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Building Our Future Together  
Occasional Thoughts: Career Development

Dear Chaplain:

This is my third letter to you building upon my initial November 1998 letter, "Building Our Future Together—A Letter to the Chaplain Corps." Each letter amplifies and re-emphasizes our Chaplain Corps vision and priorities.

From our first day to our last day in the Chaplain Corps, we sail on a career voyage. My goal for our Corps is to promote and provide good leadership as we sail. I seek intentional leadership that serves our Corps, our customers and our stakeholders. Our vision statement is a compass needle prompting us to lead those we serve, as well as ourselves, toward harbors of hope:

We envision a future in which the lives of men and women will be strengthened and their spirits soar in the knowledge that there is a God who loves them and who ensures their worth and value. That means hope within the reach of everyone in the Sea Services family.

The waters we sail throughout our career voyage are often brimming with danger. We face issues that can shipwreck inexperienced mariners: doldrums of shrinking budgets; shoals of personnel reductions; typhoons of exploding technologies; diseases of discord and careerism. In spite of that, our Navy Chaplain Corps offers one fundamental and essential life-nurturing component no other community is chartered to offer to our Sea Services people: hope!

The purpose of this letter is to tell you more about our message of hope. We have a course to steer as we enter the uncharted waters of the next millennium. As we steer those we serve to their harbors of hope, I offer us three aids to navigation. These are three constellations for us to use as we steer our course:

- Career Development
- Technology
- Spiritual Growth

This letter will address the first constellation of Career Development. Career Development is a linchpin in sustaining a healthy Chaplain Corps. Each of us, whether active duty or reserve, has a career in the Chaplain Corps. We are linked to those we serve and to one another from the minute we raise our hand for the Oath of Office until that same hand renders its final salute before going ashore.

I want to emphasize an important distinction between Career Development and Careerism. Webster defines careerism as, 'the policy or practice of advancing one's career often at the cost of one's integrity.' Usually the end-state of any discussion about careerism is promotion and the means to this end is frequently the manipulation of people and the system. Careerism is a malignancy we cannot afford.

Career Development consists of identifying deliberate training requirements and opportunities, then coupling them with experience and proven performance. The end-state of professional development qualifies (and in some cases certifies) chaplains to serve as better equipped clergy for ministry. In this sense we are practitioners expressing our call within the institutional context. We serve our customers better and we return as better clergy to our respective faith groups. I recently received a letter from Ed Condon written the day before he retired who summed up this idea perfectly. He wrote, "I have been honored to serve in the Navy Chaplain Corps. These years have enriched my priesthood and I return to Boston a better priest."

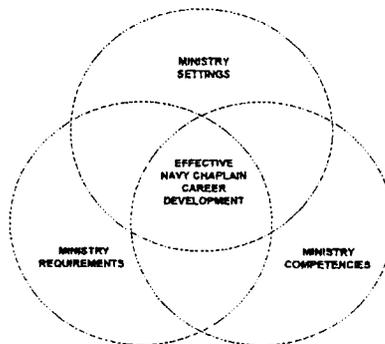
Career Development is also the structured progression from one assignment to the next while simultaneously taking advantage of various formal and informal training opportunities. This necessitates developing a series and/or sequence of training experiences available to all equally. Completing these events makes chaplains better qualified to be the professionals the Sea Services and our faith groups expect us to be. A well-constructed Career Development schema accomplishes two major objectives. First it satisfies requirements. Second it creates operators - individuals capable of institutional ministry. I offer you a basic paradigm of Career Development within the Chaplain Corps. It includes ministry settings, ministry requirements, and ministry competencies.

MINISTRY SETTINGS: The environment in which ministry is delivered is shaped by the Service (e.g., USMC/USN/USCG), the command (e.g., Marine Forces/Navy Ships/Shore Bases), the location (e.g., Afloat/Ashore/INCONUS/OUTCONUS), and organization (e.g., FMF/USS/TRACEN). The ministry setting answers the question, "Where are we assigned?"

MINISTRY REQUIREMENTS: Requirements are defined by the operational mission, billet quality and type (e.g., NOBC). Ministry requirements are becoming more and more specialized and include subspecialty billets, hospital, CREDO, joint, inter-agency, Personnel Exchange Program (PEP), combined (NATO), as well as supervisory, force/fleet and claimant chaplain billets. Ministry requirements answer the question, "What are the tasks we are required to do?"

MINISTRY COMPETENCIES: Competencies are those professional skills and expertise that chaplains bring to the tasks. Competencies are developed and maintained by a comprehensive professional training and education continuum beginning at the accession point and continuing throughout the chaplain's career. Examples of professional development opportunities leading to greater ministry competencies include Naval Chaplain School courses, funded graduate education program, CNO-mandated leadership continuum, Professional Development Training Courses, Professional Development Training Workshops, resident and non-resident joint professional military education (JPME), Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), and Pastoral Care Residency (PCR) courses. Ministry competencies answer the question, "What skills do we need to do the tasks?"

Effective Career Development occurs when these three overlap together in a balanced and intentional approach to assignment, training, and professional leadership.



Chaplain Corps Career Development

The structure of Career Development within the Chaplain Corps is not the same for everyone. No single chaplain has all the skills required by the Sea Services. Each chaplain possesses certain skills, some more than others, that makes him or her detailable.

All rates and staff corps design intentional training and assignment rotations. The Chaplain Corps is no different. Our Corps is an institutional specialty that builds upon basic

ecclesiastical education and traditions. I want to enhance that foundation by equipping our Corps with institutional training requirements.

