

Navy Undersecretary Echoes February Report in Call for 'Agile' Education for Future Sailors



Undersecretary of the Navy Thomas Modly (right), with moderator Francis Rose, host of "Government Matters," at a May 7 breakfast program at Sea-Air-Space 2019. Ian Herbst Photography.

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – Undersecretary of the Navy Thomas Modly used much of his breakfast address here May 7 at Sea-Air-Space 2019 to reinforce the results of an "Education for Seapower" study and report that called for a more agile education infrastructure that develops Sailors and leaders for "this era of uncertainty."

"We cannot take our eye off the ball in developing people," he said, adding that young people come to U.S. Navy service with more technological acumen and expecting a different experience and lifestyle than prior generations. "We have to think of the kinds of kids we recruit."

The undersecretary emphasized the February report's findings that called for a top-down review of how Sailors and future Navy leaders are educated, from ROTC programs to basic training and beyond to continuing education and leadership training. The interview-laden report also showed that a naval university system should be created and that a new

chief learning officer
(CLO) be appointed.



Rose and Modly at the Sea-Air-Space breakfast program May 7.
Ian Herbst Photography.

“We need to get that key leader in place,” Modly told the audience at the breakfast, which was moderated by Francis Rose, host of “Government Matters.”

When questioned about the qualifications the new CLO should possess, Modly mentioned the CLO’s background should include some U.S. military service and experience in a large university system. He also emphasized that the Navy’s budget for education is small and must be expanded.

Later when questioned, Modly veered off education and mentioned the need to distribute “lethality” to even the smallest of U.S. Navy ships, mentioning the frigate class, and even advocated for armed unmanned vessels. “We need a lot more distributed lethality,” he said.