

# Two Sea Cadet Units Qualify for National CyberPatriot Finals



Band of the West and Sacramento Division Sea Cadets shown with Navy League CEO Mike Stevens in 2019. U.S. NAVAL SEA CADET CORPS

BETHESDA, Maryland – The U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps has qualified two teams to compete in the CyberPatriot National Final team competition set for March 17-21 in Bethesda, Maryland.

Sacramento Division and Band of the West Division will represent the youth organization at the All-Services Division Nationals. Both units are based in California and have years of experience competing in CyberPatriot annual competition.

Sacramento Division's Team Spartan has competed in the All-Services Division Nationals competition five years in a row since 2018.

"I enjoy witnessing each one of my CyberPatriot members develop their skills, foster friendships, and work as a team," said Sea Cadet Ensign Matt Foreman. "I feel like my job is to provide general direction, a safe place to compete, and the resources for them to succeed."

Foreman added that four of the youth team members have made it to nationals four years in a row.

"This year, three of those elite members are now celebrating their fourth year in a row, which should qualify them for special recognition," said Foreman.

Each of the Team Spartan cadets specializes in one of three platforms: Microsoft Windows, Linux, or Cisco. When he thinks of leaders and the impact they can have, he recalls the famous Gen. George S. Patton quote. "Don't tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results."

In its 14th year, the CyberPatriot program has more than 5,200 teams competing, of which the Sea Cadet youth organization had nearly 20 teams enrolled. The CyberPatriot program helps direct students toward careers in cybersecurity or another computer, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics discipline.

Band of the West Division's CyberPatriot Team Silicon Knights Team and the Sacramento Division's Team Spartan benefit from keen experts who guide cadets, such as the instructor Lt. j.g. Ming Ikehara, who serves as a volunteer training officer and brings forth extensive knowledge and experience in cybersecurity for the Silicon Knights.

"For cadets to acquire technological skills and critical

thinking to protect personal privacy to national defense is extremely essential and important," said Ikehara. "I also volunteer to inspire girls to get into cybersecurity and engineering disciplines."

Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Arkin Si, team captain, Silicon Knights, emphasized the amount of time devoted to the CyberPatriot team leading up to the annual competition to the nationals.

"Our team practiced every week for an hour each time, which doesn't include the countless hours outside of practice that members needed in order to become accustomed to the various operating systems that they were unfamiliar with, especially the strategies needed for the competition," said Si.

The Silicon Knights have been to National Finals three previous times, in 2016, 2018 and 2020. The members join the CyberPatriot team. They practice and compete outside of their regular drill time since they represent the nation's only Sea Cadet band.

Team Spartan is like Team Silicon Knights in the type of dedication these cadets displayed.

"Most learning took place independently via school classes, independent practice, and team collaboration," said Foreman. "These cadets are passionate about preparing for CyberPatriot competitions. They spend countless hours preparing for each competition."

The Sea Cadets who participate and lead the teams, such as Chief William Smith, who serves as the captain of Team Spartan, said participating in CyberPatriot has been an unforgettable experience for each of them and they are honored to represent the Sacramento Division again this year.

"CyberPatriot has provided Team Spartan the unique opportunity to broaden our cybersecurity skills through learning from

real-world scenarios and threats,” Smith said. “We are very grateful for the tremendous support from Sacramento Division of the Sea Cadet Organization. The discipline, teamwork, and leadership skills we’ve trained have helped us qualify for National Finals in the past five years.”



Band of the West and Sacramento Division Sea Cadet teams at the 2019 CyberPatriot finals. *U.S. NAVY SEA CADET CORPS*

Foreman added that new team members experience a steep learning curve, but senior team members mentor the new cadets and foster their skills.

“Overall, the success of team Spartan is not forced. Rather, it is fueled by their desire and personal interest,” said Foreman.

Ikehara said she enjoys teaching the youth about cybersecurity, and her motivation to instruct the youth centers on introducing them to cybersecurity career paths, but

more importantly to training them to be vigilant cyber citizens in everyday life.

The Silicon Knights team has a better understanding of cybersecurity from participating in CyberPatriots.

“Understanding cybersecurity is crucial to ensure safety as the world moves toward automation and increases its reliance on computers. It is also important to understand how to secure a computer and ensure that it has no vulnerabilities that can be exploited,” said Si.