As specialists we live and minister at all places along the spear, not just at the tip. Front lines are everywhere. Because of the complexity of the emerging needs within the Sea Services, we must constantly hone the skills we possess. Institutional education and training develops qualified military ministry specialists.

There are pre-requisites for many leadership positions. Formal classroom courses, regional training and specified training establish the foundation and prepare chaplains for certain O4 through O6 assignments. Career development must include these experiences as well as diverse assignments at the junior officer levels.

We have embarked on the most ambitious and comprehensive professional development program ever attempted in the Navy Chaplain Corps. We call it "Career Development" because this effort will encompass the entire span and spectrum of a chaplain's tenure on active duty. Our effort is focused on providing the best possible ministry to Sea Services people.

BASIC LEVEL (LTJG and LT). Career development begins on your first day at chaplain school and never ends. Therefore, let me begin by saying Chaplain Basic Training has been expanded to an eleven-week program consisting of four segments. The Chaplain Basic Course, focusing on orientation and adaptation, remains at six weeks. The next two weeks is the CNO mandated Basic Officer Leadership Training Course (BOLTC). Then there are two special courses.

The first is a one-week Amphibious & Expeditionary Ministry Course (AMEX) beginning August 1999. The AMEX experience will provide 'just in case' training for all chaplains. The goal of this course is to provide every chaplain with the basic understanding of ministry requirements in expeditionary settings (e.g., with Marines, Seabees and fleet hospitals).

The second special course is a two-week program called TEAMS - Tools Empowerment And Ministry Skills. The TEAMS course responds to my objective for chaplains graduating from Basic Training to have certain deliverable skills in their seabags. This course includes training in Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, PREP, Prepare-Enrich, CREDO and Ethics. Certification is part of the end product for some of these skills. TEAMS answers the question, 'How do we give new chaplains some of the certified skills we previously provided to

80% of the Corps in some past PDTs, e.g. CISD?' Answer, 'Give it to them at the accession point.'

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL (Senior LT). The Intermediate Officer Leadership Training Course (IOLTC) is a CNO required course held at NAB Little Creek and NAB Coronado. It is your responsibility to attend this course either TAD from your command or enroute between duty stations. We will be developing clear guidance for chaplains to ensure every chaplain understands the process involved in attaining a seat and attending one of these courses.

ADVANCED LEVEL (LCDR). The second level of resident training at the Naval Chaplains School is Chaplain Corps Advanced Training which is required prior to your assignment to a 3740 NOBC (supervisory billet). The training consists of the CNO mandated Advanced Officer Leadership Training Course and the Chaplain Corps Staff and Leadership Course (S&L).

LCDRs are the target group for this advanced training. They will receive these schools as pipeline training enroute TEMDUINS in conjunction with PCS orders. The courses are also open to chaplains at their current command, provided they get command TAD funding.

SENIOR LEVEL (CAPT). The highest level of Chaplain Corps formal professional development is the new four week Chaplain Strategic Leadership and Ministry Course. Chaplains preparing for claimant and strategic leadership positions will attend this resident course.

OTHER TRAINING. Other training opportunities are available to you. Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) is important for assignment to "joint billets." As of now, we have twenty chaplain billets that are rotated among the three service chaplaincies. This is a growing list. We have one JPME resident student seat per year at the Naval War College with hopes of gaining a second seat at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College.

All Service war colleges enroll non-resident students in their joint professional military education, called "phase one" schools. Non-resident JPME meets one of the basic qualifiers for joint chaplain billet assignments. It only requires your initiative. Contact the web site of each service war college for more information on non-resident courses. You may also contact Chaplain Baker, who serves as Head, Professional Development Branch, at <N1G1D@bupers.navy.mil> for further questions.

Our Pastoral Care Residency program is offered at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth. Five full-time students per year

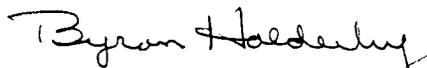
attend this "in depth" four-unit hospital Clinical Pastoral Education program. We are studying the expansion of our Clinical Pastoral Education with the Army and Air Force.

GRADUATE EDUCATION. Funded Graduate Education remains an opportunity for advanced study. The following prerequisites apply: LCDR or LCDR(sel), indicate graduate education on your duty preference card, have no prior funded grad education, PRD accommodates move, and the ability to fulfill a follow-on utilization tour. Subspecialty fields include homiletics and liturgy, religious education, religion and culture, pastoral counseling and ethics. Starting next year students will provide a deliverable training project accessible for use throughout the entire Chaplain Corps. We hope this allows all of us to be more effective chaplains to the people we serve.

This letter conveys my career development goals to prepare our Chaplain Corps for 2010 and beyond. Intentional Career Development will better equip us to serve the needs of the Sea Services. Chaplain Corps Career Development is not built on progression from rank to rank. Rather, it grows out of the idea that as one continues in the Chaplain Corps, he/she accumulates experience based on assignments and gains knowledge grounded in training. The longer we are in this institution the more we have to offer regardless of rank or assignments.

Just as the mariner's 'tools of the trade' include a sextant, chronometer and chart, I want you to take advantage of these career development initiatives as you add 'tools to your ministry toolboxes.' The Naval Chaplains School, Funded Graduate Education, Clinical Pastoral Education, Joint Professional Military Education, PDMCs and PDTWs contribute to your professional development as you minister to God's people. This has been a long letter, but it will help you set your course and speed.

Sincerely,



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Rear Admiral, CHC, U.S. Navy  
Chief of Chaplains