

Modly Announces First President of Naval Community College

WASHINGTON – Acting Navy Secretary Thomas B. Modly has selected Randi Cosentino as the first president of the new U.S. Naval Community College.

Cosentino comes to the Department of the Navy from Guild Education, where she served as the chief academic officer. Guild Education works with major Fortune 500 companies like Disney and Walmart to provide college-level education and training to their workforces. Cosentino received her bachelor's degree and doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania and her master's in business from Harvard Business School.

“In today's complex global security environment, we need to provide world-class education to our enlisted force of Sailors and Marines,” Modly said. “Dr. Cosentino's experience as an educator and administrator working with some of our nation's largest private-sector employers will help ensure that all of our personnel have access to a top-notch education while serving our nation.”

The U.S. Naval Community College will partner with civilian universities and community colleges to provide enlisted Sailors and Marines an opportunity to earn an associate's degree online in high demand fields like cyber, IT and engineering.

The planned delivery model, which will rely primarily on high-quality civilian universities and community colleges with proven track records delivering strong positive outcomes, is very similar to that pioneered by Cosentino at Guild, which has been praised nationally for its cost-effectiveness

and high return on investment.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to serve our nation’s naval services and to lead this new institution, as it develops innovative and collaborative approaches to educating America’s Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen,” Cosentino said. “The need for critical thinking, analytical problem-solving, and effective communication skills that a college education provides has never been more important than it is in today’s rapidly changing world.

“I look forward to enhancing naval readiness by developing the intellectual foundations of our enlisted force.”

As president, Cosentino will be responsible for overseeing the daily operations for the Naval Community College, which will begin teaching its first cohort of students in a pilot program scheduled for January 2021. The pilot will focus on degree programs in IT, engineering and data science. The first cohort will consist of 500 to 600 enlisted service members from the Navy, Marine Corps and the Coast Guard.

“The U. S. Coast Guard is excited to partner with the Navy and Marine Corps in establishing the United States Naval Community College,” said Rear Adm. Brian K. Penoyer, the Coast Guard’s force readiness commander. “Our people are the key to providing a ready, relevant and responsive Coast Guard.”

“The Naval Community College will help us meet the strategic goal to sharpen the skills of the mission ready total workforce and will help position the Coast Guard to recruit and retain an inclusive and diverse workforce that reflects the American public we serve,” Penoyer continued. “We see the Naval Community College as the first step in building our Mission Ready Workforce for 2040 and beyond.”

Establishing the new community college is one of the primary objectives of Education for Seapower Strategy 2020, released earlier this year. The strategy called for creation of the

community college because of the growing demand for technical skills and creative problem solving in the Navy and Marine Corps.

The U.S. Naval Community College will be part of the newly formed Naval University System, which includes the Naval War College, Naval Postgraduate School, Marine Corps University, and the U.S. Naval Academy.

Cosentino will report to John Kroger, the Navy's chief learning officer. Joining Cosentino as chief of staff is Robert Kozloski, currently acting deputy chief learning officer for the Navy. Kozloski, who served as an enlisted Sailor and Marine Corps officer, has been one of the primary architects of the Naval Community College concept.