Each member spends at least 80 hours of instructor-led and online courses each season. Many of the cadets spend more hours on their own to study and research materials on their own.

“We have great resources to tap into and of course, it furthers esprit de corps and brings pride to our unit. We are also proud to serve and represent the NSCC on a national level,” said Lt. Cmdr. Jo-Anne Dao, commanding officer, Band of the West Division. “I always remind my cadets that this is their team, not mine. And they may take it as far as they wish, but I am here to offer support in any way or form for them to succeed. But ultimately, it is their hard work, determination, and teamwork that will get them to where they want. Great life lessons here.”

For the Silicon Knights Team, many of their youth members start as middle schoolers and continue to the high school team. In the past six years, their team has consistently achieved the Platinum tier. The unit has a second high school team, the Silicon Ensembles, which has also achieved 1st place in the state awards in season 10.

Dao emphasized the sheer level of training, commitment and talent that went into competing this year.

“The Silicon Knights must be in good standing in the Band of

the West in order to even participate,” she said.

This means that in addition to the weekly drill, team members train, practice, and compete outside drill hours from November through March. This is a huge commitment from cadets and staff,” said Dao, but all that effort definitely paid off.

“For me, I am just so proud of my cadets. They come from all over the San Francisco area from different backgrounds and they all work together as a team to make it this far,” said Dao.

She added that the cadets competing in CyberPatriot are also based in Silicon Valley and from her vantage point, it is important because so many cadets have an interest in this field for future careers.

Lt. Cmdr. Jeffery Dao, who is married to Jo-Anne Dao, serves as the regional director for the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps.

“We are so proud of the cadets and grateful to Lt. j.g. Ikehara for making this opportunity possible,” said Dao, who serves as the executive officer for Band of the West, was thankful to the Navy League Marin County Council for their financial support and the Navy League STEM Grant which allowed his unit to equip its cadets with the computing gear and instructional materials needed for this training. “U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps units should apply for STEM grants,” he said.

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**16-year-old Sea Cadet  
Participates in Historic**

# **World War II Dive in Pearl Harbor**



Sea Cadet Petty Officer 3rd Class Jack Dabb participated in the first dive to USS Utah, submerged in Pearl Harbor for 80 years. *U.S. NAVAL SEA CADET CORPS / Brittany DiPippo*  
NEWPORT, Rhode Island – Sixteen-year-old Sea Cadet Petty

Officer 3rd Class Jack Dabb, from Battleship New Jersey (BB-62) Division in Camden, New Jersey, attended a Sea Cadet Leadership Training in Newport and had an opportunity to share a once-in-a-lifetime experience on Dec. 28.

The commanding officer of the training, retired Master Chief Avionics Maintenance Technician (AW/IW) Barry Crawford, realized a rare convergence of history was about to occur and saw an opportunity for Dabb to bring a little of his personal story to his classmates.

Dabb is also the youngest member of the Classic Diving Organization, LLC, and participates in deep-sea dives on historic vessels. In December 2021, just a couple of weeks before attending POLA in Newport, he had the privilege of participating in the first live dive to USS Utah (BB-31), submerged in Pearl Harbor for 80 years. Watch the historic dive: <https://youtu.be/zjQipLBHohU>.

“This leadership training event in Newport is held at Tomich Hall, which is where the U.S. Navy teaches advanced leadership to senior enlisted members of the military. The school’s namesake refers to Chief Watertender Peter Tomich, who posthumously received the Medal of Honor for his actions on board USS Utah on Dec. 7, 1941,” said Crawford.

Tomich and his fellow shipmates remain entombed onboard Utah. Still, Tomich is credited with saving the lives of hundreds of men through his heroic and selfless actions. For the Chief Petty Officers, Tomich is an iconic hero of our Navy’s past we reference when developing the leaders of today.”



Sea Cadet Dabb during the dive to the USS Utah. *SEA CADETS*

With cooperation between the U.S. Navy and the National Park Service, the Classic Diving Organization chose Dabb to participate in this rare event. Watch Dabb on Facebook live on Dec. 28, 2021 at 1 p.m. EST, [share his diving experience](#).

