long, dry, and policy heavy. Well, the first and obvious reason is as a leader you are generally going to be the first POC for a junior Sailor that desires to be commissioned. Whether via a CDB or just them approaching asking how to do it, the more you know the more you can help. Obviously it’s not expected that you’re the SME for Officer Programs, that’s why you have a Command Career Counselor and officer mentors. But your awareness that there are programs for commissioning Sailors in Medical Administration and as Physician’s Assistants could be invaluable for retaining a Sailor and helping shape their futures. That’s a big deal. I talk a lot about my time as a CCC because so many Sailors, when asked what they wanted to do, they answered “well I wanted to be XXX but was told it’s impossible because I’m stuck on submarines”. I’ve cross-rated two CSS2s to CT, both of which intended to separate but are now Chiefs. I couldn’t have done that without program awareness. Obviously I was supposed to know as the SME because I was CCC, but there’s nothing stopping you from reviewing the Career Counselor Handbook, the Officer Programs Instruction or the MILPERSMAN articles associated with big ticket programs. It’s extremely important to retention and training your relief to answer with actual information and a path towards their goals instead of shrugging them off or passing on tribal knowledge based denials; which happens FAR TOO OFTEN and leads to us losing the best and brightest.

**III. Conclusion**

 A. Summary (We talked about…)

 1. Officer Programs and where to find official guidance

 2. Specific details of each program and basic eligibility requirements

 3. Why leaders should care about topics like this

 B. Re-motivation (Junior Sailors need to be vocal early and often when pursuing a commission. This starts with getting in the instruction and leveraging all available resources, including seeking a mentor in the community for which you will be applying.)

 C. Closing – (Don’t let anyone tell you know. Don’t let anyone tell you you can’t. I tell Sailors all the time when they ask if they can do something…make them tell you no. That’s the worst that can happen, but if you never ask, or apply, or inquire…then you’ll never know. So many times when I could get a Sailor to try, the answer was yes. I talk about my Search and Rescue Swimmer CS1…she asked if she could be a SAR swimmer when she got to the ship. I said hell yes you can and don’t let anyone tell you different – because they will. They would doubt her for being small, for being a woman, for being cook…show them their wrong. She ended up a First Class Petty Officer inside 4.5 years and was not only a SAR swimmer on the ship, but is leaving the Navy after a successful tour in Pensacola as a SAR swimmer school INSTRUCTOR. Be equipped to show your Sailors the path, lead them down it and at times give them a push. That’s how we get better. It’s how we retain the best and brightest and get them into the places they need to be. It’s how we lead.)

 D. Plug “Ask DGUTS!” segment. dontgiveuptheshippodcast@gmail.com