“Jack was selected to participate as a crew member and safety diver for the USS Utah live dive broadcast with the National Park Service due to his vast experience with the MK-V diving apparatus,” said U.S. Navy Master Diver John Hopkins, Jr., and co-founder of the Classic Diving Organization, who is stationed at Hickam Air Force Base in Pearl Harbor.

“Jack was an important team member, and with his assistance, it made the event so much easier. This event was to bring back attention to the salvage efforts that took place after the attack on Dec. 7, 1941. This was the first live dive event for Utah, and it was the final piece for the remembrance events for the 80th anniversary of the attack.”

Hopkins added that Dabb has participated with the diving organization on other events in the past.

“He flawlessly folded into our team, and all of us, including the Park Service personnel, appreciated his time, effort, and great work ethic. It is always a joy to work with Jack, and I look forward to working with him again in the future,” said Hopkins.

Crawford added that having the opportunity to present pictures and Dabb’s experience diving to USS Utah and inside Tomich Hall was amazing.

“The faculty assigned to the U.S. Navy Senior Enlisted Academy were invited to the presentation, making a rare connection to things they walk by each day at work,” said Crawford. “Chief Tomich’s Medal of Honor, citation from President Roosevelt, and relics from Utah are on the hallowed quarterdeck at Tomich Hall.”

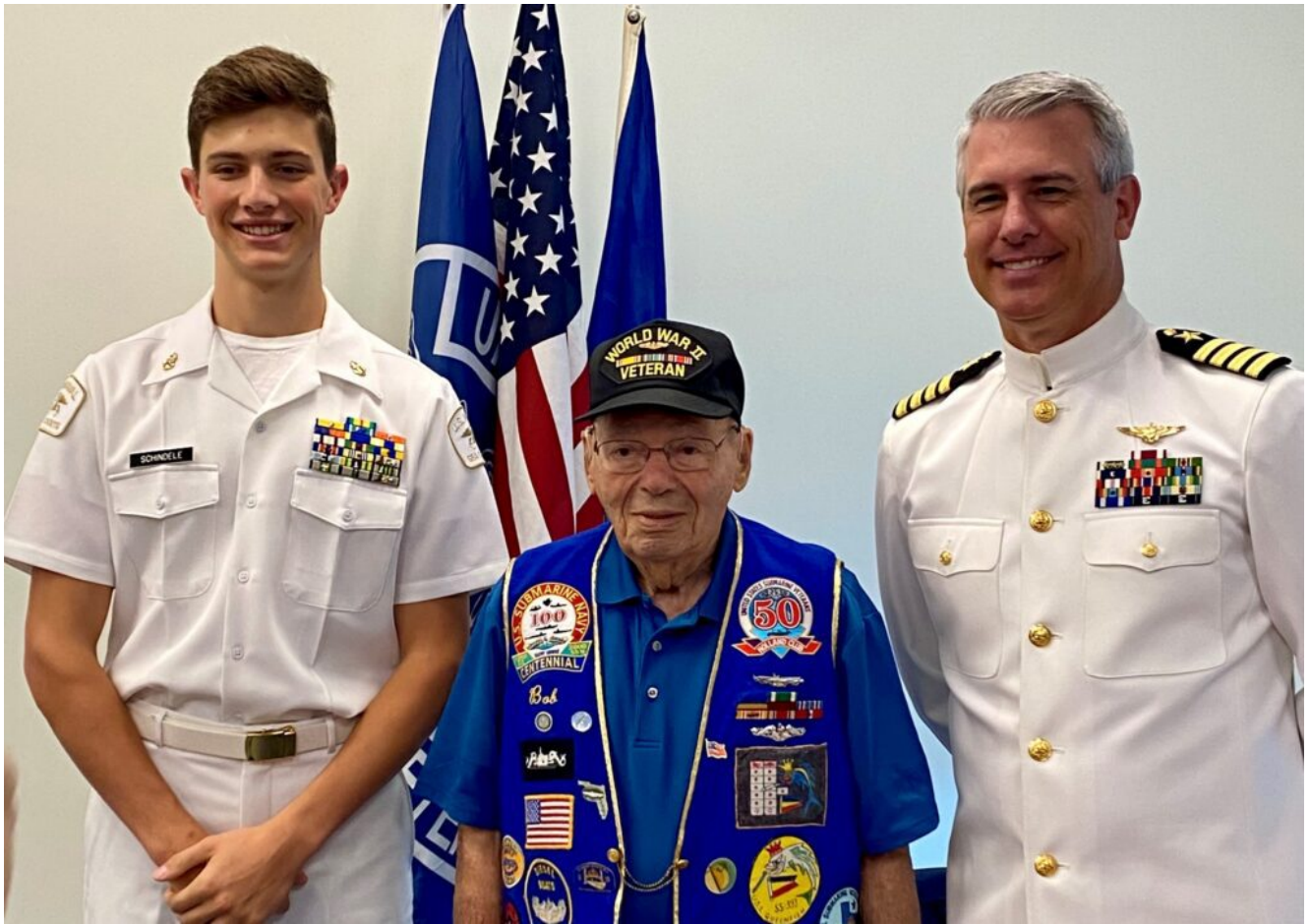
Crawford added that thousands of Navy leaders have walked by these cherished objects and could only imagine what Tomich sacrificed for his shipmates. “And here we have this 16-year-old Sea Cadet who saw it and shared it with us. What a great experience for us and the 85 participants of POLA Newport 2021.”

What does Dabb think about all this? “Diving on the USS Utah was an experience like no other. I truly can never express what this opportunity means to me because it was so monumental. It made me realize that without history, we have no future.”

For more information about U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, visit [www.seacadets.org](http://www.seacadets.org).

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**U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps  
Florida-Based Battalion  
Dedicated to Preserving World  
War II History Through  
Personal Stories**



Sea Cadet Chief Kurt Schindele, retired Gunners Mate Chief Bob Dickenson and retired Navy Capt. Matthew Robinson, representing the Navy League, at Schindele's interview with Dickenson about his World War II experiences. *GARY SCHINDELE*  
CLERMONT, Fla. – U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Chiefs representing the Clermont Battalion have picked up the mantle of responsibility to document personal stories of World War II veterans residing in central Florida, with their first interview taking place Nov. 6.

Sea Cadet Chief Kurt Schindele, who just turned 18, interviewed Gunners Mate Chief Bob Dickenson, a 96-year-old submarine veteran who served multiple tours in the Pacific theater.

The Clermont Battalion, one of 400 units nationwide, has more than 40 Sea Cadets in the unit dedicated to preserving the history of service and tradition of the U.S. Navy, one story at a time.

Clermont Battalion Commanding Officer Lt. Gary Schindele, USNSCC, Kurt's father, said he is proud of his son and his unit for taking on this responsibility.

"We can only learn from history if we know about that history. With the ever-decreasing number of World War II veterans alive, I feel that it is more important than ever to capture as much information about that era as possible when it is still available to receive a first-hand account," Schindele said. "It is also the chief's responsibility to preserve and pass on the history of the Navy, and these interviews serve as an excellent history and heritage teaching moment for our Sea Cadets."

Dickenson discussed and shared the mementos he has saved from his service, which include commendation letters from Adm. Chester Nimitz and Adm. James Forrestal. During his service, Dickenson survived four successful war patrols onboard the USS Queenfish (SS-393) and contributed to destroying 45,000 tons of enemy shipping, personally sinking two enemy ships using the USS Queenfish's 3-inch deck gun.

Dickenson served at Recruit Training Center, Newport, Rhode Island; Naval Base, Newport News, Virginia; Naval Submarine Base New London, Groton, Connecticut; USS Queenfish (SS393), Office New Construction, Mare Island, California, and USS Remora (SS-487).

Dickenson received the following citations and awards during his Naval career: American Campaign Ribbon, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Ribbon, World War II Victory Medal, Philippine Liberation Campaign Ribbon, Navy Commendation Medal, Qualified Submarine Warfare (Dolphins) and Good Conduct Medal.

The full interview is available for viewing on [www.Southlaketv.com](http://www.Southlaketv.com) and its corresponding official Facebook page, [@TVSouthLake](https://www.facebook.com/TVSouthLake). The U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps provides life-changing programs that instill the values of teamwork,

discipline, camaraderie and service to young men and women aged 10 to 17. Run by a dedicated volunteer force, the Sea Cadet program relies on strong partnerships with the Navy League and our nation's armed forces. To learn more about the Sea Cadets, visit [www.seacadets.org](http://www.seacadets.